



**European Association for
Public Administration
Accreditation**

18 September 2012

EAPAA Accreditation Committee Evaluation Report

**Corvinus University of Budapest, Faculty of Economics, Budapest, Hungary
Master in Public Policy and Management**

Evaluation Report with respect to the request for accreditation of June 21 2011.

In consideration of the Self-Evaluation Report of the above programme of 13 January 2012, the Site Visit Report of 30 July 2012 of the EAPAA Site Visit Team for this programme, and the response of the programme of 17 July 2012 to the draft of the Site Visit Report, the EAPAA Accreditation Committee, at its meeting of 8 September 2012 in Bergen Norway, has evaluated this programme against the EAPAA Accreditation Criteria (version 8, September 2011).

1. Accreditation Criteria

2. Applicability/Eligibility	
2.1 Domain	<p>The programme is a public administration programme with a strong focus upon economic aspects. Although the programme's name is 'Master in Public Policy and Management', the students get the title of 'Master of Economics in Public Policy and Management'.</p> <p>The programme is one of the programmes of the Faculty of Economics, and placed by the state as a multidisciplinary programme in the disciplinary field of Economics and Management Sciences. However, the basic disciplines of the field of public administration are represented in the programme (or as an entrance requirement).</p> <p>Although the programme has a strong economic focus, the Accreditation Committee is of opinion that the programme is well within the boundaries of the field of public administration, and concludes that this criterion is fulfilled.</p>
2.2 Geography	<p>Hungary is a member of the Council of Europe, therefore the programme falls within the jurisdiction of EAPAA.</p>
2.3 Programme longevity	<p>The programme in its present day form started in the fall of 2008, with the first graduates in 2010. Because in the spring of 2010 an 'extra' group was started, there are now 3 cohorts of graduates. Furthermore the programme is the Bologna-successor of a 'comprehensive' programme with the same focus.</p> <p>The programme fulfils the longevity requirement.</p>
2.4 Programme variants and locations	<p>The programme can be followed in a fulltime and a part-time (weekend) variant. The fall 2009 and spring 2010 cohorts had both variants, however, since then only the fulltime variant is realised because of lack of students</p>

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	<p>for the part-time variant.</p> <p>The part-time variant is excluded from the accreditation because the site visit team didn't have enough information about this variant.</p>
4 Category of accreditation	<p>There could be discussion about the character of the programme: a public administration master programme with a (strong) focus upon economics, or an economics programme with strong focus upon public sector management and policy. Given the content of the programme, the orientation of the faculty, their research and international affiliations, the Accreditation Committee is of the opinion that this programme can be considered as a "second cycle graduate/master public administration master programme".</p>
5. Standards	
5.1 Domain of public administration Score: adequate	<p>The strong point is the focus on public economics (in relation to public policy and public management), but this might also be a possible threat . The Accreditation Committee sees an interesting programme with enough public administration elements to be called a public administration programme, but it is on the edge of the discipline.</p>
5.2 Mission of the programme Score: adequate	<p>The mission of the MA in Public Policy and Management programme is to educate graduates who can apply their practical and theoretical knowledge in economics, social sciences, management, and law to solve and analyze issues in public policy, public sector, and state administration. The programme is focused on the comparative analysis of questions of public administration, public policy and public management in EU and non-EU countries in the context of processes of internationalization, Europeanization and European integration.</p> <p>On a general level, the mission statement is rather broad and unspecific. The mission based programme outcome is in line with this mission. The programme could improve on this point, by a more explicit relationship with the competencies it wants to develop in its graduates.</p>
5.3 Level Score: good	<p>The entrance requirements of the programme demand a bachelor diploma with "at least basic Bachelor's level courses in various fields related to the Faculty's general economics profile (mathematics and statistics, economics and business, social sciences) as well as the programme more narrowly defined subject areas (public economics or finance, public policy analysis)". These requirements make sure the courses of this programme can be on a master's level. From the course abstracts and obligatory literature the SVT learned that the courses have master's level.</p> <p>The Accreditation Committee is of opinion that the level of this programme is on the master's level.</p>
5.4 Practise and internships Score: adequate	<p>Internships are not an obligatory component of the curriculum. Also for voluntary internships there are no provisions in place to be granted with credit points. However, there are various other sources for links to practice established throughout and around the programme, like practice oriented course work, thesis work in contact with practice, and a mentor programme with practitioners serving as mentors etc.</p> <p>The relation to practice in the programme is adequate although this</p>

