



Accreditation Expert Group Report on Higher Education Programme

International Relations and Diplomacy, Master

LEPL - David Aghmashenebeli National Defence Academy of Georgia

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Tbilisi

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Information about a Higher Education Institution ¹

Name of Institution Indicating its Organizational Legal Form	David Aghmashenebeli National Defence Academy of Georgia, LEPL
Identification Code of Institution	218083222
Type of the Institution	Teaching University

Expert Panel Members

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¹ In the case of joint education programme: Please indicate the HEIs that carry out the programme. The indication of an identification code and type of institution is not obligatory if a HEI is recognised in accordance with the legislation of a foreign country.

I. Information on the education programme

Name of Higher Education Programme (in Georgian)	საერთაშორისო ურთიერთობები და დიპლომატია
Name of Higher Education Programme (in English)	International Relations and Diplomacy
Level of Higher Education	Second
Qualification to be Awarded ²	Master of International Relations
Name and Code of the Detailed Field	0312 Political sciences and civics
Indication of the right to provide the teaching of subject/subjects/group of subjects of the relevant cycle of the general education ³	-
Language of Instruction	Georgian
Number of ECTS credits	123
Programme Status (Accredited/ Non-accredited/ Conditionally accredited/new/International accreditation) Indicating Relevant Decision (number, date)	New
Additional requirements for the programme admission (in the case of an art-creative and/or sports educational programme, passing a creative tour/internal competition, or in the case of another programme, specific requirements for admission to the programme/implementation of the programme)	-

² In case of implementing a joint higher education programme with a higher education institution recognized in accordance with the legislation of a foreign country, if the title of the qualification to be awarded differs, it shall be indicated separately for each institution.

³ In case of Integrated Bachelor's-Master's Teacher Training Educational Programme and Teacher Training Educational Programme

II. Accreditation Report Executive Summary

■ General Information on Education Programme⁴

The Master's Programme in International Relations and Diplomacy is a two-year (123 ECTS) programme designed to provide students with a comprehensive understanding of international relations theory, history, and practice. The programme aims to equip graduates with the analytical, research, and communication skills necessary for careers in government, international organisations, diplomacy, and academia. The programme is uniquely positioned within a national defence academy, offering a specialised focus on security studies and defence policy, and attracting a cohort with a strong interest in these areas.

■ Overview of the Accreditation Site Visit

This report presents the findings of an external review of the Master's Programme in International Relations and Diplomacy at the LEPL - David Aghmashenebeli National Defence Academy of Georgia, conducted on 22nd April 2025 in Gori. The review was undertaken to assess the programme's compliance with national accreditation standards and to identify areas for enhancement. The team met with the programme's academic staff, students, alumni (of other programmes) and employers to gather information about the programme's strengths and weaknesses.

■ Brief Overview of Education Programme Compliance with the Standards

The Master's Programme in International Relations and Diplomacy at the LEPL - David Aghmashenebeli National Defence Academy of Georgia demonstrates a strong commitment to providing a high-quality education in international relations. The programme meets the essential requirements for accreditation and possesses considerable potential to become a leading programme in the region. Addressing the identified areas for improvement will further enhance the programme's quality, impact, and relevance.

■ Recommendations

- It is recommended that the programme objectives be reformulated to clearly and accurately articulate the nature of knowledge transfer, skill development, and transferable competencies offered, in alignment with the actual programme structure. The revised objectives should also highlight the programme's distinctive value proposition and explicitly address its internationalisation dimension.
- The learning outcomes of the educational programme should reflect only those aspects included in the mandatory component's courses, as required by national regulations.
- It is recommended to move the course History of Diplomacy to the elective component and replace it with a course that includes several topics on the theoretical foundations of diplomacy, followed by content focused on the specifics of military diplomacy.
- It is recommended that some core qualifying courses in the mandatory component be established as prerequisites for thematically related elective courses.
- Ensure all courses—particularly Georgia's Foreign Policy, EU Foreign Policy, and Foreign Policy Analysis—include current, academically rigorous sources. Incorporate recently published textbooks and relevant institutional documents.
- It is recommended to revise and strengthen the course "*Ethics and Values in International Relations*" by ensuring clearer conceptual focus, avoiding overlap with general international relations theory, and addressing the thematic coherence and academic appropriateness of the selected topics.

■ Suggestions for Programme Development

- It is suggested that learning outcomes should be grouped more clearly.
- It is suggested to add foreign language courses to the elective part of the educational programme.
- It is suggested that the programme structure incorporate some form of practical component.
- It is suggested to invite academic/invited personnel with experience in Military Diplomacy to contribute to the implementation of the MA educational programme "*International Relations and Diplomacy*".

⁴ When providing general information related to the programme, it is appropriate to also present the quantitative data analysis of the educational programme.

- It is suggested to introduce a dedicated course or substantively integrate human rights frameworks into relevant existing modules such as International Organizations and Ethics in IR.
- It would be highly beneficial to strengthen the practical component of the curriculum.

▪ **Brief Overview of the Best Practices (if applicable)⁵**

The programme demonstrates best practices through its integration of up-to-date international content, including NATO-aligned frameworks and contemporary geopolitical case studies. Its structured curriculum fosters analytical and policy-relevant learning, particularly in areas such as foreign policy, defense strategy, and regional power dynamics.

▪ **Information on Sharing or Not Sharing the Argumentative Position of the HEI**

In its written statement dated 4 June 2025, the David Aghmashenebeli National Defence Academy of Georgia responded to the draft accreditation report issued on 12 May 2025. The Academy generally agreed with most of the recommendations presented in the report. However, it did not agree with the recommendation under Standard 1.1 concerning the need to revise the programme objectives, and it presented counterarguments regarding several recommendations related to specific course syllabi under Standard 1.5.

The review panel took the statement into account. Regarding Standard 1.1, it was concluded that the recommendation should be maintained. Since the Academy itself intends to reformulate the structure and learning outcomes of the programme, a revision of the programme objectives will inevitably be required for consistency. Therefore, the recommendation remains relevant and logically justified.

As for Standard 1.5, the panel partially accepted the Academy's argument and decided to revise the original recommendation. The initial recommendation referred to multiple course syllabi. The final version narrows the scope and now only refers to the course "Ethics and Values in International Relations".

▪ **In case of re-accreditation, it is important to provide a brief overview of the achievements and/or the progress (if applicable)**

Not Applicable

⁵ A practice that is exceptionally effective and that can serve as a benchmark or example for other educational programme/programmes.

III. Compliance of the Programme with Accreditation Standards

1. Educational Programme Objectives, Learning Outcomes and their Compliance with the Programme

A programme has clearly established objectives and learning outcomes, which are logically connected to each other. Programme objectives are consistent with the mission, objectives and strategic plan of the HEI. Programme learning outcomes are assessed on a regular basis to improve the programme. The content and consistent structure of the programme ensure the achievement of the set goals and expected learning outcomes.

1.1 Programme Objectives

Programme objectives consider the specificity of the field of study, level and educational programme, and define the set of knowledge, skills and competences a programme aims to develop in graduate students. They also illustrate the contribution of the programme to the development of the field and society.

Summary and Analysis of the Education Programme's Compliance with the Requirements of the Component of the Standard

The Master's programme in International Relations and Diplomacy, submitted for accreditation, outlines its objectives concisely, specifying the target audience (military and civilian personnel), the type of knowledge it aims to impart (in-depth understanding of the theoretical foundations of international relations), and the skills it intends to develop (the ability to formulate rational and optimal policies aligned with national interests).

However, the knowledge-related objective includes the phrase "empirical experience in this field," which requires clarification. If this refers to the development of practical skills, it is important to note that the current programme structure lacks a practical component. Additionally, the knowledge-related objective should be further elaborated and clearly specified.

The programme is interdisciplinary in nature, a characteristic that is evident in the curriculum and should be explicitly reflected in the stated objectives. The skills-related objective suggests the programme is designed to prepare decision-makers, yet the structure does not support this claim, as it does not include practical training or courses focused on policy document drafting or similar competencies. According to the structure of the educational programme, the programme includes exclusive aspects that are not reflected in the programme objectives.

Given these observations, it is recommended that the programme objectives be reformulated to clearly and accurately articulate the nature of knowledge transfer, skill development, and transferable competencies offered, in alignment with the actual programme structure. The revised objectives should also highlight the programme's distinctive value proposition and explicitly address its internationalization dimension, as emphasized in the Higher Education Institution's (HEI) mission and the Academy's Development Strategy 2023–2029.

