



European Association for
Public Administration
Accreditation

EAPAA Accreditation Committee Standing Orders

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EAPAA Accreditation Committee Standing Orders

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Preamble

The EAPAA Accreditation Criteria and Procedures and other regulations concerning the EAPAA accreditation as outlined in this Standing Orders, will be in line with the European Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area (as issued by DG Education and Culture and ENQA).

The relevant articles of the EAPAA Statutes (as amended on June 12, 2004 and September 8, 2010) read as follows:

Accreditation/standing orders.

Article 5.

1. The Accreditation Committee will lay down the standing orders, which standing orders will contain the guidelines, standards, criteria and procedures for (extension/withdrawal of the) accreditation and the internal and external operation of the Accreditation Committee. The Accreditation Committee will be authorised to amend these standing orders, on the understanding that an amendment to these standing orders may not adversely affect an accreditation already granted or which has been applied for and is being handled. The Accreditation Committee is obliged to inform the General Meeting about (changes in) the standing orders.
2. The General Meeting can propose (changes in) the standing orders. The Accreditation Committee has to decide on these proposals. When a proposal is rejected, the Accreditation Committee has to inform the General Meeting about its arguments for rejection.

Committees.

Article 6.

1. The Association will have an Accreditation Committee with at least five members, which will decide on the applications for (continued) accreditation. The members will be appointed by the Accreditation Committee. At least one member of the Accreditation Committee must be working in a government institution, not being an institution of education. The Accreditation Committee appoint a chairman from among itself. The Accreditation Committee will draw up a rotation schedule. The guidelines, standards, criteria and procedures to be followed by this committee must be included in the standing orders referred to in Article 5. The members of this committee are appointed in private capacity and will act without burden of consultation. The aforementioned committee is authorised to delegate parts of its work to one or more subcommittees which is/are to form by the Accreditation Committee. Members of the Accreditation Committee cannot be member of the EAPAA Board. In addition to the aforementioned committee, the Board is authorised to form committees, for which the Board will lay down the guidelines, standards, criteria and procedures to be followed by these committees.

1. Composition of Accreditation Committee

1.1 Number of Members

- The Accreditation Committee has at least five members.
- At least one and up to five members of the Accreditation Committee must be working in a government institution (not being an institution of education) and act as representatives of the working field.
- The maximum number of members is decided by the Accreditation Committee.

1.2 Nomination

- Candidates for the Accreditation Committee can be nominated by the members of EAPAA, the members of the EAPAA Board or by the members of the Accreditation Committee.
- Candidates should be renowned professors or practitioners, and preferably should have experience with the EAPAA accreditation system as member of a Site Visit Team.

1.3 Appointment

- Members of the Accreditation Committee are appointed by the Accreditation Committee Meeting upon recommendation by the Chair for a period of 4 years.
- They can be reappointed once.
- There must be a rotation schedule for all members.
- In the appointment of members a representation of the EAPAA target group of public administration programmes is aimed for, especially with respect to type of institution and region of Europe.

1.4 Presidium

- The Accreditation Committee has a Presidium, existing of the chair, vice-chair and one other member of the Accreditation Committee, appointed by the Accreditation Committee. The EAPAA secretary-general is the advisor of this Presidium, and is present during the meetings of the Presidium.
- The members of the Accreditation Committee nominate a Chair and a Vice-chair from among themselves.
- The Chair and Vice-chair are nominated for 4 years and can be reappointed once.
- The presidium prepares the Accreditation Committee meetings together with the EAPAA secretariat, and advises or decides on issues between the Accreditation Committee meetings that cannot wait until the next meeting.

2. Accreditation Criteria and Procedures

2.1 Accreditation Criteria

- The criteria for accreditation by EAPAA are formulated in the EAPAA Accreditation Criteria, and are as such part of these Standing Orders.
- The EAPAA Accreditation Criteria will be in line with the European Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area (as issued by DG Education and Culture and ENQA).

2.2 Accreditation Procedures

- The procedures for accreditation by EAPAA are formulated in the EAPAA Accreditation Procedures, and are as such part of these Standing Orders.
- The EAPAA Accreditation Procedures will be in line with the *European Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area* (as issued by DG Education and Culture and ENQA), and will be in line with the *Guidelines for Good Practice in Quality Assurance* (GGP) of INQAAHE.

3. Composition of a Site Visit Team

3.1 Site Visit Team

- The site visit team is composed of three public administration experts from another country than the programme to be accredited, a practitioner and a student. One of the foreign experts is appointed as chair.
- The members of a Site Visit Team (not being the practitioner or the student) for a particular accreditation are preferably selected from among the persons on the Potential Site Visit Team Members list.
- When national regulations ask for it, the composition of the site visit team can be adapted by the Accreditation Committee.
- All Site Visit Team Members have to sign a declaration of independence.
- Members of the Accreditation Committee can be nominated as member of a Site Visit Team, but then cannot participate in the decision upon the respective accreditation. Preferably the chair of the site visit team is a member of the Accreditation Committee.

