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Distance Education for Future: best EU practices in response
to the requests of modern higher education seekers and labor market*

STANDARD INSTRUCTIONS AND METHODOLOGICAL RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF SYLLABI / WORK PROGRAMS OF ACADEMIC DISCIPLINES (in the distance form of higher education)



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PREAMBLE

- The Standard Instructions are not an original text and the compilers do not claim authorship and original source.
 - The Standard Instructions were developed within the framework of the Erasmus+KA2 DEFEP project "Distance Education for Future: best EU practices in response to the requests of modern higher education seekers and labor market".
 - The Standard Instructions is based on existing European and national practices, regulations, methodological developments of individual higher education institutions, as well as on materials and cases from the Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine, the National Agency for Quality Assurance in Higher Education, etc.
 - The Standard Instructions take into account the experience of partner universities in the DEFEP project from Ukraine, Moldova, Germany, Spain, Italy, the results of a sociological survey, an analytical report and a monograph carried out within the framework of the project.
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- Standard instructions and methodological recommendations for the development of syllabi and work programs of academic disciplines are universal for all forms of higher education, as a single document is being developed for all forms of higher education. At the same time, these Instructions take into account the peculiarities of the organization of the educational process in the distance form, which are reflected in the relevant sections of the syllabi / work programs of academic disciplines.
 - On the basis of the Standard instructions, a higher education institution develops its own Regulation on qualification papers (hereinafter the Regulation) or implements into the relevant regulatory documents of the higher education institution those provisions of the Standard instructions that relate to the distance form of higher education.

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1. GENERAL PROVISIONS

1.1. Typical instructions and methodical recommendations for the development of work programs and syllabi of academic disciplines (taking into account the distance higher education) (hereinafter — Instructions) are prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Law of Ukraine "On Education" of 05.09.2017 No. 2145-VIII (Article 44. Accreditation of the educational program), the Law of Ukraine "On Higher Education" of 01.07.2014 No. 1556-VII and the orders of the Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine "On Approval of the Regulations on Distance Learning" of 24.04.2020 No. 466 and "Some issues of distance learning" of 08.09.2020 No. 1115.

1.2. The Guidelines are based on the principles of the Resolution of the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine of 30.12.2015 No. 1187 "On Approval of the Licensing Conditions for the Conduct of Educational Activities", Order of the Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine of 11.07.2019 No. 977 "On Approval of the Regulations on Accreditation of Educational Programs for the Training of Higher Education Applicants". The text of the Instruction uses information from open electronic resources — websites (including the regulatory framework) of domestic and foreign higher education institutions, project partners, national and international institutions and associations, etc.

1.3. The Instructions are developed as an integral part of the system of internal quality assurance of educational activities and the quality of higher education in higher education institutions, which establishes uniform requirements for the content and design of the curriculum and syllabus of academic disciplines for the training of students of all levels. The purpose of the Instructions is to provide methodical assistance to academic staff of higher education institutions in the formation of an educational environment based on mutual respect and partnership between participants in the educational process, to organize the study of academic disciplines by higher education students as responsible subjects of the educational process on the basis of student-centered learning, and to strengthen the motivation of students to study by determining the role and place of a particular discipline in the educational program.

1.4. The Regulation contains recommendations for the development, design, approval, publication and recommended structure of the curriculum and syllabus of the discipline.

1.5. Within the framework of autonomy, each HEI should determine which documents (curriculum and/or syllabus) are necessary for the effective organization of the educational process in various forms of education and informing stakeholders about the content of the educational components included in the relevant EP.

1.6. It should be remembered that the work program of the academic discipline (hereinafter referred to as the WPAD) presents the content, requirements, distribution of hours, learning outcomes to be achieved in the course of studying the discipline, evaluation criteria, recommended literature, etc. in a more expanded manner (scope — 5-30 pages), and the syllabus is a short working document (scope — 2-4 pages), convenient for announcing the discipline and organizing independent work of students.