Once revised, the programme objectives will be more realistic, achievable, and better aligned with the curriculum. They currently meet the expected level for master's education and are consistent with the HEI's mission and strategic development plan—an alignment that will become more evident following the recommended adjustments.

The HEI's self-assessment report provides a detailed account of the self-evaluation process and outlines the development of the programme. Interviews confirm the active involvement of stakeholders throughout this process. The programme was initiated by the Ministry of Defense, which also serves as the primary employer of the Academy's graduates. This is substantiated by both documentation and interviews on site.

Curricula for other master's programmes at the HEI are publicly available on the institution's website. The curriculum for this programme will also be published online following the completion of the accreditation process, ensuring accessibility for all interested parties.

Evidences/Indicators

- SER
- Educational Programme
- Mission of the HEI
- Strategy of the HEI (2023-2029)
- Educational Programme Development Strategy
- Correspondence documents between the Military Academy and the Ministry of Defense of Georgia
- Interview results
- Webpage: <https://eta.edu.ge/>

Recommendations:

- It is recommended that the programme objectives be reformulated to clearly and accurately articulate the nature of knowledge transfer, skill development, and transferable competencies offered, in alignment with the actual programme structure. The revised objectives should also highlight the programme's distinctive value proposition and explicitly address its internationalization dimension.

Suggestions for the Programme Development

- none

Evaluation

Component	Complies with requirements	Substantially complies with requirements	Partially complies with requirements	Does not comply with requirements
1.1 Programme Objectives	☐	x	☐	☐

1.2 Programme Learning Outcomes

➤ The learning outcomes of the programme are logically related to the programme objectives and the specifics of the study field.

➤ Programme learning outcomes describe knowledge, skills, and/or the responsibility and autonomy that students gain upon completion of the programme.

Summary and Analysis of the Education Programme's Compliance with the Requirements of the Component of the Standard

The Master's programme in International Relations and Diplomacy at the NDA defines its learning outcomes in accordance with the Level 7 descriptor of the National Qualifications Framework and European higher education standards. The outcomes encompass a balanced mix of cognitive, practical, and analytical skills. They include advanced knowledge of international relations theory and practice, research competencies, ethical understanding, and strategic thinking tailored to the defense and diplomatic context. The learning outcomes are mapped directly to programme goals using a curriculum map and assessment plan developed as part of an institutional quality assurance process. These outcomes are defined through a collaborative process involving academic staff, the Quality Assurance Service, and external stakeholders such as employers and graduates.

The programme mainly complies with the standard. However, the learning outcomes of the educational programme should reflect only those aspects included in the mandatory component's courses, as required by national regulations. As the recommendation has been issued regarding the programme objectives, the learning outcomes should be reformulated in alignment with the revised objectives. Further, it is suggested that learning outcomes should be grouped more clearly.

Evidences/Indicators

- SER
- Educational Programme
- Interview results
- Webpage: <https://eta.edu.ge/>

Recommendations:

- The learning outcomes of the educational programme should reflect only those aspects included in the mandatory component's courses, as required by national regulations.

Suggestions for Programme Development

- It is suggested that learning outcomes should be grouped more clearly.

Evaluation

Component	Complies with requirements	Substantially complies with requirements	Partially complies with requirements	Does not comply with requirements
1.2 Programme Learning Outcomes	☐	x	☐	☐

1.3 Evaluation Mechanism of the Programme Learning Outcomes

- Evaluation mechanisms of the programme learning outcomes are defined; the programme learning outcomes evaluation cycle consists of defining, collecting and analyzing data necessary to measure learning outcomes;
- Programme learning outcomes assessment results are utilized for the improvement of the programme.

Summary and Analysis of the Education Programme's Compliance with the Requirements of the Component of the Standard

The programme employs a comprehensive and structured approach to evaluate learning outcomes at both the programme and course levels. This process is integrated into the Academy's broader ADDIE (Analysis, Design, Development, Implementation, Evaluation) framework for quality assurance and curriculum development, which draws on NATO DEEP methodologies. The evaluation mechanism follows a two-year cycle:

- Year I: Programme learning outcomes are defined, curriculum maps and assessment plans are created, and data are collected.
- Year II: The outcomes are assessed and analysed; based on findings, adjustments are proposed and implemented in programme content, structure, teaching methods, or assessment tools.

Both direct and indirect methods are used to assess the extent to which students achieve the intended learning outcomes. These include:

- Performance-based assessments (e.g., thesis evaluations, research projects, simulations).
- Surveys and feedback from students, graduates, and employers.
- Benchmarking against national and institutional standards.

Benchmarks and target indicators have been developed for each learning outcome. Results are continuously monitored and compared against these targets. If performance deviates significantly from expected ranges, the relevant programme components are reviewed and adapted accordingly.

Internal stakeholders (faculty, QA staff) and external stakeholders (employers, alumni, peer reviewers) are involved in the evaluation process. Evaluation results are systematically shared with staff, and outcomes are used to enhance the programme. This includes revisions to course syllabi, updating teaching materials, and aligning assessment methods with revised outcomes.

The programme fully complies with this standard. The outcome evaluation system is rigorous, systematic, and tailored to the programme's strategic and academic context. The use of clearly defined benchmarks, regular data collection, and active stakeholder involvement demonstrates a mature quality culture. Furthermore, the integration of findings into ongoing curriculum development ensures the continuous improvement of teaching and learning processes. The evaluation system not only measures student achievement but also informs strategic decision-making and enhances programme relevance in the field of international relations and security studies.

Evidences/Indicators

- SER
- Educational Programme
- Interview results
- Webpage: <https://eta.edu.ge/>

Recommendations:

- none

Suggestions for the Programme Development

- none

Evaluation

Component	Complies with requirements	Substantially complies with requirements	Partially complies with requirements	Does not comply with requirements
1.3 Evaluation Mechanism of the Programme Learning Outcomes	x	☐	☐	☐

1.4. Structure and Content of Education Programme

- The Programme is designed according to HEI's methodology for planning, designing and developing of education programmes.
- The Programme structure is consistent and logical. The content and structure of the programme ensure the achievement of programme learning outcomes. The qualification to be granted is consistent with the content and learning outcomes of the programme.

Summary and Analysis of the Education Programme's Compliance with the Requirements of the Component of the Standard

The educational programme has been developed in accordance with the Higher Education Institution's (HEI) methodology for planning, developing, and improving academic programmes, as outlined in the document "Rules for Analysis, Planning, Development, Implementation, Assessment and Approval of Academic Educational Programmes." It also complies with Georgian legislation, including the National Qualifications Framework and the Field of Study Classification "Political Sciences and Foundations of Citizenship," as well as the European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System (ECTS).

The total volume of the programme is 123 ECTS credits. The mandatory component consists of 93 credits, including 12 courses and a master's thesis (worth 30 credits), while the elective component accounts for 30 credits. Students (Junkers) can choose from 31 elective courses totalling 91 credits. The core courses of the curriculum includes methodological courses such as Academic Writing and Research Methods and Design, along with field- and level-appropriate subjects like Theories of International Relations, International Organizations, International Law, and Foreign Policy Analysis. These are complemented by courses that explore various dimensions of international politics and security in greater depth.

The programme structure is logically sequenced and mainly coherent, with the awarded qualification, Master of International Relations. The curriculum's scope, content, and complexity are appropriate for the master's level and reflect both disciplinary priorities and recent developments in the field. The content also integrates internationalisation aspects (some courses are connected to internationalisation by their content, and English-language literature is extensively used in the syllabi). Despite the above, considering the specifics of the educational programme, it is desirable to give students the opportunity to master a foreign language in addition to English at a certain level. It is suggested to add foreign language courses to the elective part of the educational programme.

Elective courses are diverse, covering topics such as regional politics, conflicts, foreign policies of various countries, military strategy, and the impact of artificial intelligence. However, the mandatory component includes only one course related to diplomacy—History of Diplomacy. In contrast, the elective component features The Role of Military Diplomacy in State Foreign Policy and Security, a distinctive course that contributes significantly to the programme's unique character.

Given that the History of Diplomacy course is largely descriptive (with only its first topic focusing on theoretical foundations), it would be more appropriate to classify it as an elective. It is therefore recommended to move History of Diplomacy to the elective component and replace it in the core curriculum with a course that focuses on modern diplomatic theory, methods, and practice. Ideally, such a course would cover the theoretical aspects of diplomacy in its first part, while the latter part would address military diplomacy in greater detail, building on the existing elective course.

