# THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE EUROPEAN STANDARDS AND GUIDELINES FOR INTERNAL QUALITY ASSURANCE WITHIN „HENRI COANDĂ" AIR FORCE ACADEMY

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*Abstract: A review of implementation of the European standards and guidelines for internal quality assurance within "Henri Coandă" Air Force Academy is presented. The Code of education quality assurance put in practice a system of quality assurance in the field of education, which is embedded in the academy's strategic management system. This system is a complex structure of academic strategies and policies, procedures, skills and responsibilities. "Henri Coandă" Air Force Academy is engaged in an ample process of upgrading its educational quality by applying the recommendations and requirements regarding to the status of the higher education institutions, including the quality of the educational processes, by assuming accountability in terms of achieving the standards, the references standards and the performance indicators developed by ARACIS and EUA.*

*Keywords: higher education, educational process, quality assurance, European standards and guidelines, management system, control, report, regulations, students, teaching staff, assessment, learning, resources, research, information*

## 1. INTRODUCTION

"Henri Coandă" Air Force Academy (AFAHC) is a military institution of higher education part of the national education system. The Code of quality assurance is the framework document that describes the scope of the quality management system, the documented procedures established for the system and the interaction between the processes of the quality management system, in order to verify their effectiveness. Code of quality assurance is used both by the Academy's leadership and the teaching staff in order to conduct current educational activities, internal audits activities and management reviews of the quality management system.

"Henri Coandă" Air Force Academy is engaged in an ample process of upgrading its educational quality standards by applying the principles of total quality management, which is illustrated by our motto: "Nostrum nomen rerum est mensura nostra!" The key quality assurance and enhancement procedures benefit from the participation of external peer reviewers. The international institutional evaluation of "Henri Coandă" Air Force Academy carried out by European University Association (EUA), takes place in the context of major transformations within the Romanian Higher Education, and it is in agreement with the National Education Law, which came into force on 1 February 2011.

The quality assurance policy summarizes the academy's approach to implement a quality assurance system in order to ensure that AFAHC guarantees a high quality of education by aligning it with the European standards and requirements.

## 2. THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE EUROPEAN STANDARDS AND GUIDELINES FOR INTERNAL QUALITY ASSURANCE WITHIN „HENRI COANDĂ" AIR FORCE ACADEMY

**2.1 Policy and procedures for quality assurance.** AFAHC has put in practice a system of quality assurance in the field of education, which is embedded in the academy's strategic management system.

This system is a complex structure of academic strategies and policies, procedures, skills and responsibilities adopted by the senate and applied within the involved components, including the role of students and other stakeholders. The ground of this activity is represented by the Code of education quality assurance.

The Rector (commandant) of the academy holds direct responsibility for the quality of education provided by AFAHC, the coordinates of this activity being stipulated in his annual public statement. The rector (commander) annually presents to the university senate the policy for quality assurance and permanent improvement, as well as the internal regulation projects and the methods to monitor their implementation. This policy statement summarizes the academy's approach to the maintenance of academic standards and to the assurance and enhancement of the quality of learning opportunities offered to students, it provides an overview and points to the policies and procedures, an operational framework to ensure consistency of standards, consistency and equivalence in the student experience and to assure a high quality education.

Academy policies and procedures for developing and maintaining academic standards and for assessing and enhancing the quality of learning opportunities are determined through its deliberative structures; faculty departments are responsible for their implementation.

The Vice-rector for education coordinates the activity of quality assurance in education, with regard to the institutional capacity, educational effectiveness and quality management, in compliance with legal provisions.

The Dean coordinates the quality assurance activity in education at the faculty level, based on the national higher education requirements and the graduate model of the academy, as specified by the beneficiaries' standards. Each semester, the dean analyzes the educational process run within the faculty and forwards improvement measures related to it.

The Head of Department coordinates the quality assurance of education with regard to the institutional capacity, educational efficiency and quality management, in compliance with the current legislation; he/she monitors the didactic activities of the teaching staff of the department.