A syllabus is a concise document, a kind of agreement with the seeker, motivated by the necessary educational and methodological content. The syllabus (in addition to topics, methods, techniques, hours, forms of control, etc.) contains in an accessible form what the teacher expects from the student and what the student can expect from the teacher.

2. DEVELOPMENT OF THE WORK PROGRAM OF THE ACADEMIC DISCIPLINE

2.1. The work program of an academic discipline is a regulatory document of an HEI that is developed on the basis of the educational program and the work curriculum for training seekers by specialties and educational levels and contains a list of learning outcomes / competencies that can be achieved in the process of studying the discipline, a statement of the content of the discipline, sequence, organizational forms of study and their scope, determines the forms and means of current and final control.

2.2. For different forms of education (full-time, part-time, distance, dual, network), a single curriculum is developed with classroom/contact classes, independent and individual work, and forms of control for each of them.

2.3. The work program of the academic discipline, which is included in the list of mandatory components of the EP, determines the amount of knowledge and skills in the discipline that seekers must master in accordance with the requirements of the higher education standard for the formation of competencies and learning outcomes; introduces the algorithm for studying the educational material, taking into account interdisciplinary links, types of classes, forms and methods of learning and teaching, forms of control measures and assessment criteria; provides an opportunity to determine the achievement of higher education by higher education seekers.

2.4. The WPAD, which is included in the list of elective components of the EP, contains the same components as the WPAD, which is mandatory for students, with a slight difference. The WPAD, which is included in the list of elective components of the EP, contains generalized competencies that can be acquired in the process of studying this discipline. The WPAD, which is mandatory, contains a list of LO and competencies in accordance with the EP.

2.5. The developers of the WPAD include a leading academic staff member (lecturer) or a working group of faculty members of the department who ensure the teaching of this discipline and who are qualified and professionally and scientifically active in this discipline. If the discipline is taught by several departments, one work program is drawn up. The content of the WPAD must comply with the HEI's EP, which is based on the approved standard of higher education of Ukraine for a particular specialty and level of higher education.

3. STRUCTURE AND CONTENT OF THE WORK PROGRAM OF ACADEMIC THE DISCIPLINE

3.1. The structure of the WPAD includes the following components:

3.1.1. **Cover sheet** containing information on the name of the discipline, educational level, field of knowledge, specialty, educational program, data on the developers of the work program, approval at the department meeting and approval by the scientific and methodical commission of the faculty/[institute/university](#).

3.1.2. **Description of the discipline** is presented in the form of a table and contains the following characteristics: specialist training profile, number of credits, total number of hours to study the discipline, number of weekly hours, number of hours for classroom (lecture, practical, seminar, laboratory) and independent work of the student, type of individual assignment (if any), form of study, status of the discipline (compulsory, elective), year of study and semester, distribution of training hours by type of classes and independent work (including individual assignments), as well as the type of control (exam, credit).

3.1.3. **Purpose and objectives of the discipline.** This section formulates the purpose, tasks of the discipline in accordance with its content, indicates the place in the structural and logical scheme of training of higher education seekers, the list of competencies that the seeker must have as a result of studying the discipline. For disciplines that are part of the mandatory components of the EP, the competencies and learning outcomes specified in the EP should be indicated.

3.1.4. **Teaching methods** are orderly ways of interrelated, purposeful activities of the scientific-pedagogical staff and students aimed at effectively solving educational tasks. The section indicates those teaching methods that are actually used in the classroom and meet educational needs.

When selecting the optimal teaching methods and choosing certain diagnostic tools, the scientific-pedagogical staff should be guided by the best educational (teaching, pedagogical, etc.) practices, realizing the right to academic freedom.

For the disciplines included in the required components, the teaching methods should be shown in accordance with the learning outcomes stated in the EP. The means of diagnosing these results should also be indicated (Table 1).