It is recommended to move the course History of Diplomacy to the elective component and replace it with a course that includes several topics on the theoretical foundations of diplomacy, followed by content focused on the specifics of military diplomacy. It is also worth noting that, apart from the research methods courses and the master's thesis, only two other courses in the current structure have prerequisites. However, many elective courses are thematically and logically linked to core courses. (For example, several electives on specific countries' foreign policies would naturally require Foreign Policy Analysis as a prerequisite, courses on EU and NATO requires International Organizations as a prerequisite, International Law is also linked to some courses by its content...) It is therefore recommended to establish prerequisite requirements linking foundational courses to relevant electives to strengthen academic progression.

It is recommended that some core qualifying courses in the mandatory component be established as prerequisites for thematically related elective courses.

The structure of the educational programme does not currently include a practical component. Given that the programme is commissioned by the state itself, it would be feasible for the Academy to plan even short-term practical training—possibly within the elective component or in a non-regular format. It is suggested that the programme structure incorporate some form of practical component.

Interviews with stakeholders confirm their active participation in the development of the programme structure. Information about all accredited academic programmes is publicly available on the Military Academy's website.

Once the accreditation process is complete, the new programme will also be published online to ensure transparency and accessibility for all interested parties.

Evidences/Indicators

- Educational programme with the enclosed syllabi
- Protocols of the working group created to prepare the programme self-assessment
- Methodology of planning, development, improvement, and evaluation of educational programmes;
- Interview results
- Webpage: <https://eta.edu.ge/>

Recommendations:

- It is recommended to move the course History of Diplomacy to the elective component and replace it with a course that includes several topics on the theoretical foundations of diplomacy, followed by content focused on the specifics of military diplomacy.
- It is recommended that some core qualifying courses in the mandatory component be established as prerequisites for thematically related elective courses.

Suggestions for the programme development

- It is suggested to add foreign language courses to the elective part of the educational programme.
- It is suggested that the programme structure incorporate some form of practical component.

Evaluation

Component	Complies with requirements	Substantially complies with requirements	Partially complies with requirements	Does not comply with requirements
1.4 Structure and Content of Educational Programme	☐	x	☐	☐

1.5. Academic Course/Subject

- The content of the academic course / subject and the number of credits ensure the achievement of the learning outcomes defined by this course / subject.
- The content and the learning outcomes of the academic course/subject of the main field of study ensure the achievement of the learning outcomes of the programme.
- The study materials indicated in the syllabus ensure the achievement of the learning outcomes of the programme.

Summary and Analysis of the Education Programme's Compliance with the Requirements of the Component of the Standard

Each academic course in the Master's programme in International Relations and Diplomacy is meticulously designed to align with and support the overall programme learning outcomes. The syllabi generally include a clear articulation of intended learning outcomes, appropriate assessment strategies, defined contact and independent study hours, and relevant literature. Many courses incorporate field-specific and contemporary materials such as policy papers, case studies, and strategic documents from international organizations.

The Academy ensures pedagogical quality through a two-stage internal review process: initially, the course is developed by the instructor and then reviewed by the Quality Assurance Service, which assesses alignment with programme goals, usage of Bloom's Taxonomy, appropriateness of teaching and assessment methods, and adherence to the National Qualifications Framework.

Despite this structured approach, the review of individual syllabi reveals inconsistencies and gaps in content relevance, literature currency, and pedagogical coherence.

- **History of Diplomacy** includes only one theoretical topic, with the remaining content focusing on descriptive chronological coverage. This limits analytical engagement with diplomacy as a discipline (cross-reference with recommendations under Standard 1.4).
- **Georgia's Foreign Policy** lacks reference to academic textbooks or scholarly literature. A recently published, freely accessible academic textbook co-authored by Georgian and international experts remains unlisted.
- **EU Foreign Policy** relies on outdated sources and omits even basic references such as the official EU websites or up-to-date policy documents.
- **Foreign Policy Analysis** is taught without a solid theoretical introduction, though a Georgian-language textbook now exists and could be integrated to strengthen conceptual grounding.
- **Ethics and Values in International Relations** appears thematically eclectic and pedagogically fragmented. Foundational topics overlap with core IR theory, while other sessions combine ethical theories (e.g., Kantianism) with applied themes (e.g., drone warfare) in a way that lacks conceptual clarity. Topics like "Peacebuilding in a multipolar world" introduce tangential issues such as climate change, resulting in a lack of thematic focus and professional coherence.
- **Continental Leaders: Power Dynamics in the Modern World** is overly ambitious in scope. Expecting students to grasp complex diplomatic, economic, and military dimensions of multiple countries in single one-hour sessions is not pedagogically feasible. The breadth of content is disproportionate to the time and literature available.
- The **Master's Thesis** syllabus lacks explicit reference to the methodological elements crucial for high-quality academic work. Concepts such as research design, variable identification, and hypothesis formulation are not clearly outlined.
- **Human Rights** are not systematically covered across the curriculum. The topic appears only marginally in the Ethics and Values syllabus (in the context of sovereignty) and is absent from relevant modules such as International Organizations, despite its significance to contemporary diplomacy and security studies.
- The **China's Foreign Policy** course mentions the use of innovative teaching methods like "action-oriented learning," but the course content itself is insufficiently structured, making it difficult to evaluate its academic rigor or focus.

While the programme demonstrates a structurally sound and well-intentioned framework for course design, the current implementation shows uneven quality across the curriculum. Some syllabi lack theoretical coherence, others suffer from outdated or insufficient academic literature, and certain courses are overly broad for the time and resources allocated. These weaknesses risk undermining the intended alignment between course-level and programme-level learning outcomes and should be addressed to safeguard the programme's academic integrity and relevance.

Evidences/Indicators

- SER
- Educational Programme
- Interview results
- Webpage: <https://eta.edu.ge/>

Recommendations:

- Ensure all courses—particularly Georgia’s Foreign Policy, EU Foreign Policy, and Foreign Policy Analysis—include current, academically rigorous sources. Incorporate recently published textbooks and relevant institutional documents.
- It is recommended to revise and strengthen the course “*Ethics and Values in International Relations*” by ensuring clearer conceptual focus, avoiding overlap with general international relations theory, and addressing the thematic coherence and academic appropriateness of the selected topics.

Suggestions for the programme development

- It is suggested to introduce a dedicated course or substantively integrate human rights frameworks into relevant existing modules such as International Organizations and Ethics in IR.

Evaluation

Component	Complies with requirements	Substantially complies with requirements	Partially complies with requirements	Does not comply with requirements
1.5. Academic Course/Subject	☐	x	☐	☐

Compliance of the Programme with the Standard

1. Educational programme objectives, learning outcomes and their compliance with the programme	Complies with requirements	☐
	Substantially complies with requirements	x
	Partially complies with requirements	☐
	Does not comply with requirements	☐

2. Methodology and Organisation of Teaching, Adequacy of Evaluation of Programme Mastering

Prerequisites for admission to the programme, teaching-learning methods and student assessment consider the specificity of the study field, level requirements, student needs, and ensure the achievement of the objectives and expected learning outcomes of the programme.

2.1 Programme Admission Preconditions

The HEI has relevant, transparent, fair, public and accessible programme admission preconditions and procedures that ensure the engagement of individuals with relevant knowledge and skills in the programme to achieve learning outcomes.

Summary and Analysis of the Education Programme's Compliance with the Requirements of the Component of the Standard

The Master’s programme in International Relations and Diplomacy offers relevant, public and fair prerequisites for programme admission, grounded in fairness and academic integrity. All prerequisites are aligned with the intellectual and professional demands of the programme. The admission procedure is publicly available on the official Website of the Academy and is publicly available for interested individuals.

According to the procedure, the candidate must have a Bachelor’s degree or an equivalent degree to be eligible for the Master’s programme.

The admission procedure for the Master’s programme includes:

- Internal exam in the specialty;
- English language exam or international certificate: The candidate must take an English language exam or present an international certificate at the B2 level (TOEFEL, IELTS, ECL). If the candidate does not have a B2 level certificate (TOEFEL, ILTS, ECL), then they must take the English language exam STANAG 2/2/2, which is organized by the Academy.
- Specialty interview: This is also considered part of the external exam. The topics of the exam will be published on the Academy's website one month before the interview date. The candidates are required to select two topics from the list published in the Academy's website. These topics will form the basis of a formal presentation and discussion, which will allow the candidates to demonstrate their analytical skills.

Without passing the master's exam, the candidates will be enrolled in the programme in accordance with applicable legislation. According to the admission requirements, the Master's Programme in International Relations and Diplomacy, will accept 30 students (20 students on a tuition-free basis and 10 students on a paid basis). The candidates must be employees of the Ministry of Defense of Georgia, the security sector or other state structures and must hold Georgian citizenship.