The Commission of quality assessment and assurance (CEAC) functions within the AFAHC, whose members are discussed and approved by the senate. CEAC's role is to design and draw up documents and to implement a quality assurance system in order to ensure that AFAHC guarantees a high quality of education by aligning it with the European standards and requirements. For the better performance of specific activities, at every department of the faculty and institution offices there are people in charge with quality assurance.

Also, the academy has an Education Quality Assurance and Education Computer Aided System Office, which has its own organizing and functioning regulation.

Quality control management is done by the control/audit activities of the SMC processes, for which the academy uses its internal audit and the tools of internal / management control system. The main objective of the annually internal audit is to establish the level of standard accomplishment regarding the educational process quality in the academy (set by ARACIS and CNCS). The Commission for internal audit (CAI), has its own regulation, operates permanently, under the internal audit plan, approved by the university senate. For each audited period, the internal audit report is drawn up with regard to the quality of educational process, which also contains proposed corrective and preventive measures meant to increase the quality of the educational processes. Based on the conclusions of the internal audit report analysis, an action plan shall be drawn up containing improvement measures, with specific targets and time-bound responsibility.

The internal audit process is carried out by the internal commission of academic audit. The internal public audit is performed by the Internal Audit Division of the Ministry of National Defense through the Section V of Internal Audit of Brasov.

The annual report of internal assessment of AFAHC quality in education highlights qualitative and quantitative aspects of the quality assurance based on indicators set out by the quality assurance system of the educational services and contains optimization suggestions. The report contents are presented to all beneficiaries and external evaluators by publication on the university website.

AFAHC is a university of education and scientific research and aspire to ensure that the teaching process is informed by cutting-edge research and it takes place in a research-enriched environment. This involves ensuring that assessment and the learning development of students enables them to understand the nature of research, the opportunity to engage with cutting-edge research, to carry out independent research projects (especially at taught postgraduate level) and to feel part of a research community.

The scientific research activity is orientated on the profiles of the study programs; annually a research plan is established, the research activity involving the participation of bachelor study programs students and master study programs students.

The students' research activity is conducted in various forms, as follows: scientific research conducted independently, guided by teachers and concluded with case studies, projects, work license, dissertation; involvement and participation of students in carrying out programs/projects conducted by departments or research scientific centers.

The students scientific research results are disseminated through scientific papers presented mainly at the national and international scientific students conferences.

**2.2 Approval, monitoring and periodic review of programs and awards.** Regarding the quality of the educational process, as well as the educational programs and scientific research of the AFAHC, all the study programs were subjected to ARACIS external evaluation according to the ARACIS methodology, standards and quality indicators.

The initiation, approval, regular monitoring and evaluation of the study programs are subordinated activities to the strategic management and quality management at institutional level and are designed to ensure viability of the study programs offered by the AFAHC, by its constant adaptation to dynamic external environment, upon the requirements of the Air Force Staff and other beneficiaries, as well as upon the criteria and quality standards.

The academy has a formal mechanism for the approval of new academic programs and changes to the existing curriculum. This includes key issues to be taken into account in program design and guidance on approval criteria.

Regulations regarding the initiation, approval, monitoring and evaluation of the study programs are validated by the Senate, is updated annually and distributed to heads of departments and all of those involved in the annual monitoring process.

Regulations specify the algorithm and responsibilities regarding the authorization and regular evaluation of the study programs establish a uniform procedure that facilitates the elaboration and documentation of self-assessment of the study programs and make proper and operative assessment, conducted by internal and external evaluators. The first step in initiating a new study programs is the review and evaluation of external initial conditions, conducted by Air Force Staff in collaboration with the Human Resources Management Directorate within the Ministry of National Defense. The next step in initiating the study program is to analyze and evaluate the internal initial conditions. The activity of study program projecting is made within a committee, headed by the coordinator of the study program. Each degree program has an academic coordinator, responsible for the design, supervision and ongoing quality improvement program.

