

Activities of the Estonian Academy of Security Sciences upon considering the recommendations of the institutional accreditation Assessment Committee (on 1 December 2014)

1. Organisational management and performance

<p>1.1 Effectiveness of trainings for managerial staff should be analysed systematically.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One of the influences of the trainings for managerial staff is that it has had a positive trend in the satisfaction survey (e.g. management on the Academy level 2008: 3.03; 2013: 3.99, management on the unit level 2009: 4.09, 2013: 4.31) • We analyse the efficiency of the continuing education training in cooperation with the superior during the P&D discussions. We have also made a respective update in the P&D discussion's report. • In order to analyse managerial activities, the managerial staff has been offered opportunities for both individual and group coaching. According to the managers, it has supported them in their work.
<p>1.2 Feedback information regarding staff satisfaction should be used more in planning and improvement activities.</p> <p>The results of the personnel satisfaction survey are analysed alongside the results of the P&D discussions. The Personnel Development Department introduces the results in structural units, and in cooperation, they will discuss what will be planned in the action plan of the coming year. Since 2012, the personnel satisfaction report has indicated development activities arising from the previous year's recommendations. These are sent accompanied by the cover letter for the new satisfaction survey.</p>
<p>1.3 The Academy should attempt to determine possible reasons for decline in student satisfaction as revealed by feedback, and take necessary measures.</p> <p>According to the data available to the EASS, student satisfaction rate has not decreased. The results were somewhat influenced by transferring the collecting of feedback to the SIS in the AY 2010/11. Before that feedback was collected either on paper or on the LimeSurvey platform. When collecting feedback on paper, the students may have had a certain fear that they could be identified based on their handwriting, and therefore they avoided providing stronger criticism.</p> <p>The following improvement activities have been carried out in the area of feedback:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. In cooperation with the academic assistants and group leaders, we have paid more attention on increasing students' awareness of the importance of providing feedback since the AY 2012/13. In order to increase the reliability of the results, we aimed to increase the percentage of respondents to at least 60. The objective has been achieved (AY 2011/12: 35%; AY 2012/13: 64%; AY 2013/14: 66%). 2. In addition to this, we have applied different forms of collecting feedback – since 2013 there have been focus group interviews with graduating study groups to collect feedback on the curriculum as a whole; since 2014 we have carried out conversation groups with first year students, etc. Based on the results, we have introduced training for performing measurements in the basic training of police officers, we have changed/revised learning outcomes, individual work hours (cadets have stated there are too many of them in some subjects and too few of them in others), there are common lectures for the students of all colleges. 3. Since 2013 we have implemented a student counselling system. As a result, cooperation with students has improved, and employees of different levels contribute to the solving of students' problems. Thanks to the counselling system, students receive better feedback on what has been done to solve the problems they have brought out. 4. In 2012 we enhanced the system of evaluating curricula, and now collect feedback on different aspects of the curricula and the learning process. Colleges are obliged to enter the bottlenecks that have appeared during the internal curriculum evaluation into their work schedules as places for improvement. This also helps to solve some of the problems students have indicated. 5. The results of the feedback surveys are discussed about at the lecturers' assessment interviews and during P&D discussions. As a result, we agree on activities, deadlines and persons responsible. We have revised the curricula, time tables, internship organisation, increased the number of practical lessons, made the order of subjects in modules more logical.

2. Teaching and learning

2.1 The Academy should take measures to ensure that the graduates are able to communicate in both Estonian and Russian in work-related situations.

Measure I: additional courses of Estonian for students whose mother tongue is not Estonian:

1. In AY 2012/13, there was a **C1 level course of Estonian for the students of professional higher education**. The 60-hour course was funded by the Integration Organisation and it was participated by 12 first year students and the principles of CLIL were applied.
2. In AY 2013/14, there was a **B2 level course of Estonian for the students of vocational education**. The 40-hour course was funded by the Integration Organisation, it was participated by 11 cadets of the PBGC, and the principles of CLIL were applied.
3. In AY 2014/15, there was an **additional B2 level course of Estonian** for the students of vocational education. The 40-hour course was funded by the Integration Organisation, it was participated by 9 students of the PBGC, and the principles of CLIL were applied.

Measure II: content and language integrated learning (language learning integrated into subject-related courses = CLIL). It is implemented to improve the graduates' coping with Estonian and Russian (from AY 2012/13).