	happens not via internships, but via multiple other sources of links to practice. Within the national constraints the programme helps students to find internships.
5.5.1 Curriculum Content	
5.5.1.1 Core components Score: good	The mandatory core curriculum courses include courses from economics, public policy, public administration, law, as well as methods courses. The whole programme sets a strong emphasis on economics. To date, there is also a substantial amount of public policy included in the core courses. However, topics like law and sociology are only marginally included (throughout the whole programme). Public management is not part of the core courses, but exclusively delegated to (both) specialization areas. The core curriculum of the Master programme offers an attractive and well reflected structure and course mix to students and provides them with a unique and sought after competence profile.
5.5.1.2 Other Components Score: adequate	The programme advertises with two specializations at choice, Public Policy Analysis and Public Management. The programme, specialisations and elective courses are well designed and structured. The practice of advertising two specializations, but only running one is very unusual and should be re-examined regarding its effects and advantages. The 'solution' initiated by the programme to eliminate all specializations has neither been a demand, nor suggested by the site visit team but will eliminate the confusing practice.. Further, it should be checked and observed that the Masters' theses do not veer away from the public policy and administration focus of the programme.
5.5.1.3 Structure and didactics of the programme Score: adequate	The programme uses a lot of different, consciously chosen teaching formats, such as seminars, course work, group work, and variety of teaching methods like interactive dialogs, discussions, debates, instructions. The didactics used in the programme therefore seem varied and modern. This is a well organized programme with a modern course format and teaching didactics approach. The high rate of "double-enrolled" students and students not finishing their studies within the regular timeframe needs to be further investigated.
5.5.1.4 Intake Score: adequate	A majority of students come from the Faculty's own bachelor programme, for the others there exists a clear schema of the courses they are expected to have completed If they lack any of these pre-qualifications, students are required to take these topics as extra courses to close the qualification gap. This system seems to fulfil its intention and no interference problems were reported from students. The programme is well oriented and tailored to the competencies of its incoming students.
5.5.2 Length Score: Complies	The length of the program (120 ECTS) and study times is consistent with European standards.
5.5.3 Results Score: good	The realized qualifications meet the intended final qualifications of the Master's degree under review. The quality of the master theses seems to

	<p>be adequate. The feedback and information the site visit team got from students, alumni, as well as employers was that the qualifications acquired in the programme meet their expectations and are unanimously considered as good and comprehensive.</p> <p>The final qualifications that have been achieved by the graduates meet the intended final qualifications of the programme according to all stakeholders.</p>
5.6 Quality Improvement and Innovation	
<p>5.6.1 Programme accomplishment Score: adequate</p>	<p>All courses of the programme are evaluated by students. The results of these evaluations are available for the Dean and the individual teachers. They are used in the Teachers' Performance Measurement system, and used in meetings of the Departmental Committee for Quality and Program Development that evaluates the programme and its components.</p> <p>There is a kind of quality management: they do evaluate courses and teachers; they speak about results. But the Accreditation Committee is missing the part of the systematic involvement of external stakeholders (including alumni). The existing system is too informal at the moment. In sum, the quality management is adequate but it should involve external stakeholders much more.</p>
<p>5.6.2 Curriculum Development Score: adequate</p>	<p>The faculty constantly is improving the programme. Minor changes can be realised without much problems; major changes have to go through the appropriate university channels.</p> <p>It is clear to the Accreditation Committee, that the curriculum has been developing, but it is also clear that this development takes place mostly internally and informally.</p>
<p>5.6.3 External Reviews Score: adequate</p>	<p>There was some feedback by external partners, and the programme made changes based on this. But so far there has been no previous accreditation.</p>
<p>5.7 Student Assessment Score: good</p>	<p>Many teachers use several forms of assessment (including group work and in-class participation) in the same course, leading to one mark. From the course abstracts it is clear that many different assessment methods are used, and that these are relevant for the subjects taught in those courses. The thesis always is an individual project, mentored by a faculty member, and assessed by two others.</p> <p>A lot of different assessment methods are used. The assessment is adequate and enough individual.</p>
<p>5.8 Programme Jurisdiction Score: good</p>	<p>There is a Department (of Public Policy and Management), situated in the Faculty of Economics, which is responsible for this programme which is taught jointly with members from the Business faculty. The responsibility for general programme planning and policy is in the hands of the programme leader.</p> <p>The programme seems to have enough influence – on the formal level the Faculty is the decision making body, but factually a lot of power is at the programme level. There is a clearly identified person who is responsible for the programme.</p>
<p>5.9.1 Faculty nucleus</p>	<p>the Department has 11 academic faculty members, two of whom are</p>