Effective quality assurance activities refer to regularly monitoring and periodically review (at the beginning of each academic year, after the course evaluation made by students), of : all the study programs curricula and syllabus according to students, Air Force Headquarters representatives and labor market representatives feedback; the intended learning outcomes; the availability of learning resources, securing their continuing relevance and currency. Annually, the Department of Education of the Air Force Staff organizes a gathering involving representatives of Air Force Academy "Henri Coandă", Air Force Staff, Air Force Application School, beneficiary's (commanders and specialists from Air Force bases and Air Force units, Aviation Inspectorate of the Ministry of Internal Affairs - MAI) and academy graduates. The role of this activity is to match the stakeholders requirements with the academy study programs based on participants analyze. This regular meetings revealed information that has been taken into account in designing, evaluating, organizing and conducting the educational and scientific research processes. Curricula content is constantly renewed by annual update.

The acceptance of the quality level of study programs in AFAHC is achieved by the content of the assessments of the graduates' and the beneficiaries concerning the level of competences and skills acquired in the academy. To this end, the University Senate has approved the Methodology regarding the Assessment of the Graduates' Training after Their Posting in Military Units (the monitoring and information system regarding the method of assimilating the graduate within the units' missions and activities). The Methodology is in force throughout the current academic year (2009-2010). The feeling of self-fulfillment of the academy graduates and beneficiaries concerning the educational process reveals itself from two distinct questionnaires self-administered within Air Force bases and military units. The conclusion reached by means of filling in these questionnaires are analyzed and can be considered as proper solution for enhancing the teaching performance, the curricula, and the course descriptions that are to be developed for the next academic year.

The periodic subject review process comprises a developmental and strategically focused model of review and one of its principal aims is to ensure the continuing validity and relevance of the programs on offer and to confirm their academic standards with reference to appropriate external reference points.

The academy students actively participate in the academy management by representatives in the student's council, the faculty council and the Senate. The formal election of representatives is managed by the Students' Council with support from the academy. The student's election process in the academy leadership structures is democratic, transparent and non-discriminatory. Students can raise issues of concern on courses, programs or other matters affecting their student experience. Students are involved in working groups established by different commissions regarding the educational process including the quality assurance commission.

**2.3 Assessment of students.** The academy evaluation of the teaching – learning process results is achieved through specific forms in accordance with legal provisions, rules of university autonomy, academic Charter provisions and curricula of the accredited academic specializations.

Student performance evaluation is conducted at all study subjects under the curriculum and throughout the period of ongoing education, by current and periodic tests, final tests (checks) final course works (projects), colloquies and exams. The way of examination and evaluation of each discipline will be done taking into account the performance of general and specific skills that are scheduled for that discipline.

Within the university training programs, in order to highlight the training results, together with the qualitative assessment system (scoring), it is used the European Credit Transfer System (ECST). The transferable credits do not replace the marks of appreciation (evaluation). The methodology for granting the transferable credits is approved by the university senate.

The qualitative evaluation process of the knowledge and skills acquired by students is completed as a result of the semester exams sessions or, where appropriate, at the end of year or at the end of the university degree program.

The performance evaluation of students and the calculation of averages are assessed using published criteria, regulations and procedures which are applied consistently presented in the Methodology regarding the assessment of knowledge and competences acquired by the students of the Faculty of Aeronautical Management within AFAHC, Regulations regarding the study programs, Regulations regarding the Students' Professional Activity. The existing systems of students' assessment are permanently improving and updating.

The evaluation forms are provided in the curriculum and courses files and ensure objective assessment of knowledge and skills acquired by students.

The syllabus is an outline and time line of a particular course. It will typically give a brief overview of the course objectives, course expectations, reading list assignments, homework deadlines, and evaluation form. It is available at the beginning of the course, and students are expected to know what is in the syllabus throughout the course. The purpose of the syllabus is to allow the student to work their schedule for their own maximum efficiency and effectiveness.

Criteria for admission of students to exam conditions to promote the disciplines, the calculation of average exam and information on review are announced by the teacher at the beginning of the course.

Students are clearly informed about the assessment strategy being used for their program, what examinations or other assessment methods they will be subject to, what will be expected of them, and the criteria that will be applied to the assessment of their performance.

For all forms of examination probative papers are prepared by teacher before the examination, approved by the department director, describing the course exam includes topics, key correction, maximum performance and minimum allowable performance for each issue separately. Every evaluation attends at least two specialist teachers and where appropriate is forming a commission.

