

Андрій Богданович Гриняк

*Київський регіональний центр
Національної академії правових наук України
Київ, Україна*

Мар'яна Дмитрівна Пленюк

*Київський регіональний центр
Національної академії правових наук України
Київ, Україна*

Анатолій Григорович Лапко

*Київський регіональний центр
Національної академії правових наук України
Київ, Україна*

ПРАКТИКООРІЄНТОВАНИЙ ХАРАКТЕР НАВЧАННЯ ЯК ВАЖЛИВИЙ КОМПОНЕНТ РЕФОРМУВАННЯ ЮРИДИЧНОЇ ОСВІТИ В УКРАЇНІ

Анотація. *Актуальність дослідження практикоорієнтованого навчального процесу зумовлена процесами реформування юридичної освіти в Україні, спробами теоретичного визначення методики викладання навчальних предметів та проведення самостійних занять. Дослідження особливостей організації виконання студентами самостійних завдань, їх перевірка та аналіз помилок зумовлене його метою, яка полягає у вивченні практикоорієнтованого характеру навчання та виявленні навчальних труднощів при виконанні студентами самостійної роботи, пропонування напрямів їх усунення та обґрунтування варіанту удосконалення навчального процесу. Завдяки основним методам наукового пізнання, зокрема загальнонауковим та спеціально-юридичним, розкривається сутність самостійної роботи студентів, яка у своїй роботі містить принцип розвиваючого навчання, як без участі викладача, так і під його безпосереднім керівництвом. На основі філософського та функціонального методу вдалося окреслити основну функцію навчального процесу – одержання максимального обсягу знань, їх закріплення і перетворення у вміння і навички. Послугуючись структурно-функціональним методом досліджено, що серед найбільш корисних навичок для студентів при самостійному вирішенні завдань є написання есе та робота групами. Завдяки соціально-статистичному методу розкривається сутність групової роботи студентів, яка сприяє взаємному контролю, підвищенню рівня мотивації, розвитку пізнавальної діяльності, зацікавленості у виконанні спільної роботи тощо. Результат проведеного дослідження полягає в його обґрунтованості щодо раціональної організації методичного забезпечення самостійної роботи студентів, а також щодо можливості якісного засвоєння навчального матеріалу студентами, закладає основу для подальшої самоосвіти та самовдосконалення. Обґрунтовано, що виконання студентами-правниками самостійних домашніх завдань як теоретичного, так і практичного характеру позитивно впливають на формування і розвиток спеціальних (предметних) умінь і навичок, зокрема на володіння і правильне тлумачення юридичної термінології, визначення найважливіших ознак і природи правових категорій, уміння формулювати й обґрунтовувати власну позицію при аналізі ситуації з позиції права*

Ключові слова: *вища освіта, методика викладання, самостійна робота, домашнє завдання, приватноправові дисципліни, перевірка завдань*

Andrii B. Hryniak

*Kyiv Regional Center of the
National Academy of Legal Sciences of Ukraine
Kyiv, Ukraine*

Mariana D. Pleniuk

*Kyiv Regional Center of the
National Academy of Legal Sciences of Ukraine
Kyiv, Ukraine*

Anatolii H. Lapko

*Kyiv Regional Center of the
National Academy of Legal Sciences of Ukraine
Kyiv, Ukraine*

PRACTICAL-ORIENTED NATURE OF LEARNING AS AN IMPORTANT COMPONENT OF LEGAL EDUCATION REFORM IN UKRAINE

Abstract. *The relevance of the study of practice-oriented educational process is due to the processes of reforming legal education in Ukraine, attempts to theoretically determine the methods of teaching subjects and conducting independent classes. The study of the peculiarities of the organisation of students' independent tasks, their verification and analysis of errors is due to its purpose, which is to study the practice-oriented nature of learning and identify learning difficulties in students' independent work, suggest ways to eliminate them and justify improving the learning process. Thanks to the basic methods of scientific knowledge, in particular general and special legal, the essence of independent work of students is revealed, which in its work contains the principle of developmental learning, both without the participation of the teacher and under his direct supervision. Based on the philosophical and functional method it was possible to outline the main function of the educational process – obtaining the maximum amount of knowledge, their consolidation and transformation into skills and abilities. Using the structural-functional method, it was investigated that among the most useful skills for students in solving problems independently are writing essays and working in groups. Thanks to the socio-statistical method, the essence of students' group work is revealed, which promotes mutual control, increases the level of motivation, development of cognitive activity, interest in performing joint work, etc. The result of the study is its validity on the rational organisation of methodological support of independent work of students, as well as on the possibility of high-quality assimilation of educational material by students, lays the foundation for further self-education and self-improvement. It is substantiated that the performance of independent homework by students-lawyers of both theoretical and practical nature has a positive effect on the formation and development of special (subject) skills, including mastery and correct interpretation of legal terminology, definition of the most important features and nature of legal categories, ability to formulate and substantiate their position when analysing the situation from the standpoint of law*