1. **Estonian:** Estonian has been integrated into speciality courses since AY 2013/14. The lecturer of Estonian works in parallel with the content lecturer, revises all the written tasks handed in by the students, provides individual feedback and consultation for students.
2. **Russian:** Russian has been integrated into speciality courses since AY 2012/13. This involves practical activities, parallel teaching (language and content lecturer together), outdoor learning (simulation of work-related situations in Russian and English). For example, in the PBGB we offer an elective course of Russian in the volume of 3 ECTS for students whose mother tongue is Estonian. We apply integrated learning, which involves both language and content teachers. Students roleplay different work-related situations in Russian and receive feedback on their language use. In the Rescue College's vocational education programme for call takers, there is a 24-hour course which also has Russian integrated in it. Students roleplay different work-related situations and receive feedback. In the curriculum for corrections, we have increased the volume of Russian (18x26=468 hours) and have made the content more speciality-specific, we have also modernised the methodology of teaching professional Russian. The aim of the teaching of the Russian language is to develop students' communication skills and help them break the language barrier and cope with potential communication issues. The main focus is on developing speaking and listening skills, which is supported by carrying out practical tasks in cooperation with speciality lecturers. Several learning tools have been created to support the acquisition of the Russian language – incl. electronic learning materials; in addition to that, different ICT-based learning methods are being used.

Measure III: student support:

1. We have consciously been creating opportunities for learning **Estonian and Russian via offering optional subjects**.
2. In order to increase our students' foreign language skills and to make the international module more versatile, we offer **more and more subjects in a foreign language**. Since AY 2014/15, the Study Regulations state that **in every curriculum there must be one mandatory subject and two elective subjects taught in a foreign language**. The college decides whether the foreign language is English or Russian as it depends on the characteristics and needs of the students' future work environment.
3. In the beginning of their studies, all first year students take a **test in Russian** and receive feedback on their language level (language level and the needed actions before taking the professional language course). Students whose level of the Russian language is insufficient for studying professional Russian, are obliged to take elective courses. At the end of their second year of studies, students take a test to see whether they have improved in their Russian skills. In the third year, they must take the subject of professional Russian.

2.2 As internationalisation is one of the development objectives of the Academy, it should find ways to promote international mobility among its students and teaching staff.

1. Since 2011 we have applied the opportunities of the **DoRa** programme that have increased the mobility of both the Master's level students and lecturers. One lecturer of the Rescue College defended their Master's thesis abroad.
2. The number of **ERASMUS** academic and non-academic mobility stipends has increased from 6 to 15.
3. In the spring semester of 2012, it was the first time the EASS welcomed **9 ERASMUS exchange students in the framework of the international module**. The module included subjects from our internal security Master's programme but also subjects specially designed for the module and taught in English.
4. In cooperation with Tallinn Health Care College and TTK University of Applied Sciences, we have developed a **common international module for ERASMUS students that also encourages the cross-use of subjects**. The common module was piloted in 2012. In 2014 we plan to develop a broad-based and attractive module based on the subjects taught at the Academy in order to establish a greater and stronger international internal security-related student community.
5. **Since AY 2012/13 there have been regular meetings concerning the topics of internationalisation**. The aim of these meetings is to 1) map the bottlenecks concerning the mobility of lecturers and cadets; 2) focus the units' activities according to the priorities of international cooperation; 3) find external funding for development activities. Since AY 2013/14 we have been inviting employers to the meetings in order to make sure the students' studies/internships abroad are of the interest of the employers, and to agree on the principles of welcoming foreign students to carry out their internships at the agencies in Estonia.
6. The limited flexibility of the curricula of the EASS and the complexity of transferring subjects is often the reasons why the volume of external studies does not increase. Since we are an institution of professional higher education, the learning outcomes acquired during internships abroad are as important as external studies, and therefore, our internship coordinators also work intensively to **develop close cooperation relationships with the employees of the Finnish police, rescue and correction** spheres, which in turn will hopefully increase opportunities for conducting internships abroad.
7. **11.9% of cadets are mobile**. When looking at the long-term mobility of cadets, a great improvement can be seen in the number of the cadets of the Police and Border Guard College, the Rescue College and the College of Justice who have participated in mobilities (e.g. the College of Justice organises summertime internships for its cadets in Helsinki and Oslo prisons; the Police and Border Guard College and the Police and Border Guard Board managed to move the second year cadets' internship into the summer months, thanks to which they have a three-month period they can spend working in shifts; this was the first year the cadets of the Rescue College had their rescue internship in Bulgaria where they could also visit a nuclear power plant and carry out rope rescue).
8. **The EASS has organised its international week since 2013**. The aim of it is to introduce learning opportunities at the EASS and the Academy's international module, to offer foreign lecturers a chance to give public lectures, to find new partners and ideas for projects.
9. **Lecturers have an opportunity to acquire international experience through development and development cooperation projects**. The Rescue College has two training projects, one in Afghanistan and the other in Moldova. The experts involved in the projects are lecturers who participated in organising CBRN Integrated Response 2014 and EL MODEX exercises, UN training sessions, and applied for the Baltic Sea cooperation and EU projects (in cooperation with the Rescue Board and Finland and Lithuania).

3. Research, development and/or other creative activity (RDC)

3.1. The Academy has not fully achieved its objectives regarding the application of new knowledge and innovative solutions as described in its self-evaluation report.