Evidences/Indicators

- Educational Programme
- Website: www.eta.edu.ge
- Interview with QA
- Interview with the Head of the Programme
- Interview with vice-rector of the Academy

Recommendations:

- none

Suggestions for the Programme Development

- none

Evaluation

Component	Complies with requirements	Substantially complies with requirements	Partially complies with requirements	Does not comply with requirements
2.1 Programme Admission Preconditions	x	☐	☐	☐

2.2. The Development of Practical, Scientific/Research/Creative/Performing and Transferable Skills

Programme ensures the development of students' practical, scientific/research/creative/performing and transferable skills and/or their involvement in research projects, in accordance with the programme learning outcomes.

Summary and Analysis of the Education Programme's Compliance with the Requirements of the Component of the Standard

The Master's Programme in International Relations and Diplomacy ensures the development of students' scientific, research, creative, practical and transferable skills through a combination of coursework, interactive methods and participation in academic and professional projects. The programme aims to foster creativity and public speaking

skills through regular presentations and dynamic classroom engagements. Equally, it integrates the cultivation of essential soft skills—including articulate communication, collaborative teamwork, and strategic problem-solving—into its instructional framework, thereby ensuring the formation of well-rounded professionals.

Practical component of the programme is designed in the courses to achieve the learning outcomes of the programme. During the teaching and learning process different activities are used to strengthen the practical skills for the students such as group presentations, simulations, development of learning scenarios, active engagement. During the interviews, with the staff, the possibility to add the practical component to the course by visiting military producing factories. These site visits would offer students direct exposure to the defense industry, enabling them to better understand the technological, logistical, and strategic dimensions of military manufacturing. Such firsthand experiences would complement theoretical knowledge with real-world insights into the processes behind the development and production of defense systems.

The development of research competencies is a central component. Students are engaged in supervised Master's Thesis projects, which serve as a capstone to their academic training. Foundational courses such as Academic Writing for Master's Students and Research Methods and Design further enhance students' abilities to conduct rigorous academic research and to effectively communicate their findings.

In accordance with the Academy's broader strategic vision to create a research-oriented academic environment, students are encouraged and supported in the participation in research-related activities. These include involvement in academic conferences, collaborative research projects. They also have the possibility to attend the public lectures given by distinguished guests from both military or civil spheres. Such interactions provide a good platform for students to discuss issues connected to their sphere of interest, enrich their understanding of the world developments, refine their research capacities.

The establishment of the Academy's Scientific Research Centre in 2020 is the useful step for institutionalizing a culture of scholarly inquiry. The Center supports the academic activity of professors and scholars as well as students. Participation in academic conferences—both internal and inter-academy—as well as involvement in interdisciplinary projects, positions students at the nexus of theoretical exploration and empirical application.

The Scientific Research Center publishes three journals: "Works", "Military Works" and the international English-language journal "Defense and Science". All three journals are available in digital format and hosted on online platforms, enhancing their accessibility and scholarly reach.

In 2022-2023 academic year the Academy revised the Master's thesis defense process. Students are now required to demonstrate their scholarly engagement by publishing at least one article in a peer-reviewed journal and by participating in at least one academic conference. This requirement reflects the Academy's enduring commitment to academic excellence, intellectual rigor, and the meaningful integration of research into graduate education.

Evidences/Indicators

- Educational Programme
- Website: www.eta.edu.ge
- Course Syllabi
- Information about students' involvement in local and international activities N9
- Interview with QA
- Interview with the center representative
- Interview with students and alumni
- MA Thesis Projects

Recommendations:

- none

Suggestions for the Programme Development

- It would be highly beneficial to strengthen the practical component of the curriculum.

Evaluation

Component	Complies with requirements	Substantially complies with requirements	Partially complies with requirements	Does not comply with requirements
2.2.The Development of practical, scientific/research/creative/performing and transferable skills	x	☐	☐	☐

2.3. Teaching and Learning Methods

The programme is implemented by use student-oriented teaching and learning methods. Teaching and learning methods correspond to the level of education, course/subject content, learning outcomes, and ensure their achievement.

Summary and Analysis of the Education Programme's Compliance with the Requirements of the Component of the Standard

The NDA actively involves students in the internal quality assurance processes of the Master's programme in International Relations and Diplomacy. Student participation occurs in both formal and informal ways and spans planning, monitoring, evaluation, and improvement activities.

Students contribute through feedback mechanisms such as structured surveys and focus groups. These tools assess various aspects of programme delivery, including course content, teaching quality, library and IT services, scientific supervision, and infrastructure. Evaluation forms and questionnaires are pre-designed and standardized by the Quality Assurance Service. Survey results are systematically analysed and discussed at academic meetings where programme improvements are considered.

Moreover, students are represented in broader programme monitoring processes. Although the institution does not have a traditional self-governing student body, it operates a "speakership model". In this model, elected student speakers represent their cohorts and directly communicate their peers' feedback, concerns, and suggestions to the Academy's senior leadership, including the Rector and programme heads. This ensures a channel for student voice at decision-making levels, albeit in a less formalized structure compared to student senates.

Students also participate in the development of the Self-Evaluation Report and the preparation for external accreditation and authorisation procedures. Their involvement is facilitated through participation in working groups and consultation meetings, where students collaborate with faculty, administrative staff, and external stakeholders. The Academy organises regular meetings between students and senior leadership and encourages student input on curriculum development, instructional methods, and resource allocation. When issues are raised, follow-up actions are planned and implemented collaboratively with the Quality Assurance Department.

The programme complies with this standard. The mechanisms in place for student participation in quality assurance are functional and inclusive, although they rely on a speakership model rather than a formal student council. The range of feedback channels—from surveys to working group participation—ensures that students have a voice in programme evaluation and development. The commitment of senior leadership to consider and respond to student feedback enhances the responsiveness and transparency of the quality assurance system.

Evidences/Indicators

- Educational Programme
- Website: www.eta.edu.ge
- Course Syllabi
- Interview with QA
- Interview with the center representative

- Interview with students and alumni

Recommendations:

- none

Suggestions for the Programme Development

- none

Evaluation

Component	Complies with requirements	Substantially complies with requirements	Partially complies with requirements	Does not comply with requirements
2.3. Teaching and learning methods	x	☐	☐	☐

2.4. Student Evaluation

Student evaluation is conducted in accordance with the established procedures. It is transparent, reliable and complies with existing legislation.

Summary and Analysis of the Education Programme's Compliance with the Requirements of the Component of the Standard

The achievement of a Master's degree within the Master's programme is assessed in accordance with the evaluation system established by Order No. 3 of the Minister of Education and Science of Georgia, dated January 5, 2007, titled "The Rule for Calculating Credits in Higher Education Programmes." The Academy employs an evaluation system for learning outcomes that supports and enhances students' academic performance.

The Academy ensures the conduct of informational sessions for interested parties to promote transparency regarding assessment forms, components, and methods. Relevant information is also made available on the ILIAS/MOODLE learning platform.

The learning outcomes evaluation system takes into account the specifics of the study course and includes adequate assessment forms, methods, which it is determined to what extent students have achieved the learning outcomes envisaged by the components of the educational programme.

Student knowledge is evaluated using a 100 - point grading system. The assessment structure includes both intermediate and final evaluations, the sum of which constitutes the overall final grade. Each assessment form and component are assigned a specific weight within the total score of 100 points. Detailed descriptions of assessment components, methods, and criteria are outlined in the syllabi of each educational programme.

A student is eligible to sit for the final examination only if they have accumulated a minimum of 51 points from the combined maximum possible scores of the intermediate assessments and the final examination. In this Master's degree programmes, the minimum threshold of competence for both intermediate and final assessments—as well as for the individual components of the intermediate assessment—is set at 51%. To earn academic credit, the student must obtain at least 51 points out of a maximum of 100. The grading system provides for five categories of positive evaluation:

- (A) Excellent – assessment points of 91-100 points;
- (B) Very good – maximum assessment points of 81-90 points
- (C) Good – maximum assessment points of 71-80 points;

- d) (D) Satisfactory – maximum assessment points of 61-70 points;
- e) (E) Sufficient – maximum assessment points of 51–60 points;

Two categories of negative evaluation are also defined:

- (FX) Fail – 41–50 points, indicating that the student requires additional work and is permitted to retake the examination once within five days of the announcement of final exam results
- (F) Fail – 40 points or below, indicating failure. In such cases, the Academic Council may consider termination of the student's enrollment.

The master's thesis is a research document undertaken by the master's student as part of the master's programme. It serves as a comprehensive showcase of the student's research skills, demonstrating his/her capacity to independently conduct research, formulate, structure, publicly present, and defend research. The master's thesis is individually undertaken by the Master's student, with due consideration of the guidance provided by the supervisor of the master's thesis. The master's student chooses a master's thesis topic based on his research interest.

