

TRAINING AND CERTIFICATION OF FUTURE UKRAINIAN NAVY OFFICERS DURING CYCLED EDUCATION

Ruslan SHEVCHENKO, Candidate of Military Science, Associate Professor

<https://orcid.org/0000-0002-1554-2019>

Department of Tactics and general military disciplines

of Naval institute of National university “Odesa maritime academy” (Odesa, Ukraine)

Abstract. The article is dedicated to the issues of training future officers for the Armed Forces of Ukraine, in particular, naval professionals, within the framework of continuous cycled education. The article denotes the preconditions and constituents of the cycled education system. It also denotes that training of naval officers is based on the state and sectoral standards of higher education having been formed in accordance with the national requirements to higher education whereas the Standards of Training, Certification and Watchkeeping for Seafarers (STCW) as well as military standards adopted. The article states that training of naval officers in Ukraine is directed towards harmonization with European higher education area (EHEA) and education quality assurance.

Keywords: training, Naval Forces (Navy), Armed Forces of Ukraine (Armed Forces), officers of the Armed Forces, professional training and certification, professional progress.

INSTRUIREA ȘI CERTIFICAREA VIITORILOR OFIȚERI AI MARINEI UCRAINENE PE PARCURSUL EDUCAȚIEI CICLICE

Rezumat. Articolul este dedicat problemelor de formare a viitorilor ofițeri pentru forțele armate ale Ucrainei, în special profesioniștii navali, în cadrul unei educații ciclice continue. Articolul denotă condițiile prealabile și elementele constitutive ale sistemului de învățământ ciclic. De asemenea, aceasta denotă faptul că instruirea ofițerilor navali se bazează pe standardele de stat și sectoriale ale învățământului superior, care s-au format în conformitate cu cerințele naționale pentru învățământul superior, în timp ce Standardele de instruire, certificare și păstrare a navigatorilor (STCW), precum și standardele militare adoptate. Articolul prevede că instruirea ofițerilor navali în Ucraina este îndreptată spre armonizarea cu spațiul european de învățământ superior (SEE) și asigurarea calității educației.

Cuvinte cheie: instruire, Forțele Navale (Armata), Forțele Armate ale Ucrainei (Forțele Armate), ofițeri ai Armatei, pregătire profesională și certificare, progres profesional.

The conception of personnel training educational practice varies due to the dynamical changes taking place in the state. The variability and instability of social and economic conditions in Ukraine accelerate professionals' adaptiveness to the real conditions actualizing their training for more active functioning in modern professional environment which, certainly, includes the field of seafaring. Hence, the creation of continuous education system is the natural way enabling educational institutions to remain competitive at the market of educational services. Nowadays, some attempts to systematize military-type and civilian-type educational installations for the purpose of creation a combined educational complex are in progress. As a rule, education process in such systems is socially and professionally oriented and based on the balanced education programmes which optimally combine all possible means to enable the learners to acquire the whole scope of competences prescribed in corresponding educational standards. Continuous cycled professional education is not considered to be an end in itself, but it acts as a

personal career management in a person's life as well in the course of his professional activity, intellectual development etc.

Merging of the continuous professional education didactic open system into the modern continuous professional education system (to be considered a complete education cycle) causes the continuous professional education paradigm to change into the professional self-development and self-perfection paradigm that makes realistic provisions for the continuity of professional.

The military education system is a constituent of the nationwide higher education system. Hence, its reformation is carried out in the context of modernization of the whole national education system.

Nowadays naval officer training proves to be more topical if it provides for a highly-qualified and competent professional who is strongly motivated to exercise own professional activities and demonstrate readiness to professional development and self-improvement. Therefore, the maritime educational institutions' requirements to create competitive continuous professional education system appear to be appropriate.

Naval higher education institutions are intended to assure an officer to have acquired the necessary scope of knowledge and professional skills (in general science, military science, engineering and professional/technical/tactical/physical/psychological training etc) enabling him to master the narrow specific area of his professional activity having been defined as a person's duties and the activity implementers' specification. That, in its turn, sets forth enhanced requirements for personnel's military and professional qualification including officers' preparedness. In addition, the expected professionalization and reduction of armed forces also raise the standards of training.

