



European Association for
Public Administration
Accreditation

Site Visit Manual

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EAPAA Site Visit Manual

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Summary Guidelines for Site Visit Team Members

A. Preserve the Confidentiality of Peer Review Process

1. EAPAA accreditation guidelines require disclosure upon request of site visit team members. However, site visit team members shall make no disclosure about individual programme evaluations and recommendations resulting from the site visit team review process.

B. Understand and Preserve the Intended Character of the Site Visit Team

1. It is an inquiring arm of EAPAA Accreditation Committee.
2. It is a co-operative, not an adversary or an advocacy group of professional colleagues.
3. It is responsible for presenting and interpreting the facts about the applicant programme to EAPAA Accreditation Committee.
4. It has the responsibility for fact-finding and fact clarification.
5. It is responsible for writing a final report on the programme reviewed.

C. Protect the Integrity of the Site Visit Team

1. The Site Visit Team is a team, and must work as a unit.
2. The chairperson is the official spokesperson of the team.
3. Those who comprise the Site Visit Team are entrusted with the highest form of professional confidence.
4. Interviews conducted by team members are not interrogations.
5. The team members are not inspectors, and should not view themselves that way.
6. Team members should avoid statements of "how it should be done" or "how we do it at our institution."

D. Know the Main Objectives of the Site Visit Team which are:

1. To confirm that the programme has a clear mission and goals that it regularly assesses.
2. To review data and information, and to verify and clarify, as needed, the description of the programme as presented in the Self-Evaluation Report.
3. To provide an occasion for the exchange of information among colleagues, and for learning about innovative developments responsive to common problems and opportunities in a common field.
4. To assess the programme under review against its own stated goals.
5. To assess the programme against the EAPAA Criteria.
6. To use the site visit findings as the basis for writing an evaluative report to the EAPAA Accreditation Committee.

E. Make Sure Pre-Visit Preparation has been met, including

1. A thorough knowledge of the accreditation process.
2. A knowledge of the Criteria, their interpretation, and the problems frequently encountered in their application.
3. A cover-to-cover familiarity with the applicant programme's Self-Evaluation Report.
4. A careful reading of the following most recent documents:
 - a. EAPAA Accreditation Criteria
 - b. EAPAA Accreditation Procedures
 - c. Applicant Programme's Self-Evaluation Report

- d. Applicant Programme's University¹ Bulletins or Catalogues
- e. Applicant Programme's Brochures, Pamphlets and/or Handbooks
- f. EAPAA Self-Evaluation Report Form
- g. EAPAA Site Visit Manual

F. Responsibilities of the Site Visit Team Chairperson

1. To chair the Site Visit Team.
2. To ask, if this approach is desired, each member of the team to be particularly familiar with certain portions of the Self-Evaluation Report and to write specific sections of the draft Site Visit Team Report.
3. To request the liaison person of the applicant programme to submit a proposed time-table or schedule for the site visit, and list of persons/groups to meet to the chair of the Site Visit Team at the earliest possible opportunity following the establishment of the Site Visit Team.
4. To confirm with the liaison person of the applicant programme the actual dates for the visit, and to request any specific information and/or arrangements for interviews that are needed to clarify any concerns or issues in the Self-Evaluation Report as raised by the Review Committee for the Applicant Programme.
5. To request before the site visit any special arrangements needed to interview specific university, college or school-wide faculty/staff or officials, alumni or students.
6. To ensure with the programme liaison the room for meetings is adequate to receive groups of interviewees (but also that these groups are not too big!), and that there will be name plates for the site visit team and the interviewees (mentioning name and function).
7. To decide on the schedule for the site visit, and the persons/groups to meet in time, and to inform the programme liaison this decision.
8. To arrange to have minutes of faculty/staff meetings, specific reports and documents, and university affirmative action records available in case the team wishes to review them.

¹ Where in this report 'University' is used, 'Institution' should be read in cases where the programme doesn't belong to a university.

1. Site Visit Checklist Interview Arrangements and Documents Needed

Preparation on site

- Preparatory meeting of site visit team chair and programme liaison person to fine-tune the site visit schedule and to introduce the site visit team members.
- To ensure the room for meetings is adequate to receive groups of interviewees, and that name plates for the site visit team and the interviewees (mentioning name and function) are available.

Arrange (individual or group) Interviews with:

- Chief Academic Officer (Academic Vice President or Provost)
- Dean and Assistant or Associate Dean of Faculty or School
- Programme Director
- Programme Faculty (core academic staff)
- Current Students
- Former Students (graduates)
- Employers
- Director Internship Program
- Student Counsellor

Documents to be made available:

- Current Faculty/staff Roster
- Current Course Schedule
- Current Course Outlines
- Recent exams of courses
- Required readings of core courses
- Random Sample of 10 Individual Student Files of each curriculum year, especially written exams, course papers and/or final papers
- Updated Admission Standards
- Updated Curriculum Changes
- Updated Programme Description
- Committee Assignments of Faculty/staff
- Sample of Minutes of Program-wide or Faculty/School-wide Faculty/staff Meetings on programme evaluation and/or changes

2. Introduction: General Observations

This site visit manual has been prepared by the Accreditation Committee to facilitate the site visit processes². It is addressed to both the site visit team members and host institutions. Some general observations are provided here about confidentiality, the site visit and its objectives, and the Site Visit Team.