The Master's thesis is subject to a one-time final evaluation. This includes:

- Supervisor's assessment – 20 points
- Reviewer's assessment – 30 points
- Public defense evaluation – 50 points

Prior to defending the Master's thesis, the student must fulfill the following academic requirements:

- Prepare and publish at least one scholarly article in a peer-reviewed journal;
- Participate in at least one academic conference.

Students are able to appeal assessment results and they confirmed to the team that the process is made known to them in advance. According to the Academy's Regulation if a student believes that their knowledge was not objectively evaluated within the framework of a specific component of the discipline or the defense of their qualification paper, or if they believe that there was an objective factor that led to a negative evaluation, they can submit a substantiated statement to the dean of the faculty. The appeal will be considered by a temporary commission created by the dean of the faculty. The dean of the school may invite a specialist to serve as a member of the commission. The commission will then decide to approve or reject the appeal. Interview results confirm that students are familiar with the existing appeal mechanism and find it fair, transparent, and objective.

The University has established the requirements of academic style and internal regulations and mechanisms for academic integrity, plagiarism prevention, detection, and response, all of which are utilised in the student assessment process. General provisions regarding plagiarism are included in each syllabus of study courses. More detailed information about plagiarism is covered in "Rules for Detecting and Responding to Plagiarism at the David Agmashenebeli Georgian National Defence Academy," issued by the Legal Entity of Public Law (LEPL).

Evidences/Indicators

- Instructions for conducting and evaluating examinations at the level of academic higher education;
- Educational programme;
- Syllabus of the study course;
- Statute of the Academy;
- Self-evaluation report;
- Code of ethics;
- Academy academic style guide;
- Interview results.

Recommendations:

- none

Suggestions for the programme development

- none

Evaluation

Component	Complies with requirements	Substantially complies with requirements	Partially complies with requirements	Does not comply with requirements
2.4. Student evaluation	x	☐	☐	☐

Compliance with the programme standards

2. Methodology and Organisation of Teaching, Adequacy of Evaluation of Programme Mastering	Complies with requirements	x
	Substantially complies with requirements	☐
	Partly complies with requirements	☐
	Does not comply with requirements	☐

3. Student Achievements, Individual Work with Them

The programme ensures the creation of a student-centered environment by providing students with relevant services; promotes maximum student awareness, implements a variety of activities and facilitates student involvement in local and/or international projects; proper quality of scientific guidance is provided for master's and doctoral students.

3.1 Student Consulting and Support Services

Students receive consultation and support regarding the planning of learning process, improvement of academic achievement, and career development from the people involved in the programme and/or structural units of the HEI. A student has an opportunity to have a diverse learning process and receive relevant information and recommendations from those involved in the programme.

Summary and Analysis of the Education Programme's Compliance with the Requirements of the Component of the Standard

Having considered the Academy's documentation and interview results, the expert panel finds that the programme has the necessary mechanisms for planning the learning process for students, improving academic achievements, providing appropriate counselling on employment, and supporting career development. The expert panel observed that overall, students and alumni express satisfaction with the student services and counselling provided by Academy. Interview findings from students and alumni of the programme confirm that students receive appropriate and efficient consultation and support from academic, invited, and administrative personnel. Information about the consultation hours of academic and invited personnel is provided to students in advance.

The Academy provides students with a range of extracurricular opportunities such as conferences, projects, and training, both locally and internationally. Extracurricular activities for the programme include public and field lectures, webinars, tours and meetings with field specialists, etc. Information about these activities is shared with students and alumni through various channels, including corporate email, Academy website, as well as through the Academy's official Facebook page.

The employment of military students enrolled in the Master's programme is fully supported (100%) by the Ministry of Defence of Georgia. Responsibility for the career development of civilian students lies with the respective institutions where they are already employed. The overall employment rate is nearly 100%.

The Academy utilizes a software system to manage and support the educational process. This system allows students to access course materials, choose study courses, and communicate with academic/invited staff. The integration of technology seems comprehensive and provides students with easy access to essential resources and communication channels. The utilization of the software system enhances students' autonomy in course selection and assessment tracking, enabling them to monitor their progress and seek assistance as needed.

The Academy actively collaborates with foreign military educational institutions. To this end, various events are held at the Academy, including sports, artistic, and educational activities. The Academy offers its cadets public lectures and seminars, which involve not only Georgian but also high-ranking foreign military and civilian representatives. Notably, the Academy maintains international contacts and has intensive cooperation with countries through exchange programmes, internships, and courses in both academic and scientific fields. These countries include the United States, Germany, Italy, France, Turkey, and others.

The Academy has a Research Center that supports informing, engaging, and involving cadets in scientific and research activities. Both local and international student conferences are held at the Academy, and students actively participate in these conferences. To strengthen the scientific-research component, starting from the 2022–2023 academic year, the Academy established a requirement for all master's programmes that, prior to defending their thesis, students must have published at least one article in a peer-reviewed journal and participated in at least one scientific conference.

The institution has implemented mechanisms to receive and analyse feedback from students and alumni. This involves conducting various surveys, including evaluations of study courses, lecturers, acquired knowledge, and student satisfaction with the learning experience and student support services. Interview results confirmed that Academy considers their feedback. The involvement of students and alumni in the self-evaluation process was also ensured, as confirmed during the site visit.

Overall, the educational programme appears to be compliant with the requirements of standard 3.1. The Academy has established a comprehensive system of support services, consultation mechanisms, and technological infrastructure to facilitate students' learning, academic achievement, and career development. Moreover, the incorporation of feedback mechanisms and continuous improvement efforts suggest a commitment to enhancing the quality of support services provided to students.

Evidences/Indicators

- Educational programme;
- Course syllabi;
- Self-assessment report;
- Memoranda with foreign HEIs;
- Document on student involvement in local and international activities;
- Planned and implemented consulting services;
- Student database;
- Interview results.

Recommendations:

- none

Suggestions for the programme development

- none

Evaluation

Component	Complies with requirements	Substantially complies with requirements	Partially complies with requirements	Does not comply with requirements
3.1 Student Consulting and Support Services	x	☐	☐	☐

3.2. Master's and Doctoral Student Supervision

- A scientific supervisor provides proper support to master's and doctoral students to perform the scientific-research component successfully.
- Within master's and doctoral programmes, ration of students and supervisors enables to perform scientific supervision properly.

Summary and Analysis of the Education Programme's Compliance with the Requirements of the Component of the Standard

The Academy has developed a comprehensive guideline for master's theses, which outlines the procedures for appointing, replacing, and defining the rights and responsibilities of supervisors and, where applicable, co-supervisors. The appointment of a supervisor or co-supervisor is approved by the Master's Council. In cases where a co-supervisor is assigned, the supervisor and co-supervisor jointly prepare recommendations, conclusions, and a unified evaluation of the thesis.

The collaboration between the supervisor/co-supervisor and the student takes place both in person and remotely. The supervisor provides guidance throughout the research process, including topic selection, research planning, study design, research methodology, development of the bibliography, and more. In cooperation with other structural units of the Academy, the supervisor also advises students on matters such as participation in local and international scientific events. In addition, students receive support from the Library and the Research Center. These units organize informational sessions on the use of academic databases and the publication of scientific articles.

The ratio of thesis supervisors to students in master's programmes is specified in the individual workload plans for the academic staff involved in the programme. This ratio is also outlined in the methodology used for determining the required number of personnel.

Evidences/Indicators

- Educational programme;
- Self-assessment report;
- Methodology for determining the number of supervisors and master's students per programme;
- Master's degree regulations;
- Interview results;
- Official website of the Academy.

Recommendations:

- none

Suggestions for the programme development

- none

Evaluation

Component	Complies with requirements	Substantially complies with requirements	Partially complies with requirements	Does not comply with requirements
3.2. Master's and Doctoral Students Supervision	x	☐	☐	☐

Compliance with the programme standards

3. Students Achievements, Individual Work with them	Complies with requirements	x
	Substantially complies with requirements	☐
	Partly complies with requirements	☐
	Does not comply with requirements	☐

4. Providing Teaching Resources

Human, material, information and financial resources of educational programme ensure sustainable, stable, efficient and effective functioning of the programme and the achievement of the defined objectives.

