



*European Association for
Public Administration
Accreditation*

16 July 2011

EAPAA Accreditation Committee Evaluation Report

Bachelor's programme Public Administration and Organization Science and the master's programme Public Administration and Organization Science offered by the School of Governance (USG), Faculty of Law, Economics and Governance (LEG), Utrecht University, Utrecht, the Netherlands

Evaluation Report with respect to the request for accreditation of 1 December 2009.

In consideration of the Self-Evaluation Report of the above programme of 27 May 2010, the Site Visit Report of 26 April 2011 of the EAPAA Site Visit Team for this programme, the EAPAA Accreditation Committee, at its meeting of 6 September 2011 in Bucharest, Romania, has evaluated this programme against the EAPAA Accreditation Criteria (version 7, September 2009).

1. Accreditation Criteria

2. Applicability/Eligibility	
2.1 Domain	The programmes both are public administration programmes.
2.2 Geography	The Netherlands belongs to the EAPAA domain.
2.3 Programme longevity	The curriculum in its current structure was introduced in the academic year 2003, so complies this requirement.
2.4 Programme variants and locations	The master's programme has six tracks. Five tracks are full-time programmes, one track is characterized as a full-time, dual programme which combines work and studies.
4 Category of accreditation	Bachelor: public administration bachelor level programmes (3 or 4 years) Master: public administration master level programmes (1 or 2 years)
5. Standards	
5.1 Domain of public administration Score: Good	The committee has studied the curricula of both the bachelor's and the master's programme closely, and has determined that it provides a thorough teaching of the concepts, theories, methods and history (classics) of public administration and organization science on the appropriate levels. Both programmes aim to train students in the field of governance rather than government and take societal issues as a starting point for learning and discussions. The committee appreciates this approach, as do the students. Also, the committee highly values that the programmes clearly have a Public Administration character that is visibly related to its missions. The curricula and chosen language of teaching may give the impression that the programme lacks an international perspective. However, the committee concludes that the international dimension is present in several courses,

	<p>such as Introduction to Public Administration and Comparative Political Institutions (bachelor). The committee is satisfied that the programmes offer students a sufficient international (mainly European) perspective by means of integrating this in the courses and offering students options to study abroad. Students can choose to partly conduct their thesis research abroad and/or they can follow courses, or take on an international traineeship. The programmes also make an effort to attract international staff members and as such tries to incorporate an international perspective in the programme from several angles.</p> <p>The committee is also impressed with the way in which the programmes clearly stimulate their students to search for solutions to improve the public sector from a multidisciplinary perspective and trains the students to become young professionals who are expected to be able to apply practical knowledge in the professional field. It concludes that the programme offers a variety of courses in coherent disciplines and that students practice academic and professional skills that are specifically designed for public administration professionals.</p> <p>Based on above considerations, the committee assesses the public administration character of the bachelor's programme and the master's programme as "good".</p>
5.2 Mission of the programme Score: Good	<p>USG has formulated three separate missions. The first mission finds its origin in USG's fundamental choice to create a small-scale academic community where staff and students closely work together. USG's educational mission is: To create a small-scale academic community of scholars and students where staff and students work together in an intensive, interactive, and mutually inspiring manner.</p> <p>The main academic mission of USG is: To study the interaction between social transformations and organizations in the public domain. More specifically: the interaction between social transformations and organizations with a public function, and the way in which these organizations make sense of and react to these transformations and their consequences from the perspective of public responsibility.</p> <p>USG has formulated a specific master's mission for the one-year Public Administration and Organization Science master's programme only, which is: To offer an independent, specialized master's programme that prepares students for a career as a professional at an academic level in specific professional practices in the public sector.</p> <p>The committee has evaluated and discussed the educational and academic missions and objectives of the bachelor's programme and master's programme as well as the master's mission of the master's programme. It has established that the programmes' management has made explicit choices with regards to these missions of the programmes. Both programmes show a clear focus on societal transformations and issues which is fitting with the current vision in public administration that structuring public interests and objectives is not the exclusive domain of government organizations, but to a large extent takes place in interaction with many, often semi-private, organizations in the broad public domain.</p> <p>The committee recognizes that the broadening of the public administration</p>