Keywords: *higher education, teaching methods, independent work, homework, private law disciplines, task verification*

INTRODUCTION

In today's world, higher education is the foundation of human development in general and civil society in particular. Admittedly, it is also a guarantor of individual development of personality, because it contributes to the formation of intellectual, spiritual and productive potential of man. Therefore, the development of education should be harmoniously combined with the development of the state, in which each individual would receive favourable conditions for full individual development, satisfaction of both intellectual and material needs. The problem of ensuring the quality of higher legal education, especially with the introduction modern information technologies of distance learning and in conditions coronavirus infection COVID-19 is a cornerstone among other problems of modern higher education. The state as a guarantor should have the function of controlling the quality of higher education. At the same time to control not only the learning process, teaching disciplines, licensing, accreditation of higher education institutions, but also the “result” of education, in particular by conducting a single state qualifying exam. Therewith, it is necessary to realise that the quality of legal education, and therefore its effectiveness depends primarily on teaching and methodological support, the use of interactive teaching methods, creative approach of the teacher to prepare materials and tasks, systematic regulation and implementation of independent work. As noted by OO Cat, an independent problem is that studying in law schools in fact does not provide students with practical skills at a level sufficient to use their knowledge after obtaining a diploma of higher education [1, p. 132]. Moreover, as rightly noted by S.O. Pogribny, we can confidently say that the importance of understanding the specifics of legal education

goes far beyond professional legal practice, it is a matter of formation and formation of the rule of law in general [2, p. 142]. That is why the methodical analysis of the peculiarities of the organisation of students' independent work, their verification and analysis of errors requires a separate scientific substantiation and research, and therefore the issues stated in the article are relevant.

In modern conditions of intensive socio-economic development of society, it is extremely important to increase the educational level of training of highly qualified specialists in the field of jurisprudence, enriching their intellectual and creative potential. An important condition for solving this problem is the need to "arm" future lawyers with knowledge that will allow them to communicate freely on a professional basis with both Ukrainian and foreign colleagues, by familiarising themselves with scientific doctrine, judicial practice of different countries in the original language, which will contribute to the effectiveness of performing professional tasks. These skills are "instilled" in future lawyers during the teaching of the discipline "Private Law", "Civil Law" and others. According to A.S. Dowgert, it is with the help of these disciplines that future lawyers are explained the principles, nature, structure and role of private law in the organisation of civil society and laid knowledge about the main categories, institutions of the general part of private law (subjects, objects, legal facts, the content of civil relations, etc.) [3, p. 199]. Thus, the training of future specialists in higher education in the field of private law acquires special social significance, as their knowledge is an important factor in the high professional competence of future lawyers, whose main task is to protect the rights and interests of individuals and legal entities. That is why, among the types of educational and cognitive activities, which according to the normative plan of functioning of a certain educational institution is planned and organised by a teacher of private law educational disciplines, in the educational process there are activities planned and organised by the subject. It is an independent individual work that has a fairly wide range of pedagogical tasks aimed at expanding and consolidating knowledge, mastering the methods of cognition, the formation of the need for self-education, education of volitional traits and other positive traits [4, p. 146–147].

Analysing the current substantive state of legal education, R.O. Stefanchuk notes that today there is an urgent need to shift the emphasis primarily on the training of a specialist in the field of law as a highly qualified specialist who is able to professionally solve the tasks set before him. It is necessary to stop educating "crossword puzzle players" who can give an answer to any question from the field of "general knowledge", and should direct their efforts to the formation of highly qualified specialists in the field of law, who have systematic deep knowledge and sufficient skills of practical training in this field and can independently solve the tasks assigned to them [5, p. 223-224]. The importance of ensuring the implementation of independent work by law students is due to the introduction of the Bologna process in the Ukrainian education system, according to which a significant increase in independent student work (up to 50-60%) and individualisation of education [6, p. 101]. Since the transition to the Bologna Process, such constructions as credit-module system of education, academic mobility of teachers and students, lifelong learning, distance work of students, etc. have become clear. There is much debate about whether legal education in the Bologna Process is good or bad, but the opportunity for self-realisation in the professional sphere is obvious, the level of competitiveness of professionals in the labour market today is quite high, which is impossible without quality higher education.