4. List of Potential Site Visit Team Members

4.1 Nomination

- Potential site visit team members can be nominated by the members and the affiliates of EAPAA, by members of the EAPAA Board, or by members of the Accreditation Committee. Scholars who think they fulfil the requirements also can notify the EAPAA secretariat they are willing and able to be nominated.
- A candidate is:
 - a senior public administration scholar (full or associate professor);
 - has more than 5 years of experience in public administration teaching on the master level;
 - has preferably experience with programme evaluation and/or accreditation;
 - is willing to serve in an EAPAA site visit team abroad (2-3 days) while only the travel and lodging costs are covered;
 - has international experience; is speaking English, German or French.

4.2 Appointment

- A potential Site Visit Team Member is appointed for a period of 10 years and added to the list when her/his nomination is approved by the Accreditation Committee Meeting upon recommendation by the Chair.
- A potential Site Visit Team Member can be reappointed.

4.3 Training

- Before a potential Site Visit Team Member is appointed to a Site Visit Team, she/he needs to participate in a Site Visit Team Member training, or must have had relevant experience in another review situation, to the judgement of the Accreditation Committee chair.
- Trainings are offered regularly during EGPA and NISPAcee conferences and elsewhere when needed.

5. Application for Accreditation

- When a programme thinks it is eligible for EAPAA accreditation, it applies for accreditation through a standard form. As part of this form the programme has to send some basic information about the programme.
- This information is used by the EAPAA secretariat to check the eligibility at a preliminary basis.
- After this first check the information goes to the Accreditation Committee Presidium for a further check, and to prepare together with the secretariat the nomination of a site visit team and the pre-advisors. Pre-advisors are members of the Accreditation Committee who are expected to evaluate the Self-evaluation Report of a programme, to advise the site visit team and to assess the site visit report. On principle, two pre-advisors should be nominated for one programme under review.
- The Accreditation Committee Presidium advises the programme on the continuation of the accreditation procedure. In case of a negative advice, the programme can decide to continue anyway.

6. Self-evaluation Report

- The programme presents to the Accreditation Committee a Self-evaluation Report in which it describes and appraises itself according to the EAPAA Accreditation Criteria.
- The guidelines for the Self-evaluation Report are described in the EAPAA Self-evaluation Report Guidelines, and are as such part of these Standing Orders.
- The Self-evaluation Report is evaluated by the Accreditation Committee pre-advisors and the Site Visit Team and additional information, argumentation and/or clarifications can be requested.
- The Accreditation Committee instruct the site visit team what issues to address specifically during the site visit. In case of a re-accreditation, the recommendations of the previous site visit team and the explicit recommendations in the previous Accreditation Committee evaluation are important elements of this instruction.

7. Site Visit

- The Site Visit Team visits the programme requesting accreditation to collect information as a basis for the decision by the Accreditation Committee.
- The Self-evaluation Report is an important source of information for the Site Visit Team.
- During the visit the Site Visit Team has conversations with all relevant stakeholders of the programme to collect further information.
- The guidelines for the Site Visit are described in the EAPAA Site Visit Manual, and are as such part of these Standing Orders.

8. Site Visit Report

- The Site Visit Team writes a report about its findings and presents an evaluation of the programme as basis for the decision on accreditation of the programme by the Accreditation Committee.
- The Site Visit Report presents the findings of the site visit team criterion by criterion, concluded by a general evaluation. Also the report contains commendations and recommendations.
- The programme gets the opportunity to react to the draft of the Site Visit Report.

9. Accreditation Decision Procedures

9.1 Preparation

- The Site Visit Report and the programme's reaction to the draft of the Site Visit Report are sent by email to all members at least two weeks before the meeting.
- The EAPAA secretariat prepares, on the basis of the recommendations of the Site Visit Team, an Evaluation Report as a basis for discussion in the Accreditation Committee.
- The Evaluation Report follows the EAPAA Accreditation Criteria and appraises all criteria according to the scale of judgements (see below)
- The Evaluation Report is sent to all Accreditation Committee members, preferably at least one week before the meeting.
- The appointed pre-advisors critically review the Site Visit Report and Evaluation Report, and prepare questions for the Site Visit Team.
- The members of the Site Visit Team are invited to present (in person or in writing) to the Accreditation Committee supplementary information on the Site Visit Report.