Officer training for the Armed Forces of Ukraine means instruction and education of military personnel organized by the unitary intent and plan. It also includes preparation and cohesion of military governing bodies, headquarters, formations, units, installations and other regular military organizations to accomplish their assigned tasks during peace as well war time. The constituents of officer training in the Armed Forces of Ukraine are: operational training, combat training, training of the reserve, and education in military institutions (universities, academies, institutes, scientific establishments and training centres). Education of officer candidates and officers seeking for a higher academic or professional degree is conducted on academic or professional cycles relevant to the future assignment in order to meet the demands of the Armed Forces of Ukraine and other regular military formations [3].

The scientific searches made by V. Honcharenko, S. Kozak, M. Kulanova, S. Sokoluk, I. Furman, V. Yarema, I. Poprotskyi, N. Terentieva, V. Shemchuk at al. denoted particular aspects of Ukrainian Naval Forces' activities in regard to naval officer training in the 21st century. Nonetheless, complementary explorations in the context of cycled

military higher education are required to be conducted in order to formulate the whole scope of the aspects.

The essence of cycled military higher education consists in qualifying for different educational levels upon completion of corresponding cycles (phases) of higher education. The origin of cycled education concept is conditioned by:

- democratization of society, formation of newly appeared social and economical structures targeting towards market relations and, thus, permanently competing with one another in a professional field;
- necessity in distinguishing among academic (scholarly) and professional (military) constituents of education since both compose the ground of an educational installation functioning;
- requirement on providing an officer with assured ability to make his professional career in strong adherence to principles of social equality, responsibility, morality, and universal values;
- differentiation of demands to the character and content of both academic and professional education on different educational levels;
- implementation of an impartial controlling mechanism enabling to assess the performance of higher education system on the whole as well as the results of study of each individual (e.g. standardized testing technologies) [1].

Cycled education of future officers combines the components directed to mastering the necessary professional skills and those providing deep academic knowledge within the realm of military science that includes understanding the operating principles of specific armament and equipment and obtaining the other cognitive skills. Both kinds of components contribute to the development of a highly-competent naval officer who is capable to “control situations” and make decisions under unforeseen circumstances, particularly, in war-fighting conditions (conditions of indeterminacy).

Naval officer training is based on the state and sectoral standards of higher education having been formed in accordance with the national requirements to higher education whereas the Standards of Training, Certification and Watchkeeping for Seafarers (STCW) as well as military standards adopted. The article states that naval officer training in Ukraine is directed towards harmonization with European higher education area (EHEA) and education quality assurance. The Law on Higher Education in Ukraine determines the following hierarchy of educational levels: associate (junior bachelor), bachelor, master, Doctor of Philosophy (PhD), Doctor of Science (ScD). The law also provides for bachelor learning outcomes relying on the ability to control complex technical operations and projects as well manage people and encourage their professional development. Almost the same outcomes had been stated in the previous law for higher educational level of specialist. Thus, the changes in national legislation in the field of higher education expanded the range of responsibilities appropriate for holders of a bachelor’s degree and

made possible their appointment to the posts previously reserved for postgraduates holding a specialist's degree.

Bachelor's degree in Ukraine is the basic level of higher education that enables a postgraduate to obtain certified competencies, qualify for entering master's cycle, and develop his officer career. In view of traditional training and certification of naval professionals in the Armed Forces of Ukraine bachelor's and master's levels are considered the most appropriate for naval officers. It is assumed that the majority of postgraduates will not apply for master's studies and the absence of master's degree will not restrain career opportunities at tactical level.

Naval officer training and certification procedures must not solely reflect changes in the field of higher education but also provide for a possibility to achieve higher educational levels.

The changes within the structure of national higher education have initiated adopting the set of amendments to naval officer training and certification procedures aimed at creation of a holistic officer training and certification system which would provide for gradual acquisition of competencies and qualifications required. In particular, the amendments call off the requirement on mandatory master's degree having been necessary in order to obtain the competency certificate. Nevertheless, one can notice that the competencies appropriate for senior officers appear unachievable within the framework of a bachelor cycle.

Development of advanced officer training specific syllabi must constitute the core in new approach to assurance of the required competency level. Successful completion of a syllabus tends to be sine qua non condition for an officer's promotion. The syllabi are considered to be either academic or professional. The latter assumes a higher-level educational degree to be optional.

A naval officer candidate is supposed to be certified upon completion of bachelor cycle and subsequent 12 month practical training. Having had 18 month experience of active military service at officer positions a naval officer is eligible to apply for follow-on level of certification provided that he has acquired a master's degree in relevant field of study or he has passed through advanced training and qualification assessment upon its completion. Thus, owing to cyclicity and flexibility, such design of training remains capable of adaptation to war-time conditions while maintaining its integrity and efficiency as well as adherence to traditional national approach to higher education. Moreover, the model described appears capable of bringing troops into a higher state of readiness as it makes provision for gradual development of personnel's professional skills through the whole time line of a person's military career.