2.1 Confidentiality

In accordance with accreditation policy and procedures, no disclosure about individual applications and the evaluations and recommendations made to individual programmes resulting from the site visit team evaluation process will be made by any site visit team.

2.2 The Site Visit Team and its Objectives

2.2.1 The Site Visit

The site visit is a most critical and sensitive part of the review and accreditation process. The site visit is a co-operative, not an adversary, event. Fundamental to peer review is recognition that excellence in public administration education can be achieved in diverse ways. Both the site visit team and everyone at the host institution must appreciate that the site visitors have two roles to play in helping to determine the quality of the applicant programme:

- a) The team is EAPAA Accreditation Committee's inquiring arm.
- b) The team will through its report present and interpret the applicant programme to EAPAA's Accreditation Committee.

It is very important that all participants embrace this understanding and approach the site visit with trust and goodwill. It is assumed that it is within the reach of reasonable people to translate these attitudes into appropriate site visit performance.

During the site visit, administrators, faculty/staff and students at the host institution and members of the site visit team will be in almost constant and intensive contact with one another. The site visit will be an occasion when the host institution will want to create the best possible impression on its visitors, and the visiting team will want to gain the most thorough possible appreciation of the programme under review.

2.2.2 Objectives of the Site Visit

The main objectives of the site visit are:

- to confirm that the programme has a clear mission and goals that it regularly assesses.
- to verify and clarify the description of the programme as presented in the Self-Evaluation Report.
- to assess the programme against its own stated goals.
- to assess the programme against the EAPAA Criteria.
- to establish a basis for an evaluative report by the Site Visit Team to the EAPAA Accreditation Committee.
- to provide an occasion for the exchange of information among colleagues and for learning about innovative developments responsive to common problems and opportunities in a common field.

² EAPAA is very grateful to NASPAA for allowing to make extensive use of their Site Visit Manual as an example.

The site visit is part of a larger process by which members of this field are endeavouring to discover and share a continuing development of quality and excellence in public service education.

2.3 Site Visit Team Members

Site visitors are professional colleagues who are interested in the applicant programme's well-being and continued improvement. When this spirit prevails, sufficient information will be gathered during the visit to provide a sound basis for the team's evaluation. Great care should be taken by Site Visit Team members to avoid statements of "how it should be done" or "how we do it at our institution". Such expressions can easily be interpreted in a fashion that detracts from the "objective" reviewer posture each site visitor should assume. An attitude for receptiveness to the applicant institution's philosophy and approaches not only makes the visit more productive but often yields dividends in "food for thought" as one returns home.

To facilitate the spirit of the site visit process, site visitors are encouraged to remember that:

- The Site Visit Team is a team. It must work as a unit. Accordingly, the chairperson is the official spokesperson for the team, is in full charge of the visit, and must insure that the evaluation is comprehensive and thorough. The complete co-operation of members in carrying out their respective assignments is essential.
- The highest form of professional confidence is entrusted to those with the responsibility for making a site visit. The opinions of site visitors about the programme being visited must be confined to the team and to members of the Accreditation Committee.
- Should problems be encountered that are not addressed in this Site Visit Manual, the EAPAA Secretary and members of the Accreditation Committee are available to answer questions. The number to call in the Netherlands is: +31-53-483 6346.

3. Pre-Visit Preparation

The pre-visit preparation of every team member includes four major elements:

- a thorough knowledge of the accreditation process.
- a knowledge of the Criteria and their interpretations, and the problems frequently encountered in their application.
- a cover-to-cover familiarity with the applicant programme's Self-Evaluation Report
- knowledge of the specific questions the Accreditation Committee has on this programme.

In addition to the above, the chairperson of the Site Visit Team has the additional responsibility to consult with the applicant programme's liaison and the Site Visit Team members regarding scheduling details for the site visit.

3.1 Knowledge of Accreditation process

The entire review process is described in the most recent [EAPAA Accreditation Procedures](#) developed by the Accreditation Committee.

3.2 Knowledge of Criteria and Their Interpretation

These are contained in the most recent [EAPAA Accreditation Criteria](#).

3.3 Familiarity with Self-Evaluation Report

Every member of the Site Visit Team is expected to have a total familiarity with the applicant programme's Self-Evaluation Report. These reports will have been prepared according to the format presented in the [EAPAA Guidelines for the Self-Evaluation](#). The Self-Evaluation Report is the result of much labour on the part of the host institution. When questions that are clearly answered in the report are asked during the site visit, confidence in the site visit process is greatly shaken. Each member of the Site Visit Team should become particularly familiar with the areas of the Self-Evaluation Report whose first review prompted questions by the Accreditation Committee.

Thorough preparation will enable the team to focus quickly on the items that must be resolved during the course of the visit. But the team should also explore any other possible items missed in the Self-Evaluation Report. The Site Visit Team chairperson may ask each member to be particularly familiar with certain portions of the Self-Evaluation Report and draft specific sections of the Site Visit Team Report.

3.4 Special Obligations of Chairperson

The chairperson of the Site Visit Team will be expected to communicate with the applicant programme at the earliest possible opportunity to provide guidance to the applicant programme's representative about:

- the site visit time-table and
- any additional data that should be prepared and made available that would serve to clarify problems noted in the preliminary review of the Self-Evaluation Report.