9.2 Accreditation Decision Rules

- The discussion and decisions during an Accreditation Committee meeting are based on all material available.
- Members of the Accreditation Committee that live or work in the country of the programme to be evaluated or are somehow connected to that programme, cannot be present during the discussion and the decision on that programme.

9.2.1 Criteria

- The criteria upon which the decision on accreditation is based, are formulated in the EAPAA Accreditation Criteria.

9.2.2 Scale of Judgements

- Each criterion will be appraised by the Accreditation Committee. The score for each criterion is the weighted appraisal for the elements that could be distinguished within the criterion.
- Each criterion is scored on a five-point scale:

Very poor	The quality is seriously below the basic standard
Poor	The quality is below the basic standard
Adequate	The quality level corresponds to the basic standard
Good	The quality level exceeds the basic standard
Excellent	The quality level is very good in all respects
- All appraisals must be based on facts from the Self-evaluation Report and/or the Site Visit Report.

9.2.3 Decision

- For the accreditation of a programme the scores on all criteria should be adequate or higher. However, a poor-score on one criterion can be compensated by a good-score on a related criterion, according to the judgement of the Accreditation Committee.

9.2.4 Decision categories

- The final judgement of the EAPAA Accreditation Committee on the accreditation can be:
 - accreditation (for a period of 7 years, and without conditions): the programme fulfils all criteria sufficiently;
 - no accreditation: the programme does not fulfil the requirements for accreditation sufficiently;
 - conditional accreditation (for a limited period not more than 3 years and with specific conditions): the programme almost fulfils all accreditation criteria and has declared to make certain changes to fulfil all criteria;
 - postponement of the accreditation decision (for one year): the programme doesn't fulfil the accreditation criteria at all points and/or there are points that need clarification, but there is a chance that the programme can make changes in one year that brings the programme closer to accreditation,
 - a dismissal of the accreditation.
- In the case of a conditional accreditation or postponement of the accreditation decision, the specific conditions and/or unclear issues will be explained in an official letter to the programme along with the way the fulfilment of the conditions will be judged, and when this will be done.

9.2.5 Recommendations

The Accreditation Committee can add to its evaluation of the report recommendations (which can be made by the site visit team already in the Site Visit Report). These recommendations will be important issues in the next accreditation, and the programme is invited to address them in their two-yearly reports.

10. Quality Assurance of the Accreditation System

10.1 Continuous Quality Assessment

- In order to get regular feedback on the quality of the EAPAA accreditation system, an evaluation form is sent to the programme representative and the foreign experts of the Site Visit Team after the accreditation decision.
- The written evaluations are discussed by the Accreditation Committee at the next Accreditation Committee meeting.

10.2 Formal Evaluation of the functioning of the Accreditation Committee

- Every 7 years the functioning of the Accreditation Committee should be evaluated by an external committee of at least three members who have knowledge of and/or experience with accreditation systems.
- This committee evaluates the functioning through evaluation of
 - The Self-evaluation Reports
 - The products (Evaluation Reports and decisions) of the Accreditation Committee
 - The written evaluations forms
 - Interviews with members of the Accreditation Committee, members of Site Visit Teams and representatives of reviewed programmes.

- The committee reports its findings in writing to the Accreditation Committee and can make recommendations.
- EAPAA publishes the committee report, its recommendations, and the actions taken by the Accreditation Committee.
- In order to design such an evaluation system and to help EAPAA find members for the Evaluation Committee, collaboration with the Commission on Peer Review and Accreditation (COPRA) of the National Association of School of Public Affairs and Administration (NASPAA) in the USA, and the International Network of Quality Assurance Agencies in Higher Education, is established.
- The first evaluation of the functioning of the EAPAA accreditation system will be held in 2013.

11. Costs of the accreditation procedure

11.1 Costs for affiliated programmes

For programmes of Higher Education institutions who are affiliated to EAPAA through one of the corporate members of EAPAA, the costs of the accreditation procedure are:

- A handling fee for the costs of the EAPAA secretariat and the Accreditation Committee. This fee is decided upon through the decision by the EAPAA General Meeting on the budget each year.
- The costs for travel and lodging of the Site Visit Team members.
- No fee has to be paid for the time the Site Visit Team members spend for the site visit.

11.2 Costs for other programmes

For other programmes the costs of the accreditation procedure are:

- A handling fee for the costs of the EAPAA secretariat and the Accreditation Committee. This fee is decided upon through the decision by the EAPAA General Meeting on the budget each year.
- The costs for travel and lodging of the Site Visit Team members.
- An hourly fee for the time the Site Visit Team members spend for the site visit. This fee is decided upon in consultation with the Site Visit Team members.