The growing requirements for the quality of professional skills of a student of law encourage the improvement of forms and methods of teaching, which make it possible to shift the emphasis to the training of a lawyer in the field of law as highly qualified, able to professionally solve problems practical training skills in this area. Accordingly, the student's orientation in the educational process to independent work is also due to the rapid pace of development of scientific and technological progress. The organisation and methodological support of students independent work have been repeatedly discussed in scientific circles [7-10] however, modern realities of life, in particular the spread of the global pandemic, have somewhat changed the perspective of important components of the educational process, which provide for the integration of various types of collective or individual educational activities, which are carried out during classroom, extracurricular activities, with or without the participation of a teacher, as well as under his guidance. That is why it is extremely important to review the methodological features and specifics of organising students' independent work, change the verification of their homework, etc. The purpose of this study is to determine methodological features and specifics of the organisation of independent work of law students, checking homework and analysing mistakes.

1. MATERIALS AND METHODS

To analyse the prospects for further development of Higher Education, the latest developments of the Ukrainian doctrine, methods of teaching academic disciplines, possession of elementary skills in solving practical problems, in particular, the analysis of the practice of the court, the European Court of human rights, the Ukrainian and international standards of higher education were worked out, the main trends in the

development of higher education in Ukraine were traced, the methodology for conducting independent work with students was studied, which allows identifying practical problems, in particular to identify errors and analyse them. The structure of scientific research on the organisation of students' independent work (tasks), their verification and analysis of errors should contain traditional elements: problem statement, putting forward initial provisions and their theoretical development, collecting and analysing empirical data, justifying the conclusion, formulating questions that need to be solved in the future [11]. For its part, the main tasks in the study of methods of performing independent tasks by students, their verification and analysis of errors should be a focus on: Western standards of education; democratic approach based on the experience of European countries; determining the optimal ratio of public and private law; on the philosophy of perception of civil, not totalitarian society. This approach to the study of the discipline "Civil Law" will enable a comprehensive analysis of private law categories and phenomena, and allow achieving the purpose of teaching the discipline.

Private law disciplines should be based on the special mentality and national traditions of the country, which is formed more than one millennium and contains the dynamics of studying the history of private law and Roman private law in particular. The world practice of civil society development testifies to the objective nature of the optimal balance of private and public disciplines, and therefore in this perspective it is worth developing a scientific plan in higher education today. The most important courses for students should be "Civil Law", "Property Law", "Contract Law", "Torts", "Civil Procedure Law", "Corporate Law", "Family Law", "Inheritance Law", "Labor Law" "Consumer protection". At the same time, the scope of their teaching should meet European standards, and not contain echoes of non-private design law, such as operational management and economic management and others. Scientific knowledge of private law disciplines should be based on the principles of scientific objectivity, unity of modern theory and practice, which will cultivate in the minds of future lawyers professional skills depending on modern ideology, politics, development of civil society. After all, the science of private law has its own methods, which are formed through the methods of formal logic and so on. The comparative legal method, which became the basis for determining the content of such private legal categories as "civil legal relations", "individual", "legal entity", etc. and allowed identifying their inherent features, etc.

With the help of the method of abstraction the conclusions of the research are formed in the article, the method of deduction and induction allowed performing the corresponding search of ideas and conclusions concerning methodical features of the organisation of performance by students of independent tasks, their check and the analysis of errors. To achieve the goal of scientific research were also used methods of scientific knowledge, including comparative, dialectical, formal-logical, structural, method of analysis, induction, interpretation of legal norms, simplification of the concept, theological method, "golden rule" and so on. The regulatory framework of this study included curricula and programmes of teaching disciplines [12; 13], codified regulations – sources of civil legislation of Ukraine, in particular the Civil Code of Ukraine [14], Family Code of Ukraine [15]. Therewith, to properly illustrate the application of the relevant methodology and teaching skills, a number of methodological guidelines and instructions, instructions, standard plans of academic disciplines, etc. are analysed. This applies entirely to the methods of teaching private law disciplines and conducting independent students.

2. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Independent work of students is based on the principle of developmental learning both without the participation of the teacher and under his direct supervision. During the independent work of students the main function of the educational process is realised – the student receives the maximum amount of knowledge, their consolidation and transformation into skills and abilities. Through independent work, students develop the ability to: consciously show motivation and purposefulness in acquiring knowledge; to cultivate self-organisation, self-control and other personal qualities; to fill the "information vacuum" with the necessary scientific knowledge; get rid of the so-called "phenomenon of secondary illiteracy", in particular the inability to read meaningfully, analyse the information obtained, draw their conclusions; to form professional competence; to acquire skills of independent work for future professional activity; take responsibility, solve problems independently, find constructive solutions, solutions to crisis situations. Proper organisation and methodological support of independent work of students will allow developing both general and integral competencies, a variety of which is the ability to abstract thinking, analysis, synthesis, generation of new ideas, etc., as well as the ability to use scientific theories and concepts, acquired practical knowledge for conducting scientific research. For example, when studying the theoretical understanding of the mechanism of legal regulation, students develop skills not only in terms of its abstract understanding, but also the implementation of its model in practice due to its elements. After all, as is known, the mechanism of legal regulation includes the rules of law, social regulators, legal facts, civil law [16]. During the study, the student must be tuned to an

effective process of cognition, feel a personal interest in it, understand why and why he performs these tasks. It is known that educational activities cannot bring a positive result without motivation. Legislative changes, which are usually based on the results of scientific and comparative analysis, can serve as such a motivating feature for the student.