A general site visit principle is that the applicant programme's routine should be interrupted as little as possible. Therefore, the chairperson of the Site Visit Team should provide the host with a good understanding of the basic evaluation format to be used during the visit. It is quite unfair to the

applicant institution if it has only the vaguest understanding of what the site visit will entail. The schedule of the visit should be agreed to early enough to enable the host to make the necessary arrangements well in advance.

3.5 Responsibilities of the Host Institution

The host institution will have undertaken a great deal of preparatory work before the visit. The Self-Evaluation Report is the major result of this effort. There are some very important additional things that should be done, however, to ensure that the site visit goes well. The following is a suggested list:

- Every individual who will have some part in the site visit should read this manual carefully. Obviously, a clear appreciation of the Site Visit Team's procedures, goals and expectations will make the site visit more effective.
- Everyone expected to participate in the site visit should be given enough advance notice so that he or she can be sure to be on hand as needed. In this regard, the programme representative should submit to the chairperson of the Site Visit Team a tentative but detailed schedule of persons to be interviewed, their names and the places to be visited. Preferably, this schedule should be submitted two weeks in advance of the visit.
- The programme's liaison is responsible for briefing all participating administrators, faculty/staff and students on what to expect. It might be useful to discuss together some of the questions site visitors are likely to ask.
- Materials that were gathered and used in the preparation of the Self-Evaluation Report should be gathered at a central location and be readily available for review. A section-by-section review of the EAPAA Guidelines for the Self-Evaluation Report would quickly suggest what these items might be. In this connection, the appropriate officials at the host institution should be thoroughly familiar with Section V of this manual.
- In cases where States have promulgated complex regulations concerning aspects of the programme, representatives at the host institution should be prepared to explain these regulations and just how the self-study process has coped with this problem.
- It should be ensured that the room for the site visit team is adequate to receive groups of interviewees, and that name plates for the site visit team and the interviewees (mentioning name and function) are available.
- It should be ensured the groups the site visit team will be meeting (like students and faculty/staff) will not be too big (maximum 10 persons). If necessary representatives should confer with their colleagues before the site visit to collect observations and opinions. The chair of the site visit team will contact the programme's liaison in time to discuss the persons/groups the site visit team wants to meet. It is the chair of the site visit team who decides who to meet.
- Finally, every effort should be made to ensure that the site visit is a co-operative, collegial experience and not an adversarial encounter, and that no one involved sees it as such. The officials in charge of the self-study preparation and the site visit should take every possible occasion to reinforce this understanding. The Accreditation Committee is dedicated to the proposition that openness, candour, and trust at the host institution must, in turn, generate goodwill, sensitivity and dispassionate evaluation on the part of the site visitors.

The host programme director and faculty/staff, motivated by a normal sense of hospitality, may want to have some sort of social activity for the Site Visit Team. Extensive social activities are inappropriate, and the site visit schedule leaves little time available. At the same time, informal socialising when the occasion permits can make the site visit a more congenial and sometimes more insightful experience.

4. The Site Visit Schedule

It is impossible to define a site visit schedule that will fit every situation. Presented here is a tentative model of how the site visit could proceed. The Accreditation Committee believes that the schedule presented below puts the items to be covered in a logical sequence. However, the Accreditation Committee envisages that the actual Site Visit Team may modify this model, but such modifications should be explainable in the light of the situation.

4.1 Length of Visit

The site visit will normally require two full-working days. Team members should arrive in the late afternoon of the day preceding the start of the site visit. Day I and II are totally devoted to site visit activities. In most cases, the site visit will be completed by mid-afternoon of Day II.

On Day II in the afternoon the team will meet to arrive at a consensus view and a draft of the site visit team report. A final meeting will be held with the appropriate official(s) who are directly responsible for the programme to request any additional clarifying information or explanation. At that time, the Site visit Team should also review the next steps in completing the accreditation process, including the dates on which the EAPAA Secretariat should expect to receive the Site Visit Team Report. Team members should meet briefly after the final meeting to determine if the additional clarifying information is to change the previously agreed to Site Visit Report.

When the site visit team members agree, the chair can propose to the programme to give a short concluding statement on the 'first impressions', summarising the most important strength and weaknesses of the programme in the eyes of the site visit team. However, it must be made totally clear that these impressions in no way can be an indication of the judgement of the EAPAA Accreditation Committee. The chair shall be very cautious here.

The team will normally depart in the night of Day II or the morning thereafter.

If the applicant programme is small and the site visit moves along expeditiously, the team should make full use of the slack time in drafting the report before departing. An extended visit may be required for multiple campus schools, or if the planned visit is thrown off schedule by some unforeseen event such as the illness of a Site Visit Team member, air travel problems, or the like.

4.2 Model Site Visit Schedule

Prior to scheduling the site visit, the site visit chairperson should contact the other team members to discuss their interests and potential responsibilities for interviewing and report drafting. Based on this, the chair makes team (and when appropriate, individual) assignments for interviews that are then reflected in the final schedule.

At times, the entire team will attend meetings; at other times, it will be necessary to split up the team for meetings; according to assigned responsibilities.