Score: good	professors, 5 are associate professors, 3 are assistant professors and one is a lecturer. There is also an emeritus professor who teaches on the programme. These are clearly involved with the running of the programme. The Faculty nucleus is a good team, highly qualified, and has proven will and skill for personal development, within a very open and constructive culture.
5.9.2 Faculty qualifications Score: good	All but one of the faculty in this main department, the Department of Public Policy and Management, have either a PhD or a DSc. Eight are in economics or some branch of economics, two in political science and one in public policy and administration. The quality and quantity of staff in relation to what they teach, is good. Also there is good cooperation throughout the university and also outside the University. The faculty is very well connected, visible, and active in research.
5.9.3 Diversity: gender and minorities Score: poor	This criterion can only be graded as 'poorly adequate'. There are no visible measures for any diversity policy. There are very few women in staff and none in the ranks of full professor, and no minorities in staff and students. For students, there is a "bonus" for minorities in the admission score, but hardly any Roma students apply.
5.10 Admission of Students Score: adequate	The entrance requirements of the programme demand a bachelor diploma with "at least basic Bachelor's level courses in various fields related to the Faculty's general economics profile (mathematics and statistics, economics and business, social sciences) as well as the programme's more narrowly defined subject areas (public economics or finance, public policy analysis)". Admission standards are clear and publicly available. The Accreditation Committee has comments on two points: the numbers of students are at a low level whereas there would be a higher need in society. Secondly, the "system" for minorities does not seem to work.
5.11 Supportive Services and Facilities Score: excellent	The budget for the programme is sufficient at the moment, but is under pressure. The physical facilities are excellent for the whole university. Also the library and IT-facilities are state of the art. There are more than enough computers for the students. The library has enough Hungarian and English titles and all students and faculty can log into the library and its electronic journals from their workplaces and from home. In conclusion: the facilities and supporting services are excellent.
5.12 Student Services Score: good	Most student services are organized at University (campus) or Faculty level. CUB's Career Counselling Office organises career expos, job fairs, trainee programs, personal CV counselling etc. regularly. However there is but little focus on the public sector. On the departmental level there is a mentor for each year of students. Voluntary student initiatives are very valuable and take over a lot of crucial services that otherwise would need to be organized and provided by the faculty. In general, student services work adequately and no additional service provisions are requested to date.
5.13 Public Relations	In Hungary the Government operates an effective website (and publishes

Score: adequate	<p>brochures regularly) to inform all stakeholders on higher education opportunities. More detailed information can be found on university websites. The fact, that only the more popular specialization will be offered is not stated clearly at either site.</p> <p>The program is visible and possible applicants can find almost every necessary information at the university's and government's website designed for them. The university has a great prestige, and plenty of open programmes are organized.</p>
6 Additional Criteria Score: n.a.	N.A.

2. Conclusion

- The programme has a clear focus, but at the same time its mission is rather broad and ambiguous (academic or practice oriented). The programme has no clear learning objectives yet.
- Strong point is the focus on public economics (in relation to public policy and public management), but this might also be a weak point. The Accreditation Committee sees an interesting programme with enough public administration elements to be called a public administration programme, but it is on the edge of the discipline. When economics gets an even greater focus then it will become a public sector specialisation in an economic programme.
- The programme has a strong and very well connected faculty that is active in the international public administration world and research.
- The programme is rather small in terms of number of students (and faculty). This is an advantage because the lines are short, and the relation between faculty and students can be intensive. At the same time all kind of processes tend to be informal in small organisations, with the danger of unsystematic processes. In this programme this is visible especially in the programme evaluation and development, and in the involvement of external stakeholders (alumni and employers).
- With respect to diversity the programme is 'poorly adequate' because there are no visible measures for any diversity policy, neither for women, nor minorities.
- The facilities for the programme are excellent.

Based on the above evaluation of the specific criteria, the EAPAA Accreditation Committee concludes that this programme's fulltime variant meets the criteria for accreditation sufficiently, and so the programme can be accredited without restrictions.