The mechanism of formation of educational motivation is the development of a single structure of the purpose of educational activity. Therefore, the timely and systematic formulation by the teacher of the purpose of learning, which students must accept and direct their efforts to achieve it, plays an important role. At this stage it is important to properly organise the pedagogical interaction of teacher and student. In the psychology of higher education, scientists distinguish the following principles of organisation of interaction: 1) dialogue; 2) problematisation; 3) personalisation; 4) individualisation; 5) differentiation. According to the principle of dialogisation, the lesson (both practical and lecture) should not turn into a simple message of knowledge (reading the material). It should be built as a discussion of different views, as a joint search for truth, i.e. in the form of dialogue, not a monologue of the teacher. In such a process of creative discussion of theoretical and practical aspects of the legal problem, students will form (actualize) cognitive, professional and social motives. The principle of problematisation provides an opportunity to develop skills for the systematic creation of problem situations, conditions for their independent solution and students' cognitive tasks. The principle of personalisation allows developing the skills of personal communication between teacher and student, which takes place in partnership. The principle of individualisation and differentiation of education allows considering the individual characteristics and interests of students, to create the most favourable conditions for the development of their abilities and inclinations [17]. Thus, motivation to study is one of the main conditions for the implementation of the educational process, which promotes the development of intelligence, thinking, analysis of independent decision-making, and is a driving force for improving the professionalism of law students. It is the motivation to study that allows students to perform their work independently.

Independent work is the basis for higher education and an integral part of the training process. According to V.I. Zagvyazinsky, independent work forms a willingness to self-education, creates a basis for lifelong learning, the opportunity to constantly improve their skills, if necessary, then relearn, be a conscious and active citizen [18]. It is known that the process of real, long-term and high-quality acquisition and structuring of knowledge occurs as a result of independent work of students. That is why the ratio of classroom hours and hours allocated for independent work in higher education institutions in Europe and America is 1: 2 (one to two), and in some educational institutions in Finland in general 1: 3 (one to three), this is despite that we rarely have even a ratio of 1: 1 (to each other). In this regard, the role of the teacher in the training of highly qualified lawyers is changing, which involves a creative approach to the organisation of the educational process using innovative teaching methods and knowledge control. This requires raising the level of qualification of the teaching staff, because the teacher goes from the status of "lecturer" to the status of "supervisor (consultant)". At this stage, teachers often use the method of analysis of scientific articles, which provide an analysis of case law and legal doctrine. For example, in the article "Contractual regulation of joint property relations of individuals in Ukraine (on the example of transactions on the transfer of property ownership)" the authors rightly stated that a civil contract acts as a regulator of joint property relations of individuals, clarifies the place and role of civil legal agreement among the grounds for the emergence of joint property rights of individuals and proposed the author's concept of civil law agreement as a regulator of property relations, highlighted its basic conditions, taking into account the analysis of judicial practice [19]. This approach gives students the opportunity to rethink the material passed and understand the scientific approaches of the authors.

The student's independent work combines individual classroom and extracurricular (home) activities with the development and practical application of knowledge, competencies, abilities and skills. The organisation of independent work of students is carried out, as a rule, based on educational and methodical literature recommended by the course programme and the teacher with obligatory control of quality of training by qualified experts, examiners and experts. The purpose of independent work of students is to master a certain amount of knowledge and skills. Independent work of law students can be of two types: organised by the teacher and independent work without supervision by the teacher (homework), when he acts only as a consultant on self-education. Types of independent work of students include both classroom and extracurricular independent work. The first type involves solving problems according to the topic of the lesson, individual tests, surveys, etc. The second type includes writing essays, reports, essays, speeches at conferences, student competitions, and so on. Independent work of students is associated with different levels of knowledge, skills and abilities to search for information, work with online publications and more. Unfortunately, the implementation of scientific projects, writing legal essays, etc. mostly contains formal signs, and the responsible attitude of students to such tasks is below expectations. The effectiveness of students' independent work largely depends on how independent it is and how the teacher controls it. The system of independent

work of students, as well as the control depends on its planning and organisation directly by the teacher. Thus, the main content of independent work of students, its methods and forms, deadlines, their sequence are determined by the teacher within the discipline. The main content of independent work of students depends on its planning and organisation by the teacher, as well as on the system control.