A possible schedule and its relationship to EAPAA Criteria is sketched below. The Site Visit Team may decide to combine meetings if appropriate. The length of the meetings is up to the Site Visit Team. The chairperson of the Site Visit Team should inform the programme about the wishes of the Site Visit Team on the scheduling of meetings.

Day before

Team members arrive in late afternoon and confer, review site visit schedule and assignments, contact hosts, confirm site visit schedule, request any additional data or material needed during the site visit, and review the occasions on which they can separately carry out parts of the site visit.

Dinner: team members and programme administrators and faculty/staff for the purpose of getting acquainted.

Day I

Meeting of the Site Visit Team to prepare the visit

Meeting with the Programme Management to review:

Criterion 1.3 and 1.4	Constraints by National Educational and Evaluation Systems
Criterion 2.0	Applicability/Eligibility
Criterion 5.1	Domain of the Programme
Criterion 5.2 and 5.3	Mission and Multidisciplinarity
Criterion 5.8	Programme Jurisdiction
Criterion 5.9	Programme Faculty
Criterion 5.10	Admission of Students
Criterion 5.11	Supportive Services and Facilities
Criterion 5.13	Public relations

Meeting with the Department and/or Faculty management to review:

Criterion 5.2	Mission
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Meeting with faculty/staff teaching common core courses to review:

Criterion 5.5	Curriculum
Criterion 5.6	Quality Improvement and Innovation
Criterion 5.7	Student Assessment

Lunch preferably with faculty/staff, other staff, and students

Meeting with students to review:

Criterion 5.2 and 5.3	Mission and Multidisciplinarity
Criterion 5.5	Curriculum
Criterion 5.6	Quality Improvement and Innovation
Criterion 5.7	Student Assessment
Criterion 5.12	Student Services

Meeting with graduates to review:

Criterion 5.2 and 5.3	Mission and Multidisciplinarity
Criterion 5.5	Curriculum
Criterion 5.6	Quality Improvement and Innovation

Meeting with employers to review:

Criterion 5.2 and 5.3	Mission and Multidisciplinarity
Criterion 5.3	Level
Criterion 5.4	Relation to practice and Internships
Criterion 5.5	Curriculum
Criterion 5.7	Student Assessment

Evening

Dinner and Site Visit Team meeting (team members only)
Team members take stock of how the site visit is going and discuss about additional review(s) on Day II of any items already covered.

Day II

Meeting with the dean and/or programme director to facilitate any additional arrangements which need to be made.

Visits as needed to the computer facilities, classrooms, internship office, Public relations Officer etc., to review:

Criterion 7.0	Student services
Criterion 8.0	Support services
Criterion 5.13	Public Relations

Examination of transcripts from the student sample to review:

Criterion 5.5	Curriculum (see pg. 17)
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Meeting with university³ or college administrators as appropriate.

Lunch (team members only) to arrive at a consensus about the site visit evaluation and to outline the draft Site Visit Team Report to the Accreditation Committee.

Final exit interview with appropriate programme officials.

Site Visit Team meets to draft the report of the site visit team before departing.

(when appropriate) Statement by the site visit team chair on the first impressions of the site visit team

The chairperson of the site visit team must agree to the time-table.

³ Where in this report 'University' is used, 'Institution' should be read in cases where the programme doesn't belong to a university.

5. Interviews with University and Programme Administrators, Faculty/staff and Students

5.1 General Guidelines

Interviewing those who make the programme function--faculty/staff, students and administrators--is largely what the site visit is all about. Some time must be spent reviewing appropriate records and inspecting facilities. Some of the visit must also be devoted to team conferences to establish an early consensus about the report that must be prepared for the Accreditation Committee. However, interviewing will consume the most time and should yield the greatest dividends in terms of the site visit objectives, if the Self-Evaluation Report has been well-prepared and thoroughly studied in advance.

5.2 Interview Techniques

While expert interviewers may find this reminder somewhat presumptuous, it is worth cautioning site visitors against falling into the oldest "trap" of the interview process: allowing the person being interviewed to dominate the interview by asking questions of you, the person conducting the interview.

Also, comparisons with one's own experience should be avoided. The result may be a long meeting without the priority questions being answered--or answered as fully as otherwise possible. Above all else, site visitors should be thoroughly prepared for every interview. Such preparation generally requires a focus on two fundamental questions: (1) on which aspects of the Self-Evaluation Report can the person being interviewed offer the best insights; and (2) what are the important, priority issues that must be covered in the limited time available?

Thus, it is important that the Site Visit Team respect what is unique about the programme being reviewed and the many ways in which a programme can achieve excellence. During the interviews, the nuances, unique features, and special ways of doing things that characterise the programme will have to be drawn out from the persons being interviewed. And what is being heard will have to be weighed against Criteria that are themselves not rigidly promulgated or defined. Accordingly, the interview process will be less directed, and a good deal of unstructured give and take will be quite appropriate. The goal will be to perceive and understand the programme in relation to EAPAA Criteria. The formal matter-of-fact interview approach should give way to an informal conversation designed to create clear perception and understanding of the character and substantive elements of the programme.

The sections below provide suggestions about the kinds of issues that site visitors ought to raise in these interviews. A few general observations about interviewing are in order. When conducting the interviews, the Site Visit Team should be continuously aware of the requirements of the report that must be prepared for Accreditation Committee because different needs of the report may be met by using different interview techniques as illustrated below.