Evaluation results are motivated to each student in relation to the criteria set and examination results are announced (published) in a short and determined period of time.

To ensure the accuracy of the procedures, the evaluation activities are subjected to verification checks conducted by the department's director who has administrative responsibilities. Deviations from ethical norms in the evaluation process, committed both by the teacher and the student are analyzed by the university ethics committee.

Representatives of students are participating in quality assurance activities which are monitoring the progress and the students achievements – all final exams results are discussed in the faculty council and university senate.

Annually, the students are evaluated through the appreciation of military service according to the Internal Regulations of "Henri Coandă" Air Force Academy.

Due to the military specificity of the institution, the military regulations have clear regulations covering student absence, illness and other mitigating circumstances.

**2.4 Quality assurance of teaching staff.** The academy is committed to attracting and appointing scholars who are capable of excellence in teaching and research and who support the core university values of teaching and learning.

The teaching staff of the AFAHC consists of personnel with university degrees (professor, associate professor, paper coordinators / lecturer, assistant professor) and the body of military instructors (military professor, superior instructor, chief instructor), that meet the requirements for filling positions and have the necessary level of competence.

The employment and promotion of the teaching staff are completed by competition, according to the national legislation and in accordance with the Regulations regarding the organization and carrying on of the contests for filling up higher education positions within AFAHC.

The foundation of the academic human resources is the principle of autonomy in selecting and promoting, manifested by the right to organize and hold position filling competitions, the right to appoint people on teaching positions, the right to select teaching staff for various education and training programs. The competitions for position filling take place usually twice a year, and they are public, open and legally regulated. Position filling for assistant professor and lecturer positions must have internal validation, whereas the position filling for associate professor and professor positions must have external validation from CNATDCU/MEN.

The external validation envisages meeting certain nationally agreed performance standards. The position filling within AFAHC must be approved by Air Force Staff. Staff retirement is also nationally regulated, but the university has its own staff detainment policies according to its academic and research needs.

The academic staff policy is autonomous, not subject to extra-academic criteria, observes the minimal national standards, is not discriminatory, is open and transparent, observes the institutional strategy, mission and general objectives of teaching and research activities and fosters individual growth.

Heads of Departments are responsible, primarily, for ensuring the strategic direction and development of their subject area. Their range of duties includes academic staff matters (recruitment, appraisal, mentoring of new staff, staff development and performance review), development, delivery and enhancement of the curriculum, annual monitoring of courses and programs and for internal and external reviews.

The life-long professional learning of the teaching staff is achieved by psycho-pedagogical and methodological training activities, organized by the institution on a monthly plan basis (The academic staff psycho-pedagogical and methodical development plan), approaching the latest trends in teaching techniques and methods with an emphasis on student-centered teaching and specificity of the taught subject matters.

AFAHC offers the possibilities for teaching staff to develop and extend the teaching capacity development, by participation in various projects such as: strategic project "Quality assurance in the Romanian higher education in European context. Development of academic quality management at system and institutional level", Internal evaluators training – sectorial operational program for human resources development by actions for the system, as well as by actions meant for improving institutional capacity: quality evaluators, development of the management staff in universities, decision-makers and those involved in policy-making; "Quality, innovation, communication in the life-long learning of higher education experts", which follows the national priorities in education regarding the quality assurance in the context of the knowledge based society; strategic ESF project Quality assurance in higher education by elaborating and piloting methods of empowerment and auditing coordinated by UEFISCDI unfolds, and it examines the appraisal of academic human resources, as well as the new methodologies in the field.

At the end of each semester, the students evaluate the curriculum unit they are enrolled in that semester, the resources available, and the teaching staff didactic contribution - their degree of professional dedication as fundamental benchmarks in assessing the quality of educational processes. The analyze of the level of satisfaction of students in relation to professional and personal development provided by faculty, assessment of teaching staff by students of the academy is mandatory.

The evaluation results, representing input information obtained in the process of improving the quality of study programs, are analyzed statistically, presented in table and graphical form and a ranking is produced in the case of student satisfaction with subjects and teaching staff and is carried out by the department director at the end of each semester.