LO (in accordance with the EP)		Teaching methods	Diagnostic tools
LO code	The content of the LO		

3.1.5. **Program of the academic discipline.** This section contains a list of content modules and topics of all lectures taught, as well as an indicative list of questions to be studied for each topic.

3.1.6. **The structure of the academic discipline** is presented in the form of a table and contains the distribution of class time for each topic by type of class in accordance with the working curriculum.

3.1.7. **Topics of seminars (practical, laboratory)** are presented in the form of a table, which indicates the topic of the sessions, the number of session hours for each topic.

3.1.8. **The independent work** is presented in the form of a table, which indicates the topic for independent study, the number of session hours for each topic; forms and

content of the educational material that is the subject of independent study by seekers. The ratio of classroom session and independent work is determined taking into account the specifics and content of a particular discipline, its place, importance and didactic purpose in the implementation of the educational program.

3.1.9. **Individual assignments** that deepen, generalize and consolidate the knowledge gained in the course of study, as well as allow you to test it in practice. Individual assignments include analysis of practical, problematic situations, analytical review, calculational-graphic or graphic works, tests, translation, preparation of research results for a conference presentation, writing abstracts, essays, participation in competitions, etc. A special type of individual assignment is the completion of term papers (projects) in accordance with the working curriculum and the existing requirements for their content. This section of the work program of the discipline specifies the name of the individual assignment, its scope, topic, a brief description of the content and requirements for completion and evaluation.

3.1.10. **Evaluation of student learning outcomes.** This section describes the procedure for conducting the current and final assessment of the learning outcomes of the seeker and the possibility of re-crediting the learning outcomes of the seeker in the discipline.

In accordance with the procedure for evaluating the learning outcomes of the seeker in force at the HEI, the results of the evaluation must be described:

- a form of final control of the discipline;
- peculiarities of scoring by the types of academic activities of the seeker;
- scale of evaluation of the results of the final control used in higher education institutions and ECTS (indicates the maximum number of points that can be obtained for certain types of academic work by topic, with points for current performance and final certification. The distribution of points is formed in the form of a table);
- opportunities for re-credit and recognition of learning outcomes in the discipline.

3.1.11. **Methodical support.** The section includes a list of teaching materials for seminars, practical and laboratory classes, independent work of students and information about the course page on the distance learning platform of the university.

3.1.12. **Recommended reading.** The list consists of basic and supplementary literature. The basic literature includes regulatory documents, textbooks and manuals. The list of supplementary literature includes reference books, periodicals, monographs, articles, and guidelines on the relevant subject.

3.1.13. **Distance learning courses and information resources.** This section contains links to documents and collections of documents in information systems (libraries, archives, funds, data banks, repositories, etc.) that may be useful in the study of the discipline, as well as links to electronic resources open exclusively within the university, which contain additional information on the discipline (samples of tests and examination tasks, topics of essays, guidelines for laboratory work, etc.)

3.1.14. **Changes in the curriculum for the current year.** The section contains information about changes made to the curriculum of the discipline in the current academic year (clarification of the system of control and assessment of knowledge of

seekers, plans for seminars (practical, laboratory) sessions, topics for essays and term papers (projects), a list of basic and auxiliary literature).

4. THE PROCEDURE FOR APPROVAL AND PERIODIC REVIEW OF THE WORK PROGRAM OF THE ACADEMIC DISCIPLINE

4.1. The WPAD is developed in accordance with the educational program and curriculum. It is submitted for consideration, discussion and approval at a meeting of the relevant department, no later than the first meeting of the current academic year. The WPAD is reviewed and approved by the scientific and methodical council of the faculty/institute/institution, approved by its Chairperson and signed by the guarantor of the EP. The WPAD is stored in the structural unit designated by the HEI. The electronic version of the WPAD is posted on the website of the department responsible for the implementation of the EP. On the basis of the WPAD, methodical recommendations for the study of the discipline, manuals and other methodical materials are developed to ensure the successful mastery of the program material.