- From the AY of 2012/13 the EASS started implementing grant-based research, development and/or other creative activities. At the RDC competition, it is possible to apply funding for implementing innovative solutions. One of the criteria upon assessing the applications is the implementation value and opportunities for the use of the new knowledge and innovative solutions.

- The EASS has developed and improved the RDC product and service catalogues to support the process of offering applied knowledge and innovative solutions to the MoI area of government, but also to other state and private institutions.

3.2. The Academy should develop a strategy for research and development and a specific action plan for its implementation.

The EASS Research and Development Strategy was confirmed on 4 March 2013. The broad lines of its activities rely on the aims of the EASS 2020 and on the aims and principles stated in the development plan of the MoI area of government (VAAK), and support the implementation of the named development plans. In 2014 we formed an expert group to assess the RDC strategy and to develop the advanced version of it.

3.3. In order to achieve the priorities set for RDC (to promote research capabilities) and planned work results by research groups, the Academy's teaching staff should be more engaged in international research projects.

- In the past years, the EASS has gradually increased its resources to enable the teaching staff to participate in international conferences. One of the requirements for participation is making a conference presentation.
- Upon assessing the EASS's RDC grant applications and upon evaluating lecturers, we award higher points for international research-related cooperation.
- Since the process of internationalisation is becoming more intensive, the need to have a research outcome in English has appeared. As a result, the Proceedings of the EASS has been fully **in English and with the ETIS database classification 1.2 since 2014**. "Proceedings" offers an opportunity to publish the best internal security related research papers internationally.

3.4 The Academy should seek alternative funds for its development activity, in case the financing by the European Social Fund is decreased.

- Through the internal call for grant applications, the EASS provides means for development in the amount of 80,000-100,000 euros, and participates in international projects and EU financial measures in the approximate volume of 15-20% of its annual budget.
- It has been planned to establish a research group studying the fire safety of wood constructions; in order to maintain the group, we apply for project-based co-financing from the Ministry of Economic Affairs and Communication and from the Ministry of the Interior.
- We received funding from the Integration and Migration Foundation Our People to conduct language courses (list in subsection 2.1). In the AY 2013/14, in cooperation with our Lithuanian and Finnish partners, we compiled a **Nordplus** project application "ILTAWE – Integrated language teaching in adult working environment" and applied funding to compile teaching materials for content and language integrated learning. The application was unsuccessful, therefore, we will apply again in the AY 2014/15.

4. Service to society

4.1 In-service training management at the Academy's subordinate institutions needs to be better organised.

- We have established a Centre for Continuing Education (CCE, 13.06.2012) that regulates cross-academy continuing education. Along with the centre, we established a common information space for employers and colleges, a subsection on the Academy's website and the procedure for providing continuing education.

4.2 As one of its priorities, the Academy needs to determine its intentions and objectives regarding in-service training, lifelong learning, and non-formal education; and then to develop a plan on how to achieve those objectives in the best way.

The main strands have been stated in the statute of the Centre for Continuing Education and in the Procedure for Providing Continuing Education at the EASS. The area has also been considered in the EASS development plan and upon compiling annual action plans for both the CCE and other structural units of the EASS. At the moment, the development trends of continuing education have not fully been implemented yet since the MoI has ordered a related study, and the results of it will influence the future developments.

4.3 The self-evaluation report indicated low satisfaction with the Civil Service Development and Training Centre, and that requires leadership's extra attention.

The Civil Service Development and Training Centre (ATAK) is now managed through the Centre for Continuing Education, it is no longer independent from the Academy, and it follows all the documents regulating the continuing education conducted at the EASS. We have developed a new electronic feedback survey (on the LimeSurvey platform) that is currently being tested by colleges. In 2015 we want to start using it with a wider audience. We continue collecting feedback from all ATAK training sessions. On a 5-point scale, the average satisfaction with the organisation of ATAK training sessions and with the trainers has been higher than 4 points in the past 2 years.

The Academy has not fully achieved its objectives regarding the application of new knowledge and innovative solutions as described in its self-evaluation report.

4.4 The Academy has not fully achieved its objectives regarding the application of new knowledge and innovative solutions as described in its self-evaluation report.

See sections 3.1.-3.4

4.5 In-service training management at the Academy's subordinate institutions needs to be better organised.

See also sections 4.1, 4.2

- There is wider cooperation with our main partners and employers. In 2013 we conducted negotiations with the PBGB to transfer their in-service training to the EASS. A project document was compiled and it was supported by the Director General of the PBGB, rector of the EASS and the council of the PBGC. At the moment, it has not been implemented yet since we are waiting for the MoI's decision, the results of the PRAXIS study concerning the possible education model of the EASS and the role of continuing education in it.
- Based on the simulation classrooms, we provide major accidents related training sessions to various target groups. We have also developed a continuing education training programme for civilian missions. It has also been planned to develop two annual crisis management related continuing education training programmes. In order to improve continuing education, we have carried out discussions with the employers to make some continuing education training programmes/sessions regular (employees need to participate in the training sessions again after a certain period has passed).