The questionnaire results for teaching staff go to the individual staff members (feedback on their own performance), whereas all the rest of the results are made public in the academy in information display cases. The results of the questionnaires are analyzed and a report is presented and discussed at the Faculty Council and Senate twice a year.

The results are also discussed in the psycho-pedagogical workshops, organized at the beginning of each academic year, and have an important role in the improvement of the pedagogical practice at curriculum unit level and in taking measures in response to raise the issues found.

The teaching staff quality assessment is performed on an annually basis evaluation, according to the set of criteria specific to teaching staff evaluation methodology (Methodology of the academic staff assessment within AFAHC, Methodology regarding the assignment of teaching and scientific research tasks within AFAHC). Every academic year, permanent faculty members, academic staff submit to the department director a report detailing their activities in the spheres of teaching, research, administration and other areas of academic life. Thus, every teaching staff representative is evaluated by the department director, department colleagues and students who pursued teaching. The evaluation by the department director refers to the criteria stipulated in the job description, to student's evaluation, but also to the quality of interpersonal relationships, involvement in extra-activities etc. Peer assessment aims at maintaining harmonious relationships within the department and creating working atmosphere that allows to efficiently solving any issue and it is based on objective criteria of interpersonal interaction. Each teaching staff evaluation by hierarchical superior, annual assessment results, are recorded in the personal file of the HR office.

**2.5 Learning resources and student support.** The AFAHC library collects and records books, periodic publications and other graphic and audio-visual documents, as well as foreign publications relevant to the graduate and master programs offered by the university.

The adequacy of learning resources to support new study programs, is a requirement of the study program approval process. For each course defining a study program, library has an adequate background in national and international books and subscriptions to professional journals at home and abroad.

Library resources for learning and teaching are prioritized, acquired and managed on the basis of notification of new demands which arise through the program approval process.

There is an ongoing dialogue with departments in order to manage demand for the existing curriculum where course reading lists are submitted by teaching staff and there is a termly management cycle for the receipt, checking and processing of these reading lists.

Manuals, university courses, anthologies, informative documentation specific to military environment are provided by the university library and classified information library, which, by the number of their volumes, provide not only students' self-study, but also teachers'. The academic staff, permanent faculty members, as teaching loads, is responsible to prepare textbooks, course books, collections of problems, laboratory guide books, atlases and other works necessary to conduct the educational process, according to the records of the subjects. Some of these learning resources are also in electronic format and may be borrowed free for students. Information characteristic to the book collection available to the library is placed in a database and it can be accessed by several methods (keywords, author, etc.).

The library has a collection of periodicals corresponding to each study programs they are purchased under annual subscription agreements with suppliers. Learning resources are available in sufficient copies for student's documentation with free access. The scientific collections are accessible to all the students, teaching staff and the entire AFAHC free of charge. The bibliographic search is now facilitated by the online catalogue of scientific publications.

A range of mechanisms and procedures are used to evaluate the effectiveness of the Library: Regulations regarding the organization and functioning of the University Library, Regulations regarding the functioning of the Scientific Council of the University Library.

The budgets for the Library are set through as part of the academy's multiannual planning programing, evaluation and budget structures process. Textbooks, manuals, lectures and other works necessary to the educational process are printed in the Academy Publishing House, (recognized CNATDCU, Class A2 - Publishing prestigious nationally recognized in the "Military Science, information and public order") and multiplied as learning resources support for students. Its activity is coordinated by the dean faculty under the Regulations regarding the organization and functioning of the Publishing House within AFAHC.

Regulations and methodologies are updated annually and provide comprehensive information for students on their responsibilities as students, the full range of services and support available, key academy regulations and policy documents, progress and assessment matters and details of complaints and appeals procedures.

IT Services resources to support learning and teaching are monitored and updated throughout the year, with major changes such as the upgrade of computers and changes to computer software. Each academic year, each department of the Faculty, conduct a review of the applications software which includes new software identified from the course and program approval processes, and as a result of this review, a list of proposed application software for the following year is agreed provision is updated.

Students are provided with advice and guidance at strategic points in each academic year when they need to choose course options. This may take the form of briefing documents, option fairs or other for a where advice and guidance is available to assist students in making an appropriate choice.