For successful independent work of students it is necessary to emphasise attention: 1) statement of cognitive tasks; 2) algorithms, methods and forms of control; 3) determining the types of consulting assistance, etc. The organisation of independent work of students should be combined with all teaching methods and together with them represent a single system of tools in the acquisition of knowledge and skills. Among all the most useful skills for students in solving problems or writing essays, we consider working in groups. As a rule, 2-3 people take part in such a group, they solve typical or complex tasks, at the same time they can be given the opportunity to check small tasks of other people (group members) or write reviews of their reports. Group work of students, thanks to mutual control, promotes increase of level of motivation, development of cognitive activity, interest in performance of joint work. These forms of pre-classroom independent work of students are the most significant and very effective for students. This way of independent work of students is the most effective in preparation for a speech at scientific conferences, round tables, etc. In addition to the above, “learning channels” on the YouTube platform are becoming increasingly popular in modern education. The question of whether they can be considered a full-fledged scientific platform for higher education cannot be answered in the affirmative, as such educational platforms are only a good help to broaden students' horizons.

Regarding the practical component of training, we note that the task is quite complex. After all, it is almost impossible to answer in the affirmative the question of whether university graduates have practical understanding and skills in professional ethics or legal responsibility? Did they teach them to express their opinion correctly in writing, to speak in public, etc.? These skills are definitely “lived” by students during seminars, practical classes and play an important role in the legal profession. That is why they take place among the independent work of students. Independent work of students involves the integration of different types of individual and collective learning activities, which can be carried out during classroom, extracurricular activities, and without the participation of the teacher or under his direct supervision. Time aspects of students' independent work should be from 15 to 55% of the curriculum. This attitude is the optimal combination of classroom and independent work of a lawyer for the proper accumulation and consolidation of the level of knowledge through the student's own activities. We are convinced that the independent work of students should dominate among other types of educational activities of students, as it serves as a good basis for their practical training. In addition to practical importance, independent work of students also has educational value, because it forms independence not only as a set of certain skills and abilities, but also helps to form independence as an important feature of the character of a lawyer. No wonder the important task of legal education in general and legal schools in particular is not only to provide young professionals with the appropriate level of knowledge directly by teachers, but also the formation of a constant need to update their knowledge with changes in legislation, legal positions of courts and more.

When analysing the independent work of students, we pay attention to the qualification criterion. In particular, according to the method of management and control, the quality of knowledge, students' independent work is divided into: classroom (extracurricular); collective work under the supervision of the teacher and individual lessons with the teacher. By level of compulsory: compulsory, which is defined by the curriculum and work programme (preparation for lectures, practical work, preparation of undergraduate practice, preparation and writing of term papers, etc.); recommended (participation in the work of a legal clinic, scientific circles, preparation of scientific theses, articles, reports at conferences, etc.); initiated (participation in various competitions, grants, etc.). Students' independent work is also proposed to be divided according to the level of creativity, in particular into:

- reproductive, carried out according to a certain pattern (solving typical problems, filling in tables, modelling schemes, performing training tasks that require comprehension, memorisation and simple reproduction of previously acquired knowledge);
- reconstructive, which involves listening to and supplementing the teacher's lectures, drawing up plans, abstracts, abstracts, etc.;
- heuristic, aimed at solving problems, obtaining new information, its structuring (compilation of reference notes, schemes-summaries, annotations, construction of technological maps, solving creative tasks);
- research, which is focused on conducting research (experimentation, theoretical research, etc.) [20].

The organisation of independent work of students consists of two main aspects: a) development of methods of organisation of control over independent work of students; b) educational and methodological support of independent work. For its part, the control of students' independent work should also include listening to abstracts, checking solved problems, answers to control or test questions, checking completed

individual tasks, working with educational and scientific literature, and so on. Consider the above in more detail. It is known that in the educational process the dominant place is occupied by the work of students with scientific, reference and educational literature. Scientific articles, monographs, laws of Ukraine, decrees of the president of Ukraine, regulations of the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine, decisions of the Supreme Court, etc. are a source of professional knowledge and contribute to the development of priority skills among students. The ability to use such sources determines the quality of writing written works, including essays, term papers, essays and more. One of the forms of independent work is homework of students. It is carried out without the guidance of a teacher, but on his assignment. Doing homework, students allocate their time, determine the order of work, control it, find and correct mistakes. The success of homework depends on these skills, preparedness for independent homework in general and on a specific topic in particular [21].