4.1 Human Resources

- Programme staff consists of qualified persons, who have necessary competences in order to help students to achieve the programme learning outcomes.
- The number and workload of programme academic/scientific and invited staff ensures the sustainable running of the educational process and also, proper execution of their research/creative/performance activities and other assigned duties. Quantitative indicators related to academic/scientific/invited staff ensure programme sustainability.
- The Head of the Programme possesses necessary knowledge and experience required for programme elaboration, and also the appropriate competences in the field of study of the programme. He/she is personally involved in programme implementation.
- Programme students are provided with an adequate number of administrative and support staff of appropriate competence.

Summary and Analysis of the Education Programme's Compliance with the Requirements of the Component of the Standard

According to the Self-Evaluation Report (SER), staff categories for the International Relations and Diplomacy MA educational programme, established in January 2025, include a Head of Direction, Professor, Associate Professor, and Assistant Professor. Programme staff are engaged in line with legislation and internal Academy regulations, with pre-contracts signed accordingly. A semester-based workload model is applied, covering teaching, research, and student counselling. The Academy monitors staff workloads across all institutions and requires academic staff to be affiliated with the Academy to ensure programme sustainability. Additionally, students are supported by an adequate number of qualified administrative and support staff, based on a formal staffing methodology.

The data presented by SER is confirmed by the documentation submitted by the HEI. According to Appendix 1 (Quantitative data of the educational programme), 23 personnel are involved in the implementation of the programme (11 academic, 8 invited, 4 scientific). The number of personnel is regulated by the rule for determining the number of academic, scientific and invited personnel. The number of personnel involved in the programme is in full compliance with the target benchmarks of the document. The number of administrative staff (6) also complies with the presented documents and ensure students' support. Qualification of administrative and support staff is consistent with their functions.

According to the same document, all academic personnel have an affiliation obligation. The individual semester workload scheme for academic staff (sample) defines in detail both teaching-related obligations as well as

consultancy and scientific responsibilities. Staff workload is monitored and updated each semester, in line with HEI's regulations. Both academic and invited staff provide regular student consultations.

Academic staff are selected through a competitive process. The competition process takes into account both academic degree and scientific activities, as well as practical experience in the defense sector. The HEI presented documentation regarding the academic competition related to another educational programme.

The MA educational programme "International Relations and Diplomacy" presented for accreditation is a new programme. The HEI presented multiple documents (documentation for Conducting Competition and Selecting Academic Personnel, Employment Contracts, Academic Workload Data and Consultation Records of Personnel, Personnel Statistical Data for 2016-2023, Academy Student survey results) from other MA educational programmes of the Military Academy. The presented documentation creates an understanding of the processes that will be implemented after the launch of the presented educational programme.

The personal files of academic, invited and scientific personnel confirm their academic, scientific and practical experience. Most of the personnel have published scientific articles in both national and international academic publications, and some of them have published books and textbooks. The personnel participate in national and international conferences, attend national and international trainings, some of them are involved in research projects. Some personnel have practical experience in conducting national foreign policy. The qualification of academic persons and invited staff or have relevant knowledge, experience and competencies necessary to help students achieve programme learning outcomes. The balance between academic and invited staff ensures the programme sustainability. The number of future Master's students corresponds to the workload of their supervisors.

The HEI operates a scientific research center. Information about the Scientific Research Center is available on the Military Academy's website (mission and action plan, center activities, scientific articles and conference proceedings, textbooks and monographs). 4 scientific personnel are involved in programme implementation. The head of the programme, who is called the head of the department in the academy, has the necessary knowledge (academic degree) and experience (academic, as well as practical) for the development of the programme according to the level of the programme, and his competence is confirmed by relevant documents. The data in the documents submitted by the HEI was confirmed by accreditation experts during their visit to the academy.

It is noteworthy to mention, that the Military Academy employs individuals with experience serving as military attachés. Given the unique profile of the Academy and the specific nature of the Master's educational programme in International Relations and Diplomacy, the involvement of personnel with such professional backgrounds is highly desirable. Their practical experience will significantly enhance the relevance and quality of the programme.

It is suggested to invite academic/invited personnel with experience in Military Diplomacy to contribute to the implementation of the MA educational programme "International Relations and Diplomacy".

Number of the staff involved in the programme (including academic, scientific, and invited staff)	Number of Programme Staff	Including the staff with sectoral expertise⁶	Including the staff holding PhD degree in the sectoral direction⁷	Among them, the affiliated staff
Total number of academic staff				
- Professor	4	4	2	4
- Associate Professor	5	5	4	5
- Assistant-Professor	2	2	0	2
- Assistant	0	-	-	-

⁶ Staff implementing the relevant components of the main field of study

⁷ Staff with relevant doctoral degrees implementing the components of the main field of study

Visiting Staff	8	8	4	–
Scientific Staff	4	4	3	–

Evidences/Indicators

- SER
- Quantitative data of the educational programme (Appendix 1)
- List of personnel involved in programme implementation (Appendix 2)
- The rule for determining the number of academic, scientific and invited personnel
- The individual semester workload scheme for academic personnel (sample)
- Consultation Schedules
- Samples of Contracts
- Sample Materials for the competition of academic personnel
- Functions and personal files of the head of the programme
- Job description document for administrative and support staff.
- The HEI's Research Policy
- Functional duties of the scientific research center of the National Defense Academy of Georgia
- Reports of academic staff's scientific-research activities
- Resolution № MOD 7 23 00010188
- Personal files of the staff
- Interview results
- Webpage: <https://eta.edu.ge/>

Recommendations:

- none

Suggestions for Programme Development

- It is suggested to invite academic/invited personnel with experience in Military Diplomacy to contribute to the implementation of the MA educational programme "International Relations and Diplomacy".

Evaluation

Component	Complies with requirements	Substantially complies with requirements	Partially complies with requirements	Does not comply with requirements
4.1 Human Resources	x	☐	☐	☐

4.2 Qualification of Supervisors of Master's and Doctoral Students

The Master's and Doctoral students have qualified supervisor/supervisors and, if necessary, co-supervisor/co-supervisors who have relevant scientific-research experience in the field of research.

Summary and Analysis of the Education Programme's Compliance with the Requirements of the Component of the Standard

The NDA has developed clear qualification requirements for supervisors and co-supervisors of Master's theses. Supervisors must possess relevant academic qualifications (typically a PhD) and demonstrable research experience in the field of International Relations and Diplomacy. Their recent publications in peer-reviewed international journals and participation in academic conferences validate their active engagement with current research topics relevant to thesis subjects.

The appointment and evaluation of thesis supervisors follow a formalised procedure governed by internal regulatory documents. Supervisors are appointed by the Master's Council and their responsibilities include guiding the student in topic selection, methodology design, bibliography development, and overall research management. Supervisors provide continuous feedback and submit an evaluation report upon thesis completion. Where necessary, co-supervisors may be assigned with similarly rigorous qualification expectations.

Consultations between students and supervisors are structured into the curriculum. Each Master's thesis carries 30 ECTS credits, with 28 contact hours dedicated to supervision—averaging 2 hours per week. Supervisors are expected to support student integration into the scientific community through conference participation and publication of findings.

Number of supervisors of Master's/Doctoral theses	Thesis supervisors	Including the supervisors holding PhD degree in the sectoral direction	Among them, the affiliated staff
Number of supervisors of Master's/Doctoral thesis			
- Professor	3	3	2
- Associate Professor	5	5	4
- Assistant-Professor	2	2	2
Visiting personnel	1	1	0
Scientific Staff	1	1	1

Evidences/Indicators

- SER
- Quantitative data of the educational programme
- List of personnel involved in programme implementation
- Personal files of the staff
- Interview results

Recommendations:

- none

Suggestions for the programme development

- none

Evaluation

Component	Complies with requirements	Substantially complies with requirements	Partially complies with requirements	Does not comply with requirements
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4.2 Qualification of Supervisors of Master's and Doctoral Students	x	☐	☐	☐
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4.3 Professional Development of Academic, Scientific and Invited Staff

- The HEI conducts the evaluation of programme staff and analyses evaluation results on a regular basis.
- The HEI fosters professional development of the academic, scientific and invited staff. Moreover, it fosters their scientific and research work.

Summary and Analysis of the Education Programme's Compliance with the Requirements of the Component of the Standard

The MA educational programme "International Relations and Diplomacy" presented for accreditation is a new programme, but there are 3 other MA programmes in the Academy and the accreditation team reviewed the established practices of professional development for other master's programmes. The National Defense Academy website contains documents: Rules for Evaluation of Educational and Scientific Research Work (describes evaluation principles, criteria and frequency) and Rules for Planning, Implementation and Evaluation of Scientific Research Component (describes evaluation and support mechanisms). During the visit to the Military Academy, the personnel involved in the MA educational programme and the Quality Assurance Department provided us with information that the Higher Education Institution regularly evaluates academic and invited personnel and analyses the results. Evaluations are conducted through multiple methods.