The students are offered support activities such as counseling, as each group has its own tutor in charge with the students' vocational and professional counseling and presentation of the opportunities from which they can benefit (Methodology regarding the tutoring activity).

In order to improve their academic education, the students are involved in weekly tutorial sessions at the level of department, regular meetings with the dean etc. They are also involved in scientific activities in workshops, international scientific conferences AFASTUD on an annually basis etc.

For a better professional orientation of the AFAHC students, a Career counseling commission has been set up, whose purpose is to examine their personal and professional skills, interests, knowledge and personality by means of interviews, questionnaires, and various types of tests. Also, the commission facilitates the students' access to the career path opportunities provided by the DMRU within the MApN.

Students can also benefit from psychological counseling in case they encounter personal difficulties and need specialized advice.

An important aspect of the educational process is the students' training: flight practice for pilot students, specialty practice, shooting sessions with antiaircraft artillery equipment, training camp, documentation and research for the graduation papers. Camps and military instruction sessions have proved to be very useful for the development of warrior skills, which takes place according to the NATO standards of "Leadership program".

**2.6 Information systems.** The academy uses an information system in order to collect and analyze information to be used as the basis for all the quality assurance processes. Based on the aggregated data, the Educational Management Department, drafts the required reports for academy management and higher echelons within MApN and MEN (Minister of National Education). The information system benefits from the existence of an integrated intranet and computing system fitted to the organizational requirements and the particularities of the military educational processes. All the relevant bodies within academy management are the beneficiary of the reports drafted by the Educational Management Department.

Educational Management Department through its Planning, conducting, and data collecting Office, is responsible for aggregating all data regarding relevant information about student progression and success rates, in order to draft reports to be used and analyzed by CEAC as part of the quality assurance system. Based on this reported data, CEAC will propose the necessary corrective measures to be endorsed by academy management. Student success rate is under constant supervision by faculty council and university senate.

Analyses of these data enable the academy to monitor standards and provide the academy with evidence which can be used to monitor its support structures.

Constant monitoring of the quality management process, observations and documents review, periodically debriefing of the findings, all of them enable the review of the information systems at least on an annually basis.

Annually, at the beginning of the academic year, as part of the results control process, AFAHC drafts the self-assessment report regarding the organization performance during previous academic year.

Within this report the academy management is performing a comprehensive approach to all aspects of previous activities such as: academic and military capabilities and limitations, available logistic support including learning resources and their costs, efficiency of the entire educational and research activity, study programs evaluation and development, learning outcomes and effectiveness of teaching and supporting staff, efficiency of specialty practice activities, efficiency of the financial management.

The above mentioned self-assessment report benefits from data and information collected and made available by the Education Quality Assurance and Education Computer Aided System Office. The structure of the report follows the guidelines of quality assurance in terms of references standards and the performance indicators for educational process quality evaluation, set by ARACIS. This self-assessment report sets out the level of proficiency regarding the standards and points out the necessary corrective measures in order to accomplish our mission.

The entire self-assessment process is under constant supervision by the higher echelon, Air Force Staff in terms of the quality of educational and scientific services, the operating efficiency, and the benchmarks of the military aspects.

Annually, the data base used for assessment of educational and scientific activities is reported to MEN.

On the self-assessment report basis, the relevant academy-level committees receive data and information on trends and patterns in first degree outcomes and also on undergraduate progression data. The academy's overall performance is benchmarked and, in the case of award outcomes, subject performances benchmarked against national classification distributions. Progression, retention and award data are also presented at academy level on students' scientific research activity.

The Education Quality Assurance and Education Computer Aided System Office is responsible also with the collecting the data regarding the rate of employability of our graduates. The percentage of employability of the graduates within MApN and other institutions of public order and national security, since the establishment of the academy, has been 100%.

The education improvement measures result also from the partnerships with the beneficiaries, Air Force base and unit commanders, Air Force Staff experts and the Aviation Inspectorate of the MAI. From the meetings held periodically with all of them, information is obtained in order to support the design, organization and performance of the educational and research activities.