1. General Assessment of Programme vis-à-vis its Mission and Goals
Section II of the final Site Visit Team Report requires a review of the programme's mission and goals, its self-assessment, and its plan. The interviewing will tend to be informal and loosely structured to allow the Site Visit Team members an opportunity to get a sense of the

overall programme philosophy and how that philosophy is translated into programme policies and activities.

2. Criterion-by-Criterion Assessment

Section III and IV of the final Site Visit Team Report calls for a Criterion-by-Criterion assessment of the programme. Section III deals with specific concerns raised by the Accreditation Committee in its interim report. Section IV assess the other Criteria one at a time. Much of this information will have been presented in the Self-Evaluation Report. The Site Visit Team's first task will be to check, clarify and confirm the facts. During this phase, the interviews are apt to become somewhat structured, investigative and mechanical. (Site visitors are reminded to clarify specific points raised by the Accreditation Committee.)

3. Programme Suggestions: Wide-ranging Interviews

In Section V of the report, the Site Visit Team will make suggestions for the further development of the programme under review. Presumably, these suggestions will be cast in terms of EAPAA Criteria and not the personal public service education philosophy of Site Visit Team members. As the recommendations made in this section may (especially in the case of conforming programmes) go well beyond minimum EAPAA Criteria, the tone and style of this section may be quite informal and open-ended. To the extent that this posture begins to form during interviews, these interviews could conceivably become wide-ranging with a give and take exchange. These interviews should permit a great deal of freedom and flexibility.

These suggestions do not imply that the Site Visit Team is restricted to formal or informal techniques in conjunction with the requirements of the Site Visit Team Report. Rather, the whole site visit experience will be most rewarding for everyone if procedures and styles are interwoven and interfaced. By the time the two site visit days are over, the team should have heard and gathered enough material in enough different forms to be able to draft Sections I, II, III, IV, and V with the different certainties and sensitivities required by each part.

5.3 The University Community Outside the Programme

Faculty/School or University administrators not directly associated with the programme can provide useful insights into a variety of issues of interest to the Site Visit Team. Furthermore, they can give information about the policies at higher level that influence the programme. Also it can bring more information about the future of the programme.

The site visit chairperson should consult with the programme head, who will suggest on the day-to-day schedule when these people may be interviewed. The Accreditation Committee's suggestion is late in the site visit, perhaps on Day II, so as to permit the Site Visit Team to check the programme members' image of their programme against the image enjoyed by those outside the programme.

A list of possible issues and questions to raise in interviews with university people outside the programme is as follows:

- What is the mission of the programme?
- Do programme faculty/staff and administration regularly assess the programme and plan its future development?
- What is the prestige of the programme?
- What is the quality of students, faculty/staff and programme leadership?
- Is this programme seen as a lively one?

- Does the programme contribute to the university at large?
- Does the programme appear to be well-supported academically and financially by the department or school in which it is located, and by the university?
- What is the programme's interface with other departments, schools, programmes and other components of the university?
- Is the programme perceived as making a contribution to public service beyond placing its graduates, e.g., does it produce worthwhile research, consulting and similar services?
- Does the programme carry out worthwhile projects funded by grants?
- How is the future of this programme perceived?

Programme administrators and faculty/staff members should also have an opportunity to react to as many of the issues and questions raised above as possible so that perceptions can be compared. Certainly those in the programme should have an opportunity to respond when negative impressions were received from those outside the programme. Helping the programme see itself as others in the university see it may constitute an important dimension of the team's consultative role.

5.4 Programme Administrators

The dean and/or programme head could be asked to respond to issues and questions of the following kind:

- What is the effectiveness of the internal administrative machinery established to carry out the programme?
- Long range planning, does it exist? How is it done?
- Which programme concentrations and specialisations are currently experiencing the largest enrolments?
- Does the programme attract grant money?
- Describe the programme's budgeting processes. What are the criteria and processes relating to faculty/staff selection, development, promotion, tenure, salary determination, etc.?
- Is there an affirmative action programme or plan? Are actions being planned or taken to ensure diversity in faculty/staff including use of adjuncts and guest speakers?
- What comment can be offered on the faculty/staff interface with the public service community?
- Describe what you would regard to be the desirable mix of total responsibilities to be borne by the faculty/staff members. Specifically, what do you regard to be a desirable teaching load-why?
- What were the reasons, as you understand them, for any faculty/staff resignation that occurred last year - especially for a faculty/staff member you would have liked to see stay on?
- What have been the most significant developments in the programme in the past five years?
- If the programme were to have a 20 percent increment in the resources, how would you like to see increases spent?
- How do programme specialisations come to be created, expanded, contracted or terminated in your programme?
- How is the internship programme (if offered) managed including obtaining jobs in line with student interests, evaluation of students and assignment of credit?
- What efforts are underway to recruit students, particularly women and minorities? How successful have these efforts been? Is financial aid available for minority students?
- What changes in the programme's mission and character do you see in the next 5 to 10 years?

Again, many of the above questions should also be addressed to the faculty/staff members in the programme under review to understand comparative perceptions.