	<p>domain calls for a contemporary public administration professional. USG has created an educational environment to train these new professionals. It has developed an open and inspirational community of students, researchers, professionals and alumni who are dedicated to public administration, policy strategies and governance.</p> <p>The committee has established that USG has clearly stated its missions for its programmes which are fitting with the current developments in the field of public administration and organization studies. The missions have been translated into ambitious objectives. The programme chooses to already impart specialized knowledge and skills in the bachelor's phase. The committee noted that USG's organization is designed to fulfil the missions and objectives of the programme. In light of these findings, the committee assesses the standard relating to the programmes' missions as 'good'.</p>
5.3 Level Score: bachelor: Adequate/good; master: adequate	<p>The committee has studied the intended learning outcomes of the bachelor's programme and the master's programme from the perspective of their level. It has established that the learning outcomes correspond sufficiently to the Dublin descriptors and that they specify the level of the programmes adequately in both cases. It agrees with the way the relation between the intended learning outcomes and the Dublin descriptors has been presented in the self-evaluation reports. The committee has noted that the differences in level between the programmes could be more clearly reflected in the intended learning outcomes.</p> <p>The committee considers the intended learning outcomes of the bachelor's programme as quite ambitious and was pleased to learn from interactions with students during the site visit that these ambitions contributed to a challenging learning climate. In its view, the intended learning outcomes reveal that the students of the bachelor's programme acquire knowledge, skills and attitudes at a basic level that is typical for a bachelor's programme. For example, bachelor students learn how to use common research methods and they acquire the ability to conduct basic research. Similarly, the intended learning outcomes reveal that the students of the master's programme acquire knowledge, skills and attitudes at an advanced level that is typical for a master's programme. Students of the master's programme learn how to choose and use research strategies suitable for complex situations.</p> <p>The committee concludes that both programmes fulfil the criterion that relates to the level of the learning outcomes.</p> <p>The committee has studied the intended learning outcomes to be acquired by students of both programmes from the perspective of their orientation. It has already established that these learning outcomes correspond sufficiently to the demands of the scientific discipline and the professional practice (cf. S2). It has noted that graduates of the bachelor's programme have unconditional access to the master's programme in Public Administration and Organization Science. Furthermore, the committee is convinced that graduates of the master's programme have acquired the knowledge and skills to become successful professionals in the field of public administration. The committee is convinced that graduates of the master's programme are able to carry out academic research in their area</p>

	<p>of specialization and could qualify for relevant PhD programmes. But the committee does recognize that PhD students are mainly selected from the two-year research master's programme rather than the one-year master's programme currently under review.</p> <p>The committee finds that the learning outcomes of both programmes correspond sufficiently to the requirements of the international scientific practice. Furthermore, both programmes show that they pay specific attention to the development of research and academic skills. The committee therefore concludes that both the bachelor's and the master's programme fulfil the criterion that relates to the orientation of the learning outcomes to be acquired.</p> <p>The committee has studied the curricula of the programmes from the perspective of the requirements that hold for an academic programme. It has established that the bachelor's programme presents a good overview of the discipline as a whole. In the first and second year students acquire basic knowledge and skills which provide a firm basis for the third year in which the students start preparations for specialization. The committee is particularly impressed by the fact that students receive their research assignments from the professional field and that they conduct actual research themselves in every bachelor year. This allows students to apply theory to practice from the very start of their studies. The committee highly values that students require an understanding of and skills in conducting both quantitative (first year) and qualitative (second year) research methods and has noted that they complement each other well. In the third year, students are ready to make a balanced choice as to which research method to choose for their thesis project. The committee has established that the learning materials used are more than adequate. The curriculum contains modules which provide students with all the necessary general, academic, and research skills and techniques.</p> <p>The committee has also established that the programme manages to guarantee that students acquire knowledge and skills through the interaction of education and research. If students produce quality work, lecturers will encourage them to publish their research results and help them to achieve this. Some lecturers indicated that they have published research results together with students. The committee has established that the programme has very strong links with the professional field. However, most bachelor's students seem to go on to a master's programme rather than start a career in the field after the bachelor's programme. In the committee's view it is obvious that the master's programme sufficiently guarantees the development of research skills and that students develop knowledge in close interaction with research because the curriculum has a strong focus on the thesis project (embedded in the research seminar) in which students independently conduct research under supervision of staff who are active researchers themselves. Furthermore, the real-life assignments that are the basis for the thesis projects, prepare students for future professional practice. The committee has also taken note that the master's programme specifically trains students for a career in the professional field rather than an academic career and concludes that the curriculum is suitable to this end.</p>
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	On the basis of these considerations, the committee assesses the standard which relates to the requirements for academic programmes as 'good' for the bachelor's programme and 'satisfactory' for the master's programme.
5.4 Practise and internships Score: (adequate)	In the bachelor's programme students in their third year have the option to do an internship.
5.5.1 Curriculum Content	
5.5.1.1 Core components Score: Adequate	<p>Each bachelor's programme at Utrecht University consists of a major and a minor. The mandatory (or major) part of the programme in Public Administration and Organizations Science consists of 142,5 EC. The major consists of three types of courses: level 1 introductory courses, level 2 advanced courses, and level 3 specialist courses. These courses provide students with broad, basic knowledge and skills of key aspects of public administration and organization science. The first year is dedicated to the most important theories and views on public administration and organization science, and students are introduced to quantitative research. In the second year, students follow courses such as communication in organizations, philosophy of science, and policy, rationality and power, and conduct qualitative research. In the first two years, students participate in a learning group. In the learning group, students (maximum 30) work together on assignments under supervision of and with guidance of two learning group lecturers.</p> <p>In the third and final year, students are part of a learning circle that prepares them for a master's specialization and graduation. Students may choose from the following circles: governance and policy, communication, human resource management, new challenges to organizational cultures, and sports in motion. In the third year, students also have the option to choose electives amounting to 37,5 EC at the most. Students can choose to follow a set of coherent subjects that is specifically composed by a programme (minor), select their own electives, go abroad or do an internship.</p> <p>The curriculum of the master's programme has six different tracks or specializations: Public Governance, Communication, Policy, and Management, Organization, Change, and Management , Public Management , Strategic Human Resource Management , and Sports Policy and Sports Management (SPSM, 2-year dual track).</p> <p>Each track of the one-year programme consists of four courses of 7,5 EC each. Two courses are dedicated to acquiring academic and professional skills and two courses are public administration specialization modules. Each track is completed with the Research Seminar of 30 EC (22,5 EC for SPSM). The aim of the Research Seminar is to integrate the acquired academic and research skills with public administration theory.</p> <p>The bachelor's programme aims to provide students with knowledge and understanding of governance and the public sector in a broad sense, which includes the semi-public and private organizations that have public responsibilities and functions, as well as implementation issues and public management. More specifically, the students learn about the interaction between social transformations and organizations with a public function.</p>