It is worth noting that the task of independent homework is a necessary part of the educational and methodological complex of a discipline of the private law segment, the development of which is entrusted to the teacher. Tasks for independent homework of students the teacher develops together with the necessary educational and methodical complex of the discipline and submits it to the department before the beginning of the academic year or semester. At the beginning of the semester it is necessary to acquaint students with the organisation of work in a certain discipline, with the forms of control, with the organisation of independent, in particular homework, with the criteria for its evaluation. We believe that the main feature of this type of educational process is reflected in the student's homework, which complements classes in private law disciplines, is characterised by great independence and lack of teacher guidance. The success of independent work depends on the following factors:

- 1) formation of cognitive interest;
- 2) pedagogical guidance and control by the teacher;
- 3) adherence to didactic principles, in particular accessibility and affordability (they are also called the principle of increasing complexity – from simple to complex).

The methodological feature of ensuring the successful completion of the student's independent task is reflected in a clear explanation by the teacher of its content and methodology. The amount of independent work in private law disciplines should be regulated in accordance with the norms of time, because the volume task combined with tasks from practical classes and preparation for lectures can lead to excessive student workload and quality losses in preparation for practical classes and lectures. Therefore, based on didactic tasks, it is advisable to highlight the following types of homework in the disciplines of the private law segment:

- 1) tasks aimed at preparing the perception of new educational material (superficial acquaintance of the student with the material of the future lecture);
- 2) tasks aimed at consolidating knowledge, skills and abilities (preparation of abstracts, essays, selection and analysis of literature on specific issues, etc.);
- 3) tasks that require the application of acquired knowledge in practice (step-by-step description of solving a specific case, search and correlation of general and special rules of law, etc.);
- 4) creative tasks aimed at activating creative thinking (preparation by students of substantiation of the opposite position from the case solved by the group in a practical lesson, use of the style of expert opinions).

In addition, when determining the content and scope of homework in private law disciplines, it is important to take into account the individual level of development of thinking and learning skills and the interests of individual students. A differentiated approach to this issue has a positive effect, while an individualised approach is needed to homework for students who have gaps in knowledge, skills, abilities after skipping classes. Therefore, it is useful to combine frontal, differentiated and individual tasks. Differentiation and individualisation of homework is appropriate not only for the degree of complexity, but also for the interests and specialisation of students. Thus, in our opinion, the methodological feature of ensuring the successful completion of homework by the student is its proper structuring. Each homework for a law student in private law disciplines should consist of three main components: 1) theoretical (consideration of information on a particular issue); 2) methodical (preparation of the corresponding clarity, the plan-summary to a certain subject); 3) practical (creative approach and quality in performing a specific task). Within the individual approach, it is necessary to plan the work of law students so that each of them received a task in accordance with their personal capabilities and abilities. This, in turn, requires: a) determining the level of theoretical and practical training of each student in the group; b) determination of their individual psychological characteristics; c) development of individual programmes for independent work on a particular private law discipline. Based on the above, we highlight the rules of effectiveness of homework, in particular:

- 1) the rule of mandatory planning of the optimal amount of homework (its volume should provide the opportunity to allocate the necessary and sufficient time for practical training to check it).
- 2) the rule of validity of tasks (they should not be “punitive” in any case).

- 3) the rule of focusing homework on the development of specific qualities of a lawyer (memorisation; control / self-control; independent cognitive activity; work with regulations, documents, court decisions, etc.).
- 4) the rule of explaining homework and motivating the student to do it properly.

Therewith, independent homework of students is organised by the teacher through a system of tasks, the performance of which must be assessed by the teacher, and this assessment should be included in the semester assessment of the student. Homework assignments, depending on its specifics, students can perform individually or in groups of 2-5 people, while the types of homework assignments for students depend on the characteristics of the discipline of the private law segment. These can be, for example: abstracting of scientific sources (begins with the independent choice of the topic of the abstract, defining the purpose, tasks and problems that reveal the essence of the chosen topic, selection of literature, compiling a bibliographic list of main sources, reviewing and summarising selected textbooks and articles, writing the abstract, its design); search for scientific literature on certain issues (the teacher prepares topics for the course or part of it and presents them to students who have to pick up the relevant literature in the library and on the Internet); solving legal problems and resolving disputes of private law nature (the teacher selects (develops) legal problems for certain sections of the course and offers to solve them in writing. Students can report on the solution in writing or (more effectively) in a practical lesson in front of a general group of students); writing an essay as a type of written educational work (is to express the student's own subjective assessment of a particular rule of law or legal position of the court, as well as the activation and development of non-standard (creative), original coverage of the material. It is also a free style with possible elements of improvisation; drafting documents, in particular civil law agreements and appendices to it, preparation of constituent documents of a legal entity (allows developing in a law student such competencies in legal documentation as the ability to properly organise the documentation of practical legal activities); analysis of situational exercises (the teacher offers law students a problem situation, in the process of analysis of which they must formulate a legal problem, translate it into a problem and solve it using the relevant provisions of regulations); creation of situational exercises (this form of homework activates the student's mental activity, promotes the development of analytical skills and improves the skills of working with regulations, which is almost the main prerequisite for the success of a lawyer's professional activity).