5.5 Faculty/staff Members

Faculty/staff could be asked to address issues and respond to questions of the following kind:

- What are the dean's or programme head's expectations for the programme, of faculty/staff and graduates?
- What is the faculty/staff role in the planning for programme development? Is the faculty/staff generally satisfied with its role?
- Were you or other faculty/staff colleagues involved in the preparation of the Self-Evaluation Report?
- On matters germane to the programme, is the dean's or programme head's decision subject to substantial modification by any other dean or university official outside of the programme?
- What are the prevailing criteria and procedures regarding faculty/staff selection, development, promotion, tenure, salary determination, etc.? How are these criteria applied to female and minority faculty?
- Would you say that teaching loads are generally established with a view to the total responsibilities of the faculty/staff member?
- How many new course preparations have you experienced in the last two academic years?
- Have you or other faculty/staff colleagues with special research interests received reduced teaching loads to pursue these interests?
- Do you think the basic salary and fringe benefit structure are up to standards?
- What factors were important in your decision to affiliate with this institution?
- What do you find exciting about serving on this faculty? Are there discouraging aspects?
- Do you regard your long term professional growth to be well served by remaining on this faculty?
- How would you characterise the "typical" student you encounter in relation to the goals of your programme?
- Do you find secretarial and support personnel resources to be generally adequate?
- Are computer and library resources readily available and adequate?
- What single message, if any, would you like the team to convey to the dean, programme head, or president of your university?

5.6 Student and Graduate Representatives

Students and graduates are an important source of information and issues. Questions of the following kind should be raised with representatives of the student body and alumni:

- What were your reasons for electing this programme?
- Are you generally satisfied with your experience in the programme? Has it met expectations? Can you be specific about satisfying and disappointing aspects?
- How do you perceive the objectives of the programme? Is the curriculum consistent with these goals?
- Given your participation in the programme to date, do you think the programme will succeed in your case?
- What are the strengths and weaknesses of the curriculum?
- Which single educational experience in this programme have you most enjoyed?
- On balance, how would you characterise your "typical" professor?

- If faculty/staff or course evaluation forms are available to students, have the results of these questionnaires made any difference? If they don't exist, should they?
- Do students participate in the governance and development of the programme? formally? informally?
- Who in your judgement are makers for change and development in the programme; the dean, the programme head, the faculty?
- What is your evaluation of the academic support services - the library, computer facilities, etc.?
- What is your evaluation of student services - internships, career counselling and placement, and the like?
- What has been the participation of students in the Self-Evaluation?
- Do you think your education will effectively prepare (for alumni: has effectively prepared) you for entry into and/or advancement in the public service?
- (For alumni) In what ways are you as alumni involved with the programme? Are you contacted with any degree of regularity?
- What would you say to someone requesting your advice about entry into this programme?
- What is your message, to the president of your university, to the dean, the faculty/staff, student leaders, potential new students and the site visit team?

5.7 Employers

Employers are an important source of information on the quality of the programme. Questions of the following kind should be raised with representatives of the employers:

- What is your experience with graduates from this programme?
- Does the programme prepare students well for work in your organisation?
- What are the strong and weak points of the programme?
- Is there enough training of relevant skills?
- Do you have direct contacts with the programme? And what is your opinion about these contacts?

5.8 Concluding Remarks

The issues raised in the sections above have been put in the form of questions, but these should not be used as a checklist to be covered. Information relating to these issues should be elicited in a conversational way. The skilful site visitor will create the opportunity for the person being interviewed to tell the Site Visit Team about the issues germane to the site visit, and will not behave as an interrogator or inspector.

Do not interrupt the classroom process to reach those you wish to meet. A single classroom visit may produce a more distorted than reliable picture of what generally goes on.

One last word: the team will fulfil its consultative role by also conveying to school administrators how the school or programme is viewed from "within" as generally perceived by faculty/staff and students. This consultative dimension is generally only possible, however, if the team has had an adequate opportunity to meet alone with faculty/staff and student representatives. If the site visit has gone well, the last meeting with the programme need be merely a courtesy call. On the other hand, if there are items that need more attention, arrangements should be made between the chair of the Site Visit Team and the programme head to resolve any remaining site visit requirements.

6. The Review of Programme Records

When the question of conformity depends on specific data, it is important that an adequate auditing process be undertaken of those records supporting the factual presentation in the Self-Evaluation Report. Care should be exercised to assure that the most relevant records are reviewed, and that an appropriate sampling technique is employed. The following discussion focuses upon those areas of the Self-Evaluation Report where a "hands on" familiarity with the records of the programme is likely to be important. Site visitors may wish to examine the kinds of records and materials discussed below that are relevant to the respective Criterion(s) when and if they are available.

6.1 Records Relevant to Introduction and Criteria 2 and 5: Eligibility, Programme Mission and Programme Jurisdiction

The team may wish to examine official documents and/or a sample of minutes of school-wide and/or programme-wide faculty/staff meetings. Where appropriate, the programme's, but not individual faculty/staff member's, annual report(s) may be reviewed. The Site Visit Team Chairperson should arrange before arrival to have such documents and minutes available in case the team wishes to review them. Such materials should be read with a view to better understanding of the programme's policy-making process and its past and future directions.

6.2 Records Relevant to Criterion 5: Programme Mission, Quality Improvement and Innovation

The team will need to examine any mission goals, or objective statements that the programme has as well as planning and internal assessment documents. Such an examination is fundamental to other steps in the review in order to provide perspective on the distinctive aspects of the programme.