	<p>When studying the public domain, the programme aims to provide rather a more academic than technical analysis of organization processes. The programme offers multidisciplinary training aimed at providing students with diverse theoretical knowledge and a range of practical skills to enter a master's programme.</p> <p>In the master's programme students specialize, extend and deepen their knowledge and skills in a chosen field within the domain of public administration and organization science. The master's programme offers students six separate tracks (specializations) that are all aimed at a specific professional field. The master's programme trains student for a career at an academic level in the professional workforce. Students who want to pursue an academic career are referred to the two-year research master's programme.</p> <p>The committee has studied the intended learning outcomes of both programmes and compared them to its Domain Specific Frame of Reference (DSFR). The DSFR states that Public Administration, Public Governance, and Governance and Organization (PAGO) programmes are academic programmes that aim at the development of academic knowledge, skills and attitude in students that are relevant for understanding public administration, governance and organization. The programmes should pay particular attention to social and political contexts and developments, relevant (interdisciplinary) bodies of knowledge, aim at developing research capacities, and contribute to working professionally in public and private domains. The DSFR lists programme principles that are to be seen as building blocks for academic programmes. The committee has established that the intended learning outcomes of both programmes correspond with these defining programme principles.</p> <p>The first learning outcome of the bachelor's programme, which refers to the acquisition of knowledge and insight in the PAGO field, is related to the committee's first programme principle (knowledge of society and changing contexts). The fifth learning outcome, which refers to the student's capacity to formulate researchable problem definitions, is linked to the committee's second programme principle (research skills). The fourth learning outcome, which expresses that graduates have the ability to apply knowledge and insight in such a way that it demonstrates a professional approach to their work or profession, is connected to the committee's third programme principle (moral stature and professionalism). The remaining learning outcomes can be linked to the committee's programme principles in a similar way.</p> <p>The committee has also established that the intended learning outcomes of the master's programme are sufficiently related with the programme principles listed in the Domain Specific Frame of Reference. In addition, they correspond sufficiently to the committee's set of final academic learning outcomes for master's programmes. For example, the second learning outcome of the master's programme, which refers to the ability to design and choose strategies based on scientific analysis, is related to the committee's second programme principle (integrative skills). The fifth learning outcome, which refers to the student's capacity to analyse ambiguous policy and organization processes is linked to the committee's</p>
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	<p>second programme principle (research skills). The tenth learning outcome, which expresses that graduates are able to reflect on their own contribution to teams and organizations, is connected to the committee's third programme principle (critical stances). The remaining learning outcomes can be linked to the committee's programme principles in a similar way.</p> <p>The committee concludes that its requirements for bachelor's and master's programmes are sufficiently covered by the professional and academic competences that the programmes have in view.</p> <p>The committee also established that the competences trained in both programmes refer to skills which graduates need in the professional practice. The learning outcomes of the bachelor's programme refer to the abilities to use, evaluate and interpret research techniques, to carry out research and to communicate information and research results to different audiences. The learning outcomes of the master's programme refer to the use of advanced theoretical understanding and empirical knowledge, to the abilities to choose research strategies on the basis of scientific analysis and to reflect on their own contribution to teams and organizations. The committee concludes that the final qualifications of both programmes correspond to the demands of the professional practice.</p> <p>The committee assesses the standard related to the domain-specific requirements as 'satisfactory' for both programmes.</p>
5.5.1.2 Other Components Score: (adequate)	In the bachelor's programme students have the option to choose electives amounting to 37,5 EC at the most. Students can choose to follow a set of coherent subjects that is specifically composed by a programme (minor), select their own electives, go abroad or do an internship.
5.5.1.3 Structure and didactics of the programme Score: bachelor: Good/excellent; master: good	<p>The committee has studied the table in the self-evaluation report which relates the courses in the curriculum of the bachelor's programme to the various learning outcomes. It has concluded that the information provided in the table is adequate and correct. It has established that every learning outcome receives great attention in the curriculum and that the distribution of the learning outcomes over the curriculum is even and appropriate. The committee has noted that the attention for information technology and finance is somewhat restricted, but it has also learned that these subjects are addressed in several courses and that students can follow a minor on Economics. In the committee's opinion, the curriculum is designed and structured in such a way that it is obvious that students who have successfully completed the curriculum have acquired every learning outcome at the bachelor's level.</p> <p>The committee has established that the information provided in the tables of the master's programme is adequate and correct. In the committee's view it will be likely that there will be differences in the level at which students acquire knowledge and skills, since the curriculum expects that they compose an individual study programme and dictates a high degree of autonomous studying in the master's programme. But the curriculum and pedagogical model are organized in such a way that the differences are more than acceptable. The committee therefore concludes that the curriculum is a good realization of the learning outcomes of the master's</p>