Feedback regarding the quality of educational services in AFAHC is collected by means of the graduates' appraisals and beneficiaries' content assessments in terms of the level of competencies and skills acquired in the academy (Methodology regarding the assessment of the graduates' competencies after their graduation and distribution in military units). In this respect, are applied the provisions according to the graduates' evaluation methodology after their appointment to military units, approved by the university senate. The conclusions drawn from this process are examined and used to improve the teaching activity, curricula, syllabi and the contents of subject matters for the following year. After distributing self-administered questionnaires, one may notice that the beneficiaries are satisfied with the graduates' professional training and education and, at the same time, the graduates are satisfied with the way in which the academy contributed to their development in terms of military specialists, leaders/subordinates skills, military skills, and performance oriented motivation.

The results of a psychological test applied to students, using a questionnaire designed by the academy psychologists, confirmed that the academy students positively assess learning in a percentage of 82.21%. The questionnaire was conducted on the fields of educational curricula, educational and research activities, educational resources and accommodation.

**2.7 Public information.** "Henri Coandă" Air Force Academy respects the principle of transparency of all categories of information (except those classified), which regards the members of the academic community, the potential candidates, the graduates, the institutions it collaborates with, as well as the public, ensuring consistent and accurate information sending. Thus, the equality of chances is facilitated in competition and equal access to the academy resources is assured.

The academy, through its own website, www.afahc.ro, constantly updated, provides all specific information to the educational process. Irrespective of the way of asking information, (by email, written document, etc.), The Secretariat and Public Relations Office shall give substantiated answers by the responsible factors of the Academy.

The information provided by the academy refer to the study programs developed in the Academy, the qualifications they acquire, the diplomas they obtain after graduation the study programs, the accommodation, food and recreation facilities, available in the Academy for the students, the organization and composition of the chairs, university teaching staff, etc. The information and data provided to students are accurate and constantly updated and they are media public by the Academy website.

Each academic year, the Aeronautical Management Faculty has developed brochures, posters and promotional materials designed to inform students of military and civil colleges and high schools about the educational offer and the conditions of admission into the Academy. The activity of informing the prospective candidates for admission to the Academy was performed also by media, on local television and local press. The Academy organizes periodically the "Open Day" an activity that presents to the potential candidates for admission and to other interested persons, the content of the educational process of the institution, by visiting the educational and accommodation facilities.

For a quicker adaptation to the specific activity of the Academy, The University Charter, all the regulations and methodologies regarding the students' professional activity, the teaching, learning and assessment procedures used in the educational process, tailored for each study programs, are published on the academy website.

In respect of impartiality and objectivity, the contents of the annual report of internal assessment of AFAHC quality in education are presented to all beneficiaries and external evaluators by publication on the university website.

The ARACIS external evaluation reports, about the quality of the educational process, as well as the educational programs, scientific research, functioning of the academic leadership and management, and institutional, technical, administrative and economic procedures, were published on the academy website. The study results of the strategic project National monitoring study of labor market insertion of the higher education graduates – Graduates and labor market, about the students' satisfaction regarding the quality of the educational programs and their insertion in the labor market via, the correlation of academic knowledge and finding a corresponding job, as well as the number of graduates employed in the corresponding field of activity, were published on the academy website.

## 4. CONCLUSIONS & ACKNOWLEDGMENT

AFAHC observes and promotes the EU conventions and recommendations regarding to the status of the higher education institutions, including the quality of the educational processes, by assuming accountability in terms of achieving the standards, the references standards and the performance indicators developed by ARACIS and EUA, according to the European higher education standards.

Thus, in order to accomplish the mission and objectives, the Air Force Academy "Henri Coandă" must respect and meet the requirements of two systems: the European higher education system and the military system.

The major strategic direction is the integration of the academy system education in the national, European and Euro-Atlantic context, according to the Declarations of Bologna (1999), Berlin (2003), Bergen (2005), Lisbon (2007) and Leuven-Lauvain la Neuve (2009).

AFAHC has taken measures in order to become a European university and to increase the educational and research activities efficiency and the prestige of teaching and research staff.

AFAHC focused on the requirements of the European standards and guidelines for internal quality assurance within higher education institutions, preserving the elements of Romanian military higher education identity and characteristics.

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