4.2. Before approving the Work Program of the academic discipline at a meeting of the Scientific and Methodical Council, an electronic version of the document must be provided:

- to the head of the project team (guarantor) of the educational program – to approve the content component of the discipline;
- to an employee of the department responsible for ensuring the quality of higher education – to check for compliance with the requirements of the regulatory documents of the university.

4.3. The WPAD is reviewed at least once every three years.

4.4. The work program of the academic discipline is subject to mandatory review and re-approval after the approval of a new version of the educational program, amendments to the curriculum relating to this discipline.

4.5. The basis for updating the curriculum may be the proposals of the guarantor of the educational program, teachers, higher education students, stakeholders; the results of the assessment of seekers' knowledge of the discipline; objective changes in the conditions of the educational program; the results of a survey of seekers on the quality of teaching the discipline.

4.6. The WPAD is not subject to re-approval at a meeting of the University's Scientific and Methodical Council in case of clarification of the wording of competencies and learning outcomes that have arisen as a result of the approval of a new edition of the educational program (for compulsory academic disciplines), clarification of the list of basic and additional literature. Changes are approved by the decision of the department.

4.7. Requirements for the development and updating of the curriculum of the academic discipline:

- the amount of training hours and their distribution by forms of education must comply with the curriculum;

- when developing and updating the content of the discipline, innovative approaches in the industry, modern achievements of science and practice should be taken into account;
- the program should be innovative in content and form and practice-oriented; it should be taught in Ukrainian, with active use of technical means of education;
- the educational materials of content modules (topics) should be logically interrelated and form a single program for mastering the discipline.

4.8. The work program of an academic discipline must be posted on the website of the department to which the discipline is assigned and is available to higher education seekers and posted on the distance learning platform of the HEI. Responsible for the quality of development and timely publication of the work program is the academic staff member who provides its teaching, the head of the department, the guarantor of the educational program.

5. DEVELOPMENT AND DESIGN OF THE SYLLABUS OF THE ACADEMIC DISCIPLINE

5.1. The syllabus of the discipline (hereinafter referred to as the Syllabus) is an internal document of the higher education institution that explains the mutual responsibility of the teacher and the seeker. This document is developed on the basis of the EP for higher education seekers to explain the content of the discipline, learning outcomes, requirements for the acquisition of relevant competencies/learning outcomes.

5.2. Syllabus is designed for compulsory and elective courses.

5.3. The syllabus, as a summary of the content of the academic discipline, should be short and understandable for higher education seekers. A higher education seeker should understand what he/she can learn, what exactly is useful for him/her in a particular course.

5.4. The syllabus of the academic discipline briefly describes the main characteristics of the educational component and aims to formulate clear rules for effective communication and improve feedback between participants of the educational process; specifies the place of the educational component of the educational program, its scope and content, expected results from the study; describes the control system and criteria for assessing knowledge, contains a list of the main recommended literature (2-3 sources).

5.5. Syllabus should be freely available to all participants of the educational process and stakeholders.

5.6. A syllabus is developed by a research and teaching staff member of the department to which the discipline is assigned in accordance with the curriculum for training higher education seekers at a particular educational level. Responsibility for the quality, timeliness of development and design of the syllabus lies with the head of the department and the guarantor of the educational program. If the academic discipline, according to the curriculum, is assigned to several departments, the syllabus is developed by the team of authors of these departments.

6. STRUCTURE AND CONTENT OF THE SYLLABUS OF THE ACADEMIC DISCIPLINE

6.1. The structural elements of the syllabus are:

6.1.1. **Basic information about the academic discipline**, including its name, name of the faculty and department, field of knowledge, specialty, name of the educational program, level of higher education, semester of study, status of the discipline (compulsory/elective), link to the distance course on the distance learning platform of the university (if available), language of instruction, language of instruction, contact information.

6.1.2. **The purpose of the academic discipline and its relationship with other academic disciplines**. This section should provide information on interdisciplinary links (which disciplines are basic for the study of this discipline and for which this discipline is basic).