	<p>programme and that it guarantees that students will certainly achieve them.</p> <p>The committee concludes that both the bachelor's programme and the master's programme fulfil the criteria which refer to the relation between the learning outcomes and the curriculum.</p> <p>The committee has established that the curriculum of the bachelor's programme is designed and structured in a well-considered way. It appreciates that the programme focuses on public administration and organization science in a broad sense. The committee applauds the integrative approach which enables students to apply their theoretical knowledge to the practice of public administration at the end of each year by means of the research projects. The committee is impressed by the way in which the skills modules are embedded in the programme enabling the students to train these in relation to knowledge courses.</p> <p>The committee notes that the structure of the master's programme is well-considered. The joint, initial course for all master's tracks (with the exception of SPSM) ensures that the students find common ground. The committee recognizes that the students then pursue an individual study path. It appreciates that the coherence of the master's programme is visible within this personal study path since students follow a specialization course and choose two matching electives to create a coherent programme. The committee much appreciates that the electives are geared towards acquiring academic and professional skills that are very useful in the workforce. The committee recognizes that, despite the individual nature of conducting research, the research seminar ensures that students work together. This enables them to benefit from each other's support and feedback while being solely responsible for their own thesis. The structure of the SPSM track differs from the other master's tracks due to its dual character. The committee appreciates that this is a tailor-made track and that the SPSM students receive ample guidance to ensure that they are able to connect their course work to their work in a sports related company. Despite the difference in structure SPSM students also participate in a research seminar together and they follow skills modules that the committee recognizes are valuable for their future careers.</p> <p>Based on above considerations, the committee assesses the standard which relates to the requirements for the consistency of the curriculum as "good" for both programmes.</p> <p>The committee has established that the curriculum of the bachelor's programme can, in principle, be completed in the nominal period of three years. The actual study load is evenly distributed over the curriculum and it is not too high. The committee has not received any information which indicates that the curriculum contains serious obstacles which lead to delays in the students' progress. In fact, some students indicated that they approach their lecturers for extra work. The committee does feel that the programme offers limited time to do an internship or to go abroad even though the programme does offer these options. If students want to undertake any of these activities, adequate and timely planning is necessary.</p> <p>The committee has not received any information which suggests that the</p>
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	<p>curriculum of the master's programme cannot be completed in one (or two for SPSM) years. The committee has not encountered any structural problems with delay (cf. S26). It finds that the small scale of the institute, the interactive learning groups and the approachability of the staff members contributes to a positive learning climate that supports students in their learning process</p> <p>Based on above considerations, the committee assesses the criterion related to workload as 'satisfactory' for both programmes.</p> <p>The committee has established that both programmes have developed an explicit and elaborate didactic concept, of which the small-scale community is the starting point. The programmes use highly appropriate didactic methods that were chosen and developed with care. Furthermore, the methods are fully in line with the mission, aims and objectives of the programmes. According to the committee, the didactic approach of both programmes is extremely well thought out. The committee wants to commend the pedagogical model of the bachelor's programme in particular, which it considers excellent.</p> <p>The committee has noted that the curriculum of the bachelor's programme exposes students to a coherent, varied and balanced set of different working methods such as lectures and tutorials (for transfer of knowledge), and teamwork and role-play (for practice of academic and professional skills). The programme encourages students to learn from each other and view problems and issues from multiple perspectives. This is facilitated by project-based work (assignments) in which students work together in small groups, thus enabling them to learn from each other whilst applying theory to practice. The committee appreciates that the assignments that accompany the working methods are highly appropriate and suitable (cf. S13). The programme places great importance on the development of academic and professional skills which are trained throughout the three-year programme. The bachelor's phase is characterized by extensive supervision from staff that is present and highly visible for the students. The small-scale approach of the programme enables lecturers to follow students closely and give plenty personal attention and feedback. This is highly appreciated by both students and staff who have managed to create an academic community in which education is as important as research. Staff have an informal, open-door policy and are available and approachable. The building, which is designed specifically for the programme, enables and strengthens the pedagogical model (cf. S20). Students are exposed to the professional field from the start of their studies. They participate in research projects (real life cases) and site visits. In addition, they are exposed to guest lecturers. This connection to the professional field is highly valued by the students.</p> <p>The committee has established that the teaching methods used in the curriculum of the master's programme are fully appropriate and in line with the aims and objectives of the components. The teaching methods in the master's programme are designed to stimulate more independence and to further develop academic and professional skills which are well integrated in the curriculum. The obvious focus in the master's programme is on the thesis project (30 EC). The programme places much attention on group</p>
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	<p>work and applying theory to practice which the committee highly appreciates. The small scale of the programme ensures that students have ample opportunity to approach staff for extra feedback or personal attention.</p> <p>The committee therefore assesses this standard as ‘excellent’ for the bachelor’s programme and ‘good’ for the master’s programme.</p>
5.5.1.4 Intake Score: (adequate)	The admission criteria (see 5.10) are adequate for the aims and objectives of the programme.
5.5.2 Length Score: Complies	The length of both the bachelor programme (180 ECTS) and the master programme (60 ECTS) are in line with the Dutch and the European requirements.
5.5.2 Results Score: Good	<p>The committee has established that the level and quality of the theses of both the bachelor’s programme and the master’s programme are good. The documents studied by the committee show that students have acquired knowledge and understanding at a level that suits a bachelor’s and master’s programme and that they are able to conduct research at the same level as well. The committee therefore concludes that the achieved learning outcomes, as exemplified in the theses, easily correspond to which the intended learning outcomes of the programmes. The committee is mostly impressed by the level of the bachelor’s theses which it considers clearly above average and sometimes too advanced for a bachelor’s level. However, the theses do show that the students have achieved the ambitious learning outcomes (cf. S2).</p> <p>The committee has noted that the graduates of the bachelor’s programme are able to continue their studies in the master’s programme without any problems. Representatives from the professional field indicate that graduates of the master’s programme are easily recognizable, possess the necessary academic skills, are capable of viewing problems from multiple angles and are altogether good employees. In the committee’s opinion, this means that the actual competences which students have achieved in the course of the programmes correspond sufficiently with the demands of the discipline and the professional practice.</p> <p>Based on above considerations, the committee assesses this standard as ‘good for both programmes.</p> <p>The committee has established that both programmes have defined target figures for their success rates and that these targets figures are ambitious. In the case of both the bachelor’s programme and the master’s programme, these target figures have not been met. The programme management is aware that students, on average, take four years to complete the bachelor. The committee finds that relevant (extracurricular) activities can enhance the quality of studies for the student and agrees that the programme rightly encourages these. Although the ambitious target figures are not met, the committee finds that the actual achieved success rates are good in comparison to the generally low success rates in the Netherlands.</p> <p>The committee therefore assesses the standard relating to the success rates as ‘good’ for both programmes.</p>