Nowadays officer training in the Armed Forces of Ukraine is conducted through the cycled continuous education. It comprises the following constituents:

- 1) basic military training of young people;

- 2) professional military training;
- 3) higher education of officers on tactical, operational-tactical, and operational-strategical levels;
- 4) advanced training.

Although, such personnel training and education framework appears capable of preparing highly-qualified naval professionals, it does not satisfy the whole set of up-to-the-date requirements to a highly-competent naval officer.

Therefore, in addition to the requirement on design and implementation of the cycled advanced training framework the Personnel Management Policy Concept adopted in the Armed Forces of Ukraine envisages improvement of training procedures in accordance with national requirements stated in view of transformations towards cycled higher education at bachelor and master levels [6; 7].

Fostering the readiness at cooperating in a professional field is effective if determined by the factors as follows:

- specificity and composition of a future officer's readiness to exercise his professional activities aimed at personal professional development are taken into consideration [2];
- phased (modular) education of officer candidates is properly organized and aimed at acquirement of theoretical knowledge and practical skills necessary for decision making within the full range of possible professional situations [5];
- education and training process is organized within the system which is based on well-designed quasi-professional activities. As the system envisages modelling of real professional functions, practice, functional communication and partnership in association with shared values it also provides for concentration and development of readiness to cooperate in a professional field [4].

The specificity of an activity within a professional sphere connected with an inter-subject cooperation (which an officer's activity belongs to) is determined by the necessity of forming readiness to comply with professional ethics that cannot be based solely on quality education concept. Such special features of an officer's activity like multifunctionality (values-oriented, culture-forming, cognitive, regulatory-transformative and communicational functions), integrativity (conveyance of values, accumulation of scientific knowledge and professional experience, organizing, modeling, editing, creativity etc), situatedness (situation evaluation, data collection, ethical decision).

The change in social standards in Ukraine has revealed a number of ethical collisions resulting in appearance of crisis situation in naval officers' professional activities in regard to professional ethics. Traditional system of naval officer candidates' training requires to be reformed towards improvement of education quality and effectiveness as it has demonstrated lack of performance to resolve the conflict.

The integrative result of naval officer candidates' professional training must represent the level of readiness at complying with professional military ethical standards. Thus, world-outlook readiness shall be determined by the value-motivation and cognition criterion; behavioural readiness shall be determined by the cognition and emotional-volitional criterion; technological readiness shall be determined by the reflection component criterion. The integral readiness shall be defined as the scope of professional ethical standards that regulate professional relations.

In accordance with the Officer Training Concept adopted in the Armed Forces of Ukraine professional advancement of an officer candidate is defined as his ability to realize his creative potential within the area of activity and is based on a person's effectiveness in performing his duties. Qualification, motivation, and craft, the evaluation criteria for an officer's professional advancement, also reflect a person's effectiveness in performing his duties. Professional qualification is considered to be a determinant.

A naval officer's professional qualification level refers to his efficiency within the framework of Navy professional training system consisting of combat training subsystem and professional education subsystem. The combat training subsystem functions within the Navy organizational structures (headquarters, acting formations and units) and is directly aimed at maintaining troops' readiness to accomplish stated missions and assigned tasks. The professional education subsystem functions out of the Navy organizational structures but on demand of and in compliance with the former subsystem.

Personal characteristics of an officer (motivation and craft) also contribute to evaluation of his professional advancement level. Thus, professional advancement as the aim of professional education is likely achievable on the condition that the military educational process is duly organized within the framework of naval officer professional training.

The current conditions of socio-economic and socio-political development make it necessary to ensure that the future officer of the Naval Forces of the Armed Forces is ready for professional cooperation in all spheres of practical activity.

The priority goal of education is to develop an active personality, which involves creating an environment conducive to the development of the capabilities of the future officer, which ensures self-realization of his personal potential and leads to the search for their own ways of development and achievement of the results of educational and vocational training.

Modernizations of naval officer continuous professional training provide for the unity of modern approaches, goal sets, principles, and priorities of the Ministry of Education and Science, Ministry of Defence, and merchant fleet authorities in support of combat readiness and military preparedness of the Armed Force.

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