6.1.3. **Expected learning outcomes**. This section contains the expected learning outcomes (specified and written in a form that is understandable and accessible to seekers). That is, it should describe what kind of knowledge, skills and abilities the seeker will acquire in the process of studying this discipline.

6.1.4. **Thematic plan of the discipline**. This section presents the content of the discipline by topic. By decision of the HEI, a summary of each topic may be provided.

6.1.5. **Contact information about the teacher**. Information about the academic staff member(s) who provides teaching of the academic discipline and their e-mail addresses is provided.

6.1.6. **Recommended information sources**. A list of basic literature recommended for the study of this discipline is provided.

6.1.7. **Forms of control**. The main forms of current and final control are provided.

6.1.8. Grading scale: national and ECTS — provides a scale for comparing grades in the national system and the ECTS system.

7. PROCEDURE FOR APPROVAL AND PERIODIC REVIEW OF THE SYLLABUS OF THE ACADEMIC DISCIPLINE

7.1. Syllabi of academic disciplines are not a mandatory element of the methodical support of the educational components of the educational program. They can be replaced by other documents determined by the HEI within its autonomy (annotations, descriptions, etc.).

7.2. The drafts of the syllabi of academic disciplines are discussed among the stakeholders of the educational program and reviewed at a meeting of the department to which the academic discipline is assigned.

7.3. The syllabus of the discipline is reviewed annually before the start of the new (regular) academic year and updated in terms of all components that have changed in accordance with the EP. The basis for updating the syllabus may be the initiative and proposals of the guarantor of the educational program, research and teaching staff,

stakeholders, higher education seekers, objective changes in infrastructure, personnel, results of assessment of seekers' knowledge of the discipline, results of a survey of seekers on the quality of teaching.

7.4. If the academic discipline is taught in a foreign language, the syllabus is drawn up both in Ukrainian and in the language of instruction.

7.5. The syllabus is checked by the head of the department and the guarantor of the educational program for compliance with the requirements of the legislative acts of Ukraine and local documents of the university.

7.6. The syllabus of the academic discipline is posted on the website of the HEI in the ECTS Information Package section (or on the website of the department to which the academic discipline is assigned). The guarantor of the educational program or the head of the department to which the discipline is assigned is responsible for the quality of development and timely posting of the syllabus of the compulsory academic discipline on the website of the HEI.

7.7. The syllabus of the academic discipline should be available to higher education seekers and posted on the distance learning platform of the higher education institution.

8. ANTI-CORRUPTION WARNINGS

8.1. Participants in the educational process fully comply with the basic principles of corruption prevention, ensure regular assessment of corruption risks in their activities, and take appropriate measures to prevent and resolve conflicts of interest and corrupt practices that may arise in the performance of their duties.

8.2. Participants of the educational process in the distance form of higher education are obliged to comply with the requirements of the Law of Ukraine "On Prevention of Corruption".

8.3. Participants of the educational process in the distance form of higher education are strictly prohibited from directly or indirectly using their official powers or opportunities related to them to receive an unlawful benefit or accepting such a benefit or accepting a promise/offer of such a benefit for themselves or other persons or make promises/offers or an unlawful benefit to a person, specified in the first part of Article 3 of the Law of Ukraine "On Prevention of Corruption", or at their request to other individuals or legal entities with the aim of inducing this person to unlawfully use the official powers granted to them or related opportunities.

8.4. For the commission of corruption or corruption-related offenses, participants of the educational process are subject to criminal, administrative, civil and disciplinary liability in accordance with the procedure established by law.

9. FINAL PROVISIONS

9.1. The Instructions are approved by the Academic Council of the University and enacted by order of the Rector of the University or a person authorized to perform his/her duties.

9.2. Changes and / or additions to the Instructions are considered and approved by the University Academic Council and enter into force by the order of the rector of the University or a person authorized to perform his/her duties.