Among all types of independent work of students the most widespread is writing of abstracts. Abstract (from Latin *referre* – “report”) is a type of written work of a research nature, which is quite concise, overview of the essence of a particular scientific issue. Today, with free access to the Internet and, accordingly, with unlimited information opportunities for students, it is necessary to narrow the topics of course work. During their examination, you should pay special attention to the quality of writing and full disclosure of this topic. After all, it is known that students to quickly resolve this issue usually turn to the Internet, find relevant topics, download essays and with a sense of “duty” give them to the teacher. In most cases, such works are of low quality, contain many stylistic, logical, grammatical errors, distort the names of the authors, their quotes are not sustained structurally and do not correspond to reality. Given this, we believe that both the teacher and the student should be responsible for this task. Formal submission of an abstract without further coverage of its content cannot be considered a full-fledged independent work, does not give the student the right to claim a high grade and does not lead to positive learning outcomes. Another no less interesting type of independent work of students is a scientific report. A scientific report is a short (5-10 minutes) report that summarises scientific information, achievements, discoveries and results of scientific research. The scientific report can be a supplement to the main issues of the course and is practiced during seminars, conferences, symposia, round tables, etc.

To perform this task, students should spend many hours of work related to gathering information, writing a text, preparing for a speech, preparing material in accordance with the requirements, and so on. For the greatest understanding and perception of the material, it is proposed to form the report according to the following structure: 1) introduction, which analyses the problem field or the specific problem that caused the report; 2) the main part, which publishes the author's idea of solving the problem, the course or results of scientific research, etc.; 3) the result in which the conclusion is made, recommendations are given, prospects are defined. We believe that the work done by students will form the appropriate skills, abilities to study, collect and analyse scientific material, the necessary information and more. By uttering it publicly, the student not only develops the skills of public speaking, which are crucial for a lawyer, but also provides an opportunity for public discussion (discussion). Discussion (from Latin *discussio* – “research”, “analysis”) is a kind of independent work of students, during which there is a collective discussion, the purpose of which is to find the right solution to the issue by expressing their opinions and comparing opponents' views on the problem. During the scientific discussion, students voice opposing views, identify different positions, emotional and intellectual stimulus leads to active thinking, and thus stimulates the relevant professional skills.

The next no less effective element of students' independent work is an essay. Essay is an attempt at independent analysis, substantiation of a theoretical hypothesis, etc. There are opinions that the modern dimension of social problems and their understanding, constant socio-economic changes, causes and trends of legal phenomena require students to apply not so much a research approach as a competent analysis, appropriate problem definition, ability to professionally formulate an alternative, hypothesis, prove ability or failure its practical existence. Writing an essay, as well as preparing for it, gives students access to self-education, non-traditional accumulation of knowledge, including through the Internet, expands opportunities for creativity, an extraordinary approach to solving legal conflicts, problems and more. The essay allows covering individual impressions of students and does not pretend to exhaustive interpretation. As a work of reasoning of small size, the essay expresses individual considerations on a particular issue, problem, etc., consciously does not claim to be an exhaustive interpretation of the topic. The essay uses a free style of writing with possible elements of improvisation, in other words – it is the author's demonstration of the view through the written expression of thoughts. Essay is closer to the remark, which is addressed to the reader “prepared”, familiar with the subject of the essay. Such “targeting” provides an opportunity to focus the reader's attention on the disclosure of new content, rather than accumulating in writing the details of the case known on the topic.

First of all, students should carefully read the proposed topic of the essay. Think of relevant examples, and possibly certain quotes that will organically complement and illustrate their point of view, provide statistics and analyse them. Pay attention to whether the logical structure of the essay is preserved, as well as whether the arguments correspond to these theses. The main purpose of the essay is the student's independent vision of the problem, question, topic based on the processed material and arguments, etc. Unlike other methods of control and testing of knowledge, the purpose of the essay is to diagnose the productive, creative component of the cognitive activity of the student, who analyses information, compares facts, approaches and alternatives, personal assessment and conclusions. The use of essays in independent work of students contributes to a clearer formulation of ideas, helps to arrange them in a logical sequence, involves fluency in the language of terms and concepts, reveals the depth of educational material. When evaluating an essay, the teacher's focus should be primarily on the student's ability to critically and independently evaluate the available data, points of view, positions, arguments; ability to understand, evaluate and establish connections between key points of problems and issues; the ability to differentiate opposing approaches to the model, applying them to empirical material or discussion of fundamental issues. Lack of clear answers, clear organisation of the plan, structure of the essay, argumentation of evidence, arguments, conclusions, excessive and superficial manipulation of data, simple statement of fact instead of generalisation, stating the views of others while “silencing” their position, excessive repetition negatively affects evaluation. Thus, carefully worked out methodical work of the teacher during drawing up by students of the essay will allow transferring any student from the passive consumer of knowledge to the expert capable to formulate a legal problem, to analyse ways of its decision and to find optimum result.