6.3 Records Relevant to Criterion 5.5: Curriculum

The team, with the aid of appropriate faculty/staff or administrators, may request a review of student transcripts and/or degree requirement control sheets to determine the basis on which course and other degree requirements are waived or met, and to determine if completion of course prerequisites is enforced. A random sample of written exams of core courses also could be an important source of information.

If an internship programme exists, the team should review a sample of the documents relating to students in the internship programme. Also, the team should note the adequacy of managing the internship programme, e.g., the job availability, description, letters of appointment, and supervisory activities.

Final transcripts should also be a part of this review to determine if standards for graduation are enforced. And if a final comprehensive examination or master's thesis is required, samples should be reviewed to determine criteria and quality.

6.4 Records Relevant to Criterion 5.10: Admissions

The team may request to see admissions data on all or a random sample of enrollees who entered during the self-study year so that a judgement can be reached on the application of admissions standards. The team may also wish to review a sample of the records that support the presentation of these data.

6.5 Records Relevant to Criteria 5.11 and 5.12: Supportive Services and Facilities and Student Services

The team may wish to visit the classrooms, computer facilities and the library. It may be helpful to see the documents that relate to the student services, e.g., programme advice and career counselling, and to interview appropriate officials (e.g. student counsellor, computer support staff, librarian).

The library's record of yearly book acquisitions in subject fields offered by the programme, and the list of regularly maintained periodicals and journals may be obtained and reviewed, if necessary.

Obviously, an on-site review of library resources and services is important. The team's tour of the school's library and those ancillary services, such as the university computer centre, etc., is important to an effective visit.

7. The Site Visit Team Report

The final and crucial product of the site visit is the team's report to the EAPAA Accreditation Committee.

7.1 Team Consensus

The team will begin to assemble its impressions as early as the evening of Day I of the visit. As suggested previously in the proposed site visit schedule, the team should arrange to meet alone before departing from the campus to develop a consensus and a draft of the team's report. It may wish to meet a second time after having met with the programme faculty/staff and dean.

All members of the team should be involved in the development of the report, even though ways of allocating drafting responsibilities will vary. The final wording of the report should be reviewed by all team members before it is forwarded.

If it should happen that a consensus cannot be arrived at, then all members of the team should have the same perception of the inhibiting causes, and an agreement should be arrived at on how the failure to achieve consensus will be overcome. In the event that consensus cannot be achieved on an assessment of an individual Criterion, then a statement on the diversity of judgement should be included in the discussion of that item in the team's report along with as much factual data as possible.

Neither the team's consensus nor lack of it should ever be conveyed to anyone at the host institution. This admonition is consistent with Part I.A. of this Manual.

7.2 Draft Site Visit Team Report to Programme

Within 6 weeks of the site visit the programme head will receive from the chairperson of the Site Visit Team a copy of the draft Site Visit Team Report. It may be transmitted electronically. The programme is asked to comment on any evident mistakes or misinterpretations in the draft site visit report. Also it can react to the recommendations made by the site visit team. The programme has 2 weeks to react. The programme reaction is sent to the site visit team, which can conclude to make changes in their draft report.

7.3 Final Site Visit Team Report

The final report of the Site Visit Team should contain five sections:

- I. Introduction;
- II. Specific topics raised by the Accreditation Committee on the basis of the Self-Evaluation Report;
- III. Criterion-by-Criterion assessment;
- IV. General evaluation, commendations of good quality and recommendations to strengthen the programme.

It is extremely important to call attention to the fact that the Site Visit Team is asked to make presentations of the facts and assessments. It will NOT recommend either for or against inclusion on the EAPAA roster of accredited programmes. Final assessment and recommendations on overall programme conformity, inclusion or exclusion on the EAPAA Roster of Accredited Programs, is the

responsibility of the Accreditation Committee alone. This procedure has been adopted to ensure that EAPAA Criteria are applied in precisely the same way to every programme which applies for accreditation.

7.4 Site Visit Team Report Outline

As Appendix A an outline of the final site visit report can be found. This outline may be used as a template, filled in, and transmitted electronically.

7.5 Guidelines for Writing the Final Report

In writing the final report, the authors must bear in mind that the applicant programme administrators will be given the entire draft of the Site Visit Team's report. The authors must provide their own assessment of the facts on the basis of the Self-Evaluation Report and their interviews. However, the Site Visit Team's report must stop short of making a final assessment of conformity versus non-conformity to the EAPAA criteria for accreditation. That decision should be reserved for the Accreditation Committee.

Section III of the final report should address the specific questions the Site Visit Team raised on the basis of its reading of the Self-Evaluation Report. Section IV should continue with a item-by-item assessment covering all EAPAA Criteria. A fine line may exist from time to time between reporting the facts, "assessing the facts" yet not making a final determination of conformity versus non-conformity.

In addition, the Site Visit Team is reminded that when drafting the report, care should be taken to select a style of writing and an approach that emphasises an impartial reporting of the evidence. Finally, it is worth repeating that the Site Visit Team will not recommend for or against listing the applicant programme on EAPAA's roster of accredited programmes in conformity with the Criteria.