5.6 Quality Improvement and Innovation	
5.6.1 Programme accomplishment Score: Adequate	<p>The committee has established that the courses of the curricula of both the bachelor's and the master's programme are periodically and systematically evaluated and that the programme board uses target figures to assess the outcomes of the evaluations (cf. S23). The committee has also noted that the programme undertakes additional efforts to collect data and information about the courses and curricula, such as the organization of annual panel meetings with students. As a result, the management of the programmes has a lot of information at their disposal which they can use to assess and improve the quality of their programmes. The committee has established that the programme board takes a leading role in the evaluations of the programmes, in the analysis of their results and in the formulation of measures to improve the quality when necessary.</p> <p>The committee has established that the programmes as a whole are evaluated in several ways. During the annual panel meeting with students the curricula as a whole are discussed. Also, the lecturers discuss the whole curricula two or three times a year. The programme has distributed evaluations among graduates, but the response has been too low to yield any conclusions.</p> <p>On the basis of these considerations, the committee concludes that both the bachelor's and the master's programme fulfil the criterion with respects to the evaluation of results. It therefore assesses this standard as 'satisfactory' for both programmes.</p> <p>The committee has established that both staff members and students contribute significantly to the internal quality assurance system via the programme committee, the educational committee, the Board of Examiners, the evaluations of programmes and courses, staff meetings and student meetings. It has noted that the educational director and the programme board take a leading role in the development of the programmes. The committee appreciates the efforts undertaken by the education committee, staff and students to improve the quality of the programme. These stakeholders have a clear and demonstrable effect on the quality of the programmes. The committee is positive about the commitment and dedication of staff and students, and the open attitude of the programme board. The programmes are open to suggestions for improvement which has a positive effect on the quality.</p> <p>The committee has noted that the involvement of graduates of the programmes and of the professional field is not as prominent. The programme does have contact with both groups of stakeholders, which are useful and valuable, but have an informal character. USG employs an alumni coordinator who informs alumni about activities and lectures. However, it is less clear to the committee that graduates and the professional field are directly involved in the quality assurance of the programmes. The committee suggests that the USG community has great potential to reach its alumni in a systemic way and could involve them more in the programmes' quality assurance policy.</p> <p>Based on above considerations, the committee assesses this standard as 'satisfactory' for both programmes.</p>