Execution of the above types of independent homework, as a rule, is provided for students of private law disciplines full-time. For its part, due to the specifics of distance learning for law students who choose it, there is also the implementation of homework, which is conducted in each course from the first to the fourth year of study. At the same time, the number of tests for each semester is determined by the curriculum of the faculty. The content and topics of control tasks are based on the study material, which is planned in the Curriculum of private law discipline in accordance with the year of study and faculty. The purpose of creating homework is the final control of knowledge, skills and abilities of law students obtained during the academic year and is the main condition for admission to the exam or test in the discipline. It is important to note that the purpose of homework (DKR) is primarily to check the level of preparation of students in the process of independent study of educational material. The content of each DCR must fully correspond to the working curriculum of the discipline. Thus, homework in distance or blended learning is a lecture-related task that is individually developed and set by teachers and must be completed by students, indicating the date of completion and sending it to the teacher to check and grade. This type of assessment in distance learning allows students to observe the process of their development, interact with the teacher, increase motivation and be responsible for their results.

Homework uploaded to one or another distance learning system is evaluated by the teacher. At the same time, it is worth emphasising the significant workload of the teacher in terms of distance learning, because each student's work should be reviewed, errors – corrected, inaccuracies – updated, and the work – evaluated. Assessment of homework is important, because this stage informs students about their success and manages the learning process. Therewith, the control over the performance and assessment of homework of students of private law disciplines in the distance form of education has its own specifics and mainly depends on the instructions of the teacher. Thus, the discussion of the results of homework can take place with the help of

synchronous distance learning technologies, when communication between teacher and student takes place in real time (contact through communication). This can be video, audio, chat, etc. Admittedly, this method of checking and evaluating homework has many advantages, because during synchronous communication the teacher can check the level of student knowledge of homework, as well as his understanding of the material. For his part, the student has the opportunity through dialogue with the teacher to understand and analyse the mistakes made while doing homework. In addition, homework can be checked and graded asynchronously, in particular through the exchange of e-mails.

CONCLUSIONS

All comparative studies show that distance learning can be as effective as classroom learning if the methods and technologies are appropriate, there is interaction between students and there is timely feedback between teacher and student. Successful distance learning programmes are based on the consistent and comprehensive efforts of students, faculty, and school administration. Summarising all the above, it should also be noted that the rational organisation of methodological support for independent work of students will provide an opportunity not only for high-quality learning, but also lay the foundations for further self-education and self-improvement. Properly formed didactic purpose of independent work of students will provide purposeful study of the material, which will determine the development of creative thinking, taking into account the individual capabilities of the individual. Execution by students-lawyers of independent homework of both theoretical and practical character will positively influence formation and development of special (subject) abilities and skills. The most important of them are as follows:

- possession and correct interpretation of legal terminology;
- identification of the most important features and nature of legal categories;
- competent interpretation of the provisions of regulations and commenting on legal texts;
- ability to apply legal knowledge to analyse specific life situations;
- ability to formulate and substantiate one's own position when analysing the situation from the position of law;
- ability to draft legal documents (receipts, civil contracts, powers of attorney, etc.);
- ability to design lawful behaviour in legally important situations.

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Andrii B. Hryniak

Doctor of Law, Professor
Corresponding Member of the National Academy of Legal Sciences of Ukraine
Deputy Director for Research
Kyiv Regional Center of the National Academy of Legal Sciences of Ukraine
01024, 3 Pylyp Orlyk Str., Kyiv, Ukraine

Mariana D. Pleniuk

Doctor of Law, Professor
Scientific Secretary
Kyiv Regional Center of the National Academy of Legal Sciences of Ukraine
01024, 3 Pylyp Orlyk Str., Kyiv, Ukraine

Anatolii H. Lapko

Candidate of Law
Deputy Director for Organizational Affairs
Kyiv Regional Center of the National Academy of Legal Sciences of Ukraine
01024, 3 Pylyp Orlyk Str., Kyiv, Ukraine

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