Section V of the report should be one or two pages in length, and is devoted to developing a set of commendations of good quality that can be an example to other programmes, and recommendations that the Site Visit Team believes will strengthen the programme. These recommendations must be couched in terms of the EAPAA Criteria and not the public service philosophy of individual Site Visit Team members. Section V should capture the consultative dimension of the site visit process. It should reflect the genuine concern each visitor should have for the welfare and development of the host institution and its programme(s). It is, however, clearly impossible for site visitors to become, in a couple of very busy days, as knowledgeable as are their host about special local influences which must be taken into account when policy and innovation are at issue. It should be clear that these recommendations are the 'personal' view of the Site Visit Team-members, and not reflect any 'official' EAPAA view or demand.

In the event that the Site Visit Team is unable to reach consensus on a set of recommendations to strengthen the programme, it is appropriate to report divergent recommendations, taking care that the recommendation is couched in terms of the EAPAA Criteria and not the public service philosophy of the individual team members.

Accordingly, the Site Visit Team Report must be sensitive and tactful when specific solutions are advocated in those areas where improvement is deemed to be important.

7.6 Scoring Form

On a separate form, each criterion is scored on a five-point scale by the foreign public administration experts appointed by EAPAA. This scoring is the advice of these site visit team members for the EAPAA Accreditation Committee. The scoring form is not sent to the programme for comment.

The scoring will be one of the categories below:

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 to expected in international perspective
Good	The quality level systematically exceeds the basic standard on all elements;
Excellent	The quality level is very good in all respects; the programme internationally is an example for other programmes

7.7 Deadlines

The deadline and distribution of the site visit team report are as follows:

1. **Draft report**
A draft of the entire report should be completed by the chairperson within 6 weeks of the end of the site visit, unless is agreed otherwise. A copy of the report (without the scorings) should be sent to the programme liaison. All site visit team members, as well as the Accreditation Committee secretariat, should also receive a copy from the chairperson.
2. **Programme response to the draft report**
The programme liaison must file a response to the draft report with the chairperson of the Site Visit Team and the Accreditation Committee secretariat within two weeks of receipt of the draft report. The Site Visit Team chairperson distributes (directly or through the EAPAA secretariat) this response to the other members of the Site Visit Team.
3. **Final draft report**
Assuming no major revisions are necessary, the final version of the Site Visit Team Report should be completed and sent to the chairperson of the Accreditation Committee (along with a copy of the programme response) through the EAPAA secretariat within two weeks of receipt of the applicant programme's response. In the event of substantial revisions, the Site Visit Team chairperson must advise the Accreditation Committee of the amount of extra time that will be needed.
4. **Distribution of the draft report**
The Site Visit Team chairperson should distribute (directly or through the EAPAA secretariat) the report as follows:
 - a. The full revised report is to be emailed to the applicant programme representative.
 - b. A complete copy of the report is to be sent to each Site Visit Team member.
 - c. A complete copy of the report and the programme's response must be sent to the EAPAA Accreditation Committee secretariat for records and distribution to the Accreditation Committee.

Appendix A: Site Visit Team Report Outline

SECTION I. INTRODUCTION

- A. Summary of site visit activities
 - 1. Members of site visit team
 - 2. Dates of the site visit
 - 3. The site visit schedule (Should include the titles and names of all persons interviewed.)

SECTION II. Specific Topics Raised by the Site Visit Team on the basis of the Self-Evaluation Report

Each item raised by the Site Visit Team on the basis of the Self-Evaluation Report should be addressed in detail. The Site Visit Team should report the facts relevant to the questions raised and provide an analysis of the programme's relative performance with respect to the Criterion relevant to each item. This assessment should assess the strengths and weaknesses of the programme's performance with respect to the Criterion in question. However, the Site Visit Team should not reach final conclusions concerning conformity versus non-conformity with respect to the item and Criterion in question. Final decisions on conformity versus non-conformity should be made by the Accreditation Committee based on clear assessments from the Site Visit Team.

SECTION III. CRITERION-BY-CRITERION ASSESSMENT

In addition to addressing the items and criteria raised in Section II, the Site Visit Team should here present its evaluation of the programme's performance on each of the EAPAA Accreditation Criteria. Issues that are covered in section II can be treated briefly here. As in Section II above, this assessment should discuss the relative performance of the programme with respect to each EAPAA Criterion, citing relative strengths and weaknesses. While evaluation and interpretation of "the facts" will be necessary and important in this section (as in the previous sections above), the Site Visit Team should not reach final conclusions concerning conformity versus non-conformity with respect to the Criterion in question. Final decisions on conformity versus non-conformity should be made by the Accreditation Committee based on clear assessment from the Site Visit Team.

SECTION IV. GENERAL EVALUATION, COMMENDATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

In this section the site visit team will evaluate the programme in general terms by summing up the important findings of the site visit.

Also, the site visit team may commend the programme on outstanding efforts and accomplishments and may recommend actions to strengthen the programme. First, within the framework of accreditation (and without compromising the judgement to be made by EAPAA Accreditation Committee), it is appropriate for the Site Visit Team to identify items that are well done or that are innovative in the field. This recognition of attainments and successes can add to the items covered in the review of Criteria. Second, the site visit team may develop recommendations or suggestions which it believes will strengthen the programme. These recommendations should flow from the mission of the programme (and should avoid personal views of how things should be done).