5.6.2 Curriculum Development Score: Adequate	<p>The committee has taken note of various examples of measures aimed at improving the quality of the programmes' curricula. Besides implementing measures on a course level, the programme has also been able to respond to other needs. For example, the programme founds extracurricular classes for special groups such as Topklas and a thesis class. The thesis class is organized for students who are unable to complete their thesis in the master's Research Seminar. Every year the programme investigates whether it is necessary to organize a thesis class. In the committee's opinion, this shows that the programmes are able to quickly respond to students' needs to achieve the intended learning outcomes.</p> <p>The committee assesses the standard which relates to the development and implementation of measures for improvement as 'satisfactory' for both programmes.</p>
5.6.3 External Reviews Score:	No information available
5.7 Student Assessment Score: Good	<p>During its site visit, the committee has established that both the bachelor's programme and the master's programme use a variety of assessment methods that correspond well with the aims and didactic methods of the programme components. The methods used properly reflect the level and orientation of the programmes. Written exams, for instance, are used in the assessment of courses which focus on the acquisition of knowledge and insight, while practical tests are used to assess whether students have acquired professional skills. In order to guarantee objectivity regarding the assessment of skills, the programme has compiled a list of criteria on which students are assessed. Consistent grading of courses is currently a discussion point that has been taken up by the Education Committee. The committee feels that this issue might benefit from using assessment forms for all courses. An extensive list of criteria is available for the assessment of theses, which the committee highly appreciates. If the programme seeks to further professionalize its assessment practice it might want to consider using an external second reviewer for the theses, analogous to the thesis assessment practice in the United Kingdom.</p> <p>The committee applauds that students of both programmes are continually assessed and are subjected to a great variety of assessment methods that are highly appropriate for both the content and working method of the courses. Students are well prepared for the assessments and corresponding criteria since assessment information is posted on the internet and in course guides.</p> <p>The committee applauds the programmes' Board of Examiners for playing an active role. It appreciates that the Board shows a real commitment to the improvement of the programmes and how it consistently works on maintaining high academic standards.</p> <p>Based on above considerations, the committee assesses the standard relating to assessments as 'good' for both programmes.</p>
5.8 Programme Jurisdiction Score: Adequate	The committee has established that the factual responsibility for the bachelor's and the master's programmes is adequately and effectively organized and the responsible parties are able to influence decisions with respect to the important aspects of the programme. The organization of

	<p>USG and its relation to the faculty is characterized by its close proximity since the head of USG is a member of the board of the faculty. The Head is thus able to influence decisions at a faculty level with respect to the programmes.</p> <p>Based on above considerations, the committee assesses the standard relating to programme jurisdiction as "satisfactory" for both programmes.</p>
5.9.1 Faculty nucleus Score: Adequate	<p>The bachelor's programme uses 10.9 fte's teaching staff per year. Approximately 300 students are registered for the various courses for the three bachelor's years, resulting in a staff-student ratio of 1:27,5. In the master's programme the total teaching capacity is 7,27 fte's. The total number of students enrolled in the one-year master's programme is approximately 150 students, resulting in a staff-student ratio of 1:20,6. The committee noted that the pedagogical model of the programmes makes that lecturers and students form a small-scale academic community that places great value on the close interaction between lecturers and students. To make the small-scale community workable, lecturers actively structure the expectations of students with regards to the amount of individual attention they can give to each student. The committee has established that the staff has succeeded in creating a positive work environment of which both students and staff are satisfied. The committee therefore assesses this standard as 'satisfactory' for both programmes.</p>
5.9.2 Faculty qualifications Score: Bachelor: good/adequate; master: adequate	<p>The committee has established that the majority of staff members who contribute to the bachelor's and master's programme have a PhD degree and conduct research in a successful research programme which is evaluated regularly by assessment committees made up of international experts. Furthermore, staff contribute to (international) conferences. It therefore concludes that teaching is provided by researchers who actively contribute to the development of the discipline. As a result, both programmes have an adequate grounding in research.</p> <p>The committee highly appreciates that first-year bachelor's students are taught by core lecturers. For instance, USG's research director is the core lecturer for the first-year bachelor's course Introduction to Public Administration. The committee notes that this shows the commitment of the programme to create an academic community for all students and teachers.</p> <p>Based on above considerations, the committee assesses that standard relation to the academic orientation of staff as 'good' for the bachelor's programme and 'satisfactory' for the master's programme.</p> <p>The committee assessed the content-related expertise among staff as at least satisfactory. It has established that the areas of specialization which the programmes offer are all represented sufficiently. Teaching is demanding in a small-scale community. Therefore, periods without teaching are organized for the lecturers in which they can fully focus on their research. Policy dictates that lecturers are encouraged to spend a period abroad every two or three years. Twice yearly, career interviews are organized with lecturers to discuss further development. Research and teaching are both considered equally important.</p>