The Quality Assurance Department assesses the technical quality of lectures delivered by academic and invited staff. Peer evaluation, including lecture observation, is also a standard practice. In addition, personnel are evaluated using structured assessment and self-assessment questionnaires covering teaching and research activities (at the end of each semester). Based on the outcomes of evaluation, personnel may receive warnings or encouragement, and both material and non-material incentives are employed.

The Military Academy administration has confirmed that the Academy has established mechanisms to promote academic and research engagement, including support for participation in international conferences, publication in national and international journals, and involvement in international research projects. The HEI collaborates with the Defence Education Enhancement Programme (DEEP) and with the Bureau of International Language Coordination (BILC) of NATO (<https://eta.edu.ge/en/page/66/international-organisations>). Various types of activities supporting professional development of personnel are carried out within both organisations. The Defense Academy has established connections with various universities both within the framework of the Erasmus+ programme and through bilateral cooperation. After launching the master's programme, academic and invited staff will have diverse opportunities and support from the Military Academy for professional development.

Evidences/Indicators

- SER
- Personal files of the staff
- Lists of conferences, proceedings, trainings
- HEI's research Policy
- HEI's Memorandums
- Georgia DEEP 2022 Annual Review Areas of Cooperation
- Staff and Course Evaluations by MA Students (junkers)
- Interview results.
- Webpage: <https://eta.edu.ge/>

Recommendations:

- none

Suggestions for the programme development

- none

Evaluation

Component	Complies with requirements	Substantially complies with requirements	Partially complies with requirements	Does not comply with requirements
4.3 Professional development of academic, scientific and invited staff	x	☐	☐	☐

4.4. Material Resources

Programme is provided by necessary infrastructure, information resources relevant to the field of study and technical equipment required for achieving programme learning outcomes.

Summary and Analysis of the Education Programme's Compliance with the Requirements of the Component of the Standard

The Master's programme in International Relations and Diplomacy at the NDA is supported by a robust and well-maintained infrastructure aligned with the academic and research needs of the programme. Material resources include physical infrastructure, information and communication technology, a digital and physical library, and access to international academic databases.

The Academy's library houses all core texts listed in the syllabi. It is updated regularly to reflect advances in the field and to accommodate new courses and research areas. The physical holdings are supplemented by digital resources, including access to internationally recognized electronic databases, such as JSTOR and SpringerLink. These resources are essential for student engagement with contemporary academic literature and are freely accessible to all enrolled students and academic staff.

The ICT infrastructure includes modern classrooms equipped with multimedia teaching tools and a well-functioning e-learning platform (ILIAS), which supports hybrid and distance learning formats. Computer labs are available and maintained to a high technical standard. The Examination Centre is fitted with modern technology to support secure, computer-based testing.

Technical equipment (e.g., laptops, projectors, smart boards) is sufficient in quantity and distributed to ensure equitable access. A detailed inventory management system ensures that equipment is regularly updated or replaced. Students and staff are trained in the use of these digital tools and platforms, and support is available for troubleshooting.

Students are routinely informed about the availability of learning resources and receive orientation sessions to familiarize themselves with how to use library services, electronic platforms, and online databases. Materials and resources necessary for e-learning and distance education are available and integrated into teaching practices.

The programme fully complies with this standard. The NDA has established an impressive infrastructure that supports diverse teaching and learning activities. Access to high-quality international academic resources enhances the programme's research capacity and global outlook. The proactive updating of materials and the integration of digital platforms into regular teaching demonstrate a modern, student-oriented academic environment. The

breadth of available resources and their systematic use in teaching and assessment significantly contribute to achieving the programme's learning outcomes.

Evidences/Indicators

- SER
- Site visit
- Interview results.
- Webpage: <https://eta.edu.ge/>

Recommendations:

- none

Suggestions for the programme development

- none

Evaluation

Component	Complies with requirements	Substantially complies with requirements	Partially complies with requirements	Does not comply with requirements
4.4 Material Resources	x	☐	☐	☐

4.5 Programme/Faculty/School Budget and Programme Financial Sustainability

The allocation of financial resources stipulated in the programme/faculty/school budget is economically feasible and corresponds to the programme needs.

Summary and Analysis of the Education Programme's Compliance with the Requirements of the Component of the Standard

The National Defence Academy operates as a legal entity under public law. In accordance with the Law of Georgia on the State Budget, the Academy functions as a sub-programme under the Ministry of Defence of Georgia. Its primary source of funding is the annual appropriations allocated through the state budget. In addition to these core funds, the Academy is legally permitted to receive supplementary financial resources from targeted budgetary allocations, grant income, contractual services, donations, and other lawful revenue streams.

The financial planning for the International Relations and Diplomacy programme is conducted on a biennial basis. The allocation of funds is stable and structured to support both the ongoing operation and long-term sustainability of the programme. The programme's budget comprehensively covers salaries for academic, administrative, and support staff, funding for professional development initiatives, and support for research activities.

Moreover, the budget accounts for expenditures related to both short-term and long-term academic exchange programmes, acquisition of educational materials, technological and laboratory equipment, library development and maintenance, scholarships, social and educational support programmes, medical services for students and staff, and operational costs associated with infrastructure maintenance and utilities. It also includes provisions for transportation services, participation in national and international conferences and workshops, and the acquisition of tangible assets and equipment.

To facilitate research activities, the Academy ensures that financial resources are equitably accessible to all eligible individuals. Dedicated funding is allocated for scientific research, including costs associated with organizing academic conferences, publishing textbooks authored by Academy faculty, staff qualification enhancement, and professional travel.

Each academic programme within the Academy is supported by an individually developed budget that aligns with the overall institutional financial plan. Following this standardized approach, a detailed budget has been prepared for the Master's Programme in International Relations and Diplomacy. This programme-specific budget outlines both recurrent and one-time funding sources, aligning financial resources with the programme's academic objectives and capacity. The budget is collaboratively developed by the programme director, academic staff, the head of the financial service, and other relevant stakeholders. The financial resources allocated are realistic, sufficient, and enable the delivery of a high-quality educational experience for the defined student cohort.

Evidences/Indicators

- SER
- National Defence Academy Budget;
- National Defence Academy Specific Budget Allocations;
- Interview Results.

Recommendations:

- none

Suggestions for the programme development

- none

Evaluation

Component	Complies with requirements	Substantially complies with requirements	Partially complies with requirements	Does not comply with requirements
4.5. Programme/Faculty/School Budget and Programme Financial Sustainability	x	☐	☐	☐

Compliance with the programme standard

4. Providing Teaching Resources	Complies with requirements	x
	Substantially complies with requirements	☐
	Partly complies with requirements	☐
	Does not comply with requirements	☐

5. Teaching Quality Enhancement Opportunities

In order to enhance teaching quality, programme utilises internal and external quality assurance services and also, periodically conducts programme monitoring and programme review. Relevant data is collected, analysed and utilized for informed decision making and programme development.

5.1 Internal Quality Evaluation

Programme staff collaborates with internal quality assurance department(s)/staff available at the HEI when planning the process of programme quality assurance, developing assessment instruments, and implementing assessment process. Programme staff utilizes quality assurance results for programme improvement.

Summary and Analysis of the Education Programme's Compliance with the Requirements of the Component of the Standard

The Quality Assurance Service of the David Agmashenebeli Georgian National Defence Academy plays an active and integral role in the development of academic programmes. This process is characterized by its collaborative nature, involving a wide range of stakeholders, including programme implementers, programme heads, administrative personnel, current students, and alumni. The nature of programme creation was confirmed through both the analysis of submitted documentation and the findings of interviews conducted during the accreditation process.

The Quality Assurance Service conducts ongoing research and analysis, the results of which are documented and attached as supporting evidence. Importantly, the findings from these evaluations are systematically utilized to inform and enhance programme quality. Stakeholders involved in the delivery and management of the programme actively incorporate the outcomes of quality assessments into their decision-making processes.

The activities of the Quality Assurance Service are governed by the *Law of Georgia on Higher Education*, national regulations on authorization and accreditation, ministerial directives issued by the Ministry of Defence of Georgia, the Academy's Charter, and other relevant legal and institutional documents. One of the primary tools used in the quality assurance process is the electronic stakeholder survey. These surveys enable students and programme staff to evaluate various components of the programme, including its implementation and the performance of teaching personnel.

The documentation reviewed demonstrates that the internal quality assurance mechanisms in place are relevant, transparent, and consistently applied. Interviews confirmed that programme personnel collaborate closely with the Quality Assurance Service in planning the quality evaluation process, developing assessment instruments, and conducting the evaluations.