	The committee noted that the course and panel evaluations show that students are satisfied with the quality of the lecturers. The lecturers teaching the bachelor's programme are classed as 'good' to 'very good'. Based on above considerations, the committee assesses the standard related to the quality of staff as 'satisfactory for both the bachelor's programme and the master's programme.
5.9.3 Diversity: gender and minorities Score: Adequate	The committee has taken note of Utrecht University's policy with regards to staff recruitment and the table presented in the self-evaluation report which shows the male-female distribution for staff at USG. No explicit policy is in place to increase the number of staff from minority groups. Nor is it university policy to register the ethnic background of members of staff. The committee concludes that USG has not encountered problems related to diversity in the workforce. Based on above considerations, the standard relating to diversity is assessed as "satisfactory" for both programmes
5.10 Admission of Students Score: Adequate	The programme applies a selection procedure in the bachelor's and master's programme, which is part of a number of nation-wide experiments that have been developed by the Ministry of Education, Culture, and Science as part of the Educational Experiments Act of 2005. Applicants for the bachelor's programme need to have a degree from a pre-university secondary education (in Dutch: vwo) or they have finished the first year of a degree programme at an institute for higher professional education (in Dutch: hbo). USG uses several selection criteria to determine whether an applicant would be a successful student at USG. The criteria used are: academic potential, communicative skills, motivation and interest in the field of study. In order to show compliance with these criteria students participate in an admissions process. Students must hand in their average school-leaving examination grade and a letter of recommendation. These documents are considered an indicator for a successful university career. Furthermore, students perform a written thematic interview on the basis of which they motivate their interest for the programme. Students also complete a competence profile test which contains statements on the basis of which a profile is drawn up of their academic and communicative competencies. Finally, the applicants are invited for an interview. During the interviews, the programme aims to get a general impression of the applicants and their oral skills. The self-evaluation report contains a table which shows the coherence between the core values of the programme, the selection criteria and the selection instruments. Besides selecting students, the programme's expectations of students are made explicit in the information provided to potential students. In addition to the usual programme information, USG organizes study group meetings, 'shadow afternoons', debating, case analyses, and simulation games. The master's programme in Public Administration and Organization Science is a selective, small-scale programme. Each track admits approximately 25 students a year (cf.S26). The aim of selection is to achieve an optimal match between students and the programme to enhance the academic climate and the quality of the programme, to increase the chances of students successfully completing their studies. An admission's committee is

	<p>responsible for admission procedures. It consists of a member of scientific staff and the educational manager of the master's programme. The admission requirements for the tracks are equal to the general admission requirements for the master's programme.</p> <p>Students who want to apply to the master's programme should have at least one of the following qualifications: a) a bachelor's degree of Public Administration and Organization Science from Utrecht University, b) a bachelor's degree of Public Administration from a Dutch university other than Utrecht University, or c) a university bachelor's degree from other Utrecht University faculties with completion of a minor in Public Administration and Organization Science.</p> <p>Students with a bachelor's degree of Public Administration and Organization Science from Utrecht University have a legal right to be admitted to the master's programme. The students are subjected to an interview, which aims to ensure that they consciously choose to enrol in the master's programme. Currently, the majority of master's students originate from outside USG. Students with a bachelor's degree from an institute for higher professional education (in Dutch: hbo) are not admitted unless the degree is obtained from a preferred partner with whom USG has made arrangements¹. These students should have completed a minor in Public Administration and Organization Science prior to entering the master's programme. For the Sports Policy and Sports Management track, the same admission requirements are in place. Except that for this track students holding an hbo bachelor's degree plus a minor in Public Administration and Organization Science are admitted. The minor has a study load of a total of 30 EC and consists of four compulsory components of 7.5 EC. The minor is a reflection of the most important subject knowledge of the bachelor of Public Administration and Organization Science.</p> <p>The committee has established that the requirements for access to the bachelor's programme have been specified and are in accordance with the relevant formal demands. The programme aims to create a community of students. The selection procedure helps to establish this even before the students are enrolled in the programme by managing students' expectations. The selection procedure and subsequent entry in a small community helps a smooth transition for students from secondary education to the university. The bachelor's programme closely monitors the first-year students. This allows the programme to continually check whether the curriculum matches the entry level (qualifications) of the incoming students.</p> <p>The committee established that students who have completed the bachelor's programme in Public Administration and Organization Science in Utrecht can enter the master's programme in Public Administration and Organization Science without any further conditions. However, the students are invited to a mandatory interview to discuss their motivation for entering the master's programme. The committee has noted that USG's own bachelor students are well equipped for the master's programme. They have the necessary knowledge and skills, and they are familiar with the expectations the programme has of them. The committee concluded that students from other institutions need more time to adapt to the</p>
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	<p>master's programme. This group has enough knowledge and skills, but seems to have to get used to the teaching methods and expectations of the programme.</p> <p>The committee notes that the programme has introduced selection procedures for students from other higher education institutions and has created a minor programme for students that lack prior education in the field.</p> <p>The committee assesses the standard relating to the admission requirements as 'satisfactory' for both the bachelor's programme and the master's programme.</p>
5.11 Supportive Services and Facilities Score: Excellent	<p>During the site visit, the committee studied the material facilities available to students of the bachelor's and master's programme. On the basis of its own observations, the information provided in the self-evaluation report and the interviews with students and staff, the committee concludes that the material facilities are excellent and that they make an essential contribution to the students' ability to achieve the learning outcomes. It notes that the facilities and the pedagogical model are mutually dependent. The committee thoroughly appreciates that the interior of the building was specifically designed to strengthen the pedagogical model of the programmes. The building is the foundation of the small-scale, academic community that the programme aims to create. Students and staff work together in the same building of which they are highly appreciative. Students proudly refer to the in-house library as "their own" library, and indicate that they feel at home in the building. The quality of the classrooms is very good and the number of places for self-study or studying in groups is amply sufficient.</p> <p>Students are encouraged to bring their own computers with which they can log on to the wireless network. USG has organized its own ICT support service, since they lost their full-time ICT support service in a centralization bid by the university. Students are content with this solution. The committee highly appreciates that USG takes responsibility for the service level of its ICT facilities. The committee has noted that all the material facilities, ranging from the classrooms to the restaurants to the library, are in aid of the realisation of the final qualifications.</p> <p>Based on the considerations above and the notion that the material facilities were custom-designed for the programmes and form the foundation of the programmes' didactic model, the committee assesses this standard as 'excellent' for both bachelor's and master's programmes.</p>
5.12 Student Services Score: Good	<p>The committee has established that the tutoring and the provision for both the bachelor's programme and the master's programme are well organized and executed. It appreciates the work of the lecturers who play an important role in both the tutoring and the provision of information and who are active and committed. The lecturers take the role of academic counsellor, while the study advisor monitors students' progress and is the first point of contact for students with non-content related study issues, personal problems and (physical) disabilities. The committee noted that students of the bachelor's programme receive information about opportunities they have after completing the programme, but graduates of</p>

	<p>the master's programme were not always sure whether they were adequately prepared for the labour market.</p> <p>The programme is characterized by its small scale. Staff members are easily accessible and they all contribute to the support and guidance of the students. The committee has established that the programmes fully use the small scale to their advantage. Furthermore, it determined that the threats of running a small-scale community, such as an internal orientation on the students' part, is acknowledged and addressed by staff.</p> <p>Based on above considerations, the committee assesses this standard as 'good' for both Programmes.</p>
5.13 Public Relations Score: Adequate	<p>The committee has established that public relations for all Utrecht University bachelor's and master's programmes, that is aimed at potential students, is organized and coordinated by a central department.</p> <p>Programmes themselves are invited to participate in the collective activities. By participating, programmes have the opportunity to present themselves and give specific information on the programme to potential students and others.</p> <p>The publicly accessible webpage Studiepunt discloses details about the programmes scheduling and teaching support. Although this information is primarily aimed at those who are already attending the programme, it provides prospective students the possibility to see what the programme offers its current students.</p> <p>Besides the activities mentioned above, the programme does organize its own information gatherings for its current students on studying abroad, options for graduates and so on.</p> <p>On the basis of these considerations, the committee concludes that both the bachelor's programme and the master's programme fulfil the criterion which relates to public relations.</p>
6 Additional Criteria Score:	None

2. Conclusion

Based on the above evaluation of the specific criteria, the EAPAA Accreditation Committee concludes that these programmes meet the criteria for accreditation sufficiently, and so the programmes can be accredited without restrictions.