The quality assurance framework of the Academy is fully aligned with the *PDCA (Plan–Do–Check–Act)* cycle, which underpins the institution's continuous improvement approach. The *Quality Manual* developed by the Quality Assurance Service is widely utilized across the institution and operationalizes this cycle as follows:

1. **Plan** – The Quality Assurance Service designs programme improvement activities, defines evaluation procedures, establishes assessment criteria, and sets timelines for implementation.
2. **Do** – The institution employs both direct and indirect methods of evaluation. Stakeholder feedback is actively collected and analysed to inform programme enhancements. This process was evidenced by submitted documentation and reinforced through interviews.
3. **Check** – The Academy has established clear criteria, procedures, and schedules for reviewing results, as well as formal mechanisms for discussing evaluation outcomes.
4. **Act** – At this stage, the Quality Assurance Service analyses the data obtained during evaluations, formulates conclusions, and initiates necessary follow-up actions.

Evidence from both documentation and interviews confirms that, following the analysis of survey results, concrete corrective measures are identified and implementation deadlines are set. The Academy ensures that all stages of the PDCA cycle are executed thoroughly—from planning to final response. All evaluation-related processes are documented using standardized forms, reflecting the institution's commitment to evidence-based practice.

Furthermore, it was confirmed through interviews that academic, administrative, and support staff were actively involved in the preparation of the programme's self-evaluation report, demonstrating a holistic and inclusive approach to internal quality assurance.

Evidences/Indicators

- Quality Assurance Manual;

- Results of internal quality assessments;
- Survey results;
- Meeting minutes;
- Quality Assurance Service guidance documents;
- Interviews conducted.

Recommendations:

- none

Suggestions for the programme development

- none

Evaluation

Component	Complies with requirements	Substantially complies with requirements	Partially complies with requirements	Does not comply with requirements
5.1 Internal quality evaluation	x	☐	☐	☐

5.2 External Quality Evaluation

Programme utilises the results of external quality assurance on a regular basis.

Summary and Analysis of the Education Programme's Compliance with the Requirements of the Component of the Standard

The National Defence Academy integrates external assessment tools into the development and accreditation processes of its educational programmes. In particular, the Academy collaborates with the Legal Entity of Public Law (LEPL) – National Center for Educational Quality Enhancement to ensure compliance with national standards and best practices.

Prior to programme accreditation, the Academy successfully underwent the institutional authorization process. As part of this procedure, the authorization expert panel issued a set of recommendations and advisory notes. In response, the Academy promptly initiated targeted improvements in the identified areas immediately following the publication of the authorization decision. A key component of this response was the implementation of a comprehensive SWOT analysis to evaluate internal strengths, weaknesses, external opportunities, and potential threats. This evaluative process supports the institution's commitment to continuous improvement and is aligned with the PDCA (Plan–Do–Check–Act) quality assurance model.

Beyond formal accreditation, the Academy ensures the inclusion of external experts in the programme evaluation process. These experts are not affiliated with the programme under review and are free from any conflicts of interest, thereby maintaining objectivity and impartiality. They possess the necessary sectoral expertise to provide informed and constructive feedback. The findings of the external evaluation were submitted as supplementary documentation during the on-site accreditation visit, further demonstrating the Academy's commitment to transparency and quality assurance.

By actively engaging in both national quality assurance processes and independent expert evaluations, the National Defence Academy reinforces the credibility, relevance, and continuous enhancement of its higher education programmes.

Evidences/Indicators

- External evaluator's conclusions;
- Quality Assurance Manual;
- Interviews conducted.

Recommendations:

- none

Suggestions for the programme development

- none

Evaluation

Component	Complies with requirements	Substantially complies with requirements	Partially complies with requirements	Does not comply with requirements
5.2. External Quality Evaluation	x	☐	☐	☐

5.3 Programme Monitoring and Periodic Review

Programme monitoring and periodic evaluation is conducted with the involvement of academic, scientific, invited, administrative, supporting staff, students, graduates, employers and other stakeholders through systematic data collection, study and analysis. Evaluation results are applied for the programme improvement.

Summary and Analysis of the Education Programme's Compliance with the Requirements of the Component of the Standard

In line with the established practice at the David Agmashenebeli Georgian National Defence Academy, educational programmes are subject to systematic monitoring and periodic evaluation. This process is conducted with the active involvement of various stakeholders, including invited academic staff, students, graduates, and other relevant parties. Programme evaluation is based on the collection, processing, and analysis of data gathered through multiple channels and serves the continuous improvement of academic offerings.

As outlined in the assessment of Substandard 5.1, programme evaluation is conducted using a range of indicators. These include collegial peer review, mutual class observation, systematic monitoring, stakeholder surveys, programme content analysis, and the tracking of student academic performance. The Academy's Quality Assurance Service plays a central role in this process, reviewing the quality monitoring mechanisms annually and introducing new or more effective tools when necessary.

The development and revision of training courses are carried out in consultation with students, academic staff, graduates, and employers. These stakeholders contribute to programme evaluation through both quantitative and qualitative research methods. The findings are analysed and discussed in collaborative settings, such as workshops, after which concrete improvement measures are proposed. Feedback and action plans are subsequently submitted to the Quality Assurance Service for further consideration and implementation.

Standardized questionnaire forms are pre-developed to assess various components of the academic environment. These include evaluations of academic and invited staff, instructors, individual courses, the overall programme, and support services such as library facilities, academic advising, scientific research supervision, and cafeteria operations. The Quality Assurance Service administers a broad range of surveys, targeting graduates (regarding academic experience and career development), employers (to gauge satisfaction with programme outcomes), and participants in student exchange programmes. Additional surveys address institutional matters such as organizational climate and participation in social, cultural, economic, and environmental initiatives.

The Academy also conducts regular benchmarking of its academic programmes against similar offerings at national and international higher education institutions. This comparative analysis is carried out by programme implementers, heads of academic directions, and the Head of the Baccalaureate Programme, who is himself a graduate of the Academy and plays a significant role in guiding programme enhancements.

Personnel evaluation is another integral component of the Academy's quality assurance system. Civilian personnel are assessed annually in accordance with the *Civil Personnel Evaluation Manual*, which outlines the methods and procedures governing their evaluation. These evaluations are based on assigned roles and responsibilities. Military personnel are assessed in accordance with guidelines approved by the Minister of Defence of Georgia. Furthermore, staff performance is evaluated with regard to their educational and scientific research activities, ensuring a comprehensive and structured approach to staff development and accountability.

Evidences/Indicators

- Results of monitoring and periodic evaluation of the adjacent programme;
- Mutual attendance and classroom work assessment policy;
- Lecture observation form/results;
- Activities carried out to evaluate the training course;
- Results of the stakeholder survey;
- Interviews conducted.

Recommendations:

- none

Suggestions for the programme development

- none

Component	Complies with requirements	Substantially complies with requirements	Partially complies with requirements	Does not comply with requirements
5.3. Programme monitoring and periodic review	x	☐	☐	☐

Compliance with the programme standards

5. Teaching Quality Enhancement Opportunities	Complies with requirements	x
	Substantially complies with requirements	☐
	Partially complies with requirements	☐
	Does not comply with requirements	☐

Attached documentation (if applicable):

Name of the Higher Education Institution: David Agmashenebeli Georgian National Defence Academy

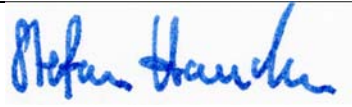
Name of Higher Education Programme, Level: International Relations and Diplomacy, Master

Compliance with the Programme Standards

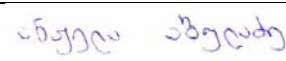
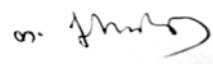
Evaluation Standards	Complies with requirements	Substantially complies with requirements	Partially complies with requirements	Does not comply with requirements
1. Education Programme Objectives, Learning Outcomes and their Compliance with the Programme	☐	x	☐	☐
2. Teaching Methodology and Organisation, Adequacy Evaluation of Programme Mastering	x	☐	☐	☐
3. Student Achievements, Individual Work with them	x	☐	☐	☐
4. Providing Teaching Resources	x	☐	☐	☐
5. Teaching Quality Enhancement Opportunities	x	☐	☐	☐

Signatures:

Chair of Accreditation Expert Panel

Handke, Stefan	
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Accreditation Expert Panel Members

Abdaladze, Gvantsa	
Abuladze, Anzhela	
Karosanidze, Tinatin	
Patariaia, Nino	