



**European Association for  
Public Administration  
Accreditation**

## EAPAA Accreditation Committee Evaluation Report

Evaluation Report with respect to the request for accreditation of the Higher School of Economics, Faculty of Social Sciences, School of Public Administration, Moscow, Russia, Bachelor's Degree Programme of Public Administration and Master's Degree Programme of Public Administration.

At its meeting of August 2017 in Milan, the EAPAA Accreditation Committee evaluated this programme against the EAPAA Accreditation Criteria.

### 1. Accreditation Criteria

2. Applicability/Eligibility	
2.1 Domain	The aims of the programmes are clearly linked to public administration practice and academic research and they fall within the field of Public Administration as used by EAPAA. Both programmes lead to a formal degree and are eligible for EAPAA accreditation.
2.2 Geography	Russia is one of the member countries of the Commonwealth of Independent States (so-called CIS Countries). Therefore, both programmes fall within the jurisdiction of EAPAA.
2.3 Programme longevity	Both programmes fulfil the EAPAA criteria of having more than two cohorts of graduates for normal accreditation.
2.4 Programme variants and locations	N.a.
4 Category of accreditation	Neither programme has been accredited before by EAPAA. The programmes expect the accreditation be granted for a seven-year period.
5. Standards	
5.1 Domain of public administration	<p><b>Evaluation of the BA programme:</b> The Public Administration content of the programme is sufficient and diverse. The objectives comply with international academic and professional norms for public administration programmes. The development of the programme towards a more integrated, coherent approach to Public Administration should be continued.</p> <p><b>Evaluation MA programme:</b> The domain of Public Administration is well covered in the programme. The discipline is sufficiently covered for participants in each its</p>

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	specialization tracks. The objectives comply with international academic and professional norms for public administration programmes.
5.2 Mission of the programme	The mission of both programmes is clear and they have a distinctive profile compared to each other and also compared to their external competitors, although the distinctions could be sharper. The missions of the programmes are consistent with intended competencies of the graduates and with the main points of their educational philosophies.
5.3 Level	The definitions of competencies and learning outcomes of both programmes indicate the implementation of the general principles of so-called Dublin descriptors of the level of bachelor and master training respectively. Given the clarification of teaching and studying practices, it is beyond doubt that that the programmes generally attain the international qualifications of the academic bachelor and master degrees.
5.4 Practice and internships	The students are trained for practical skills in various ways and internships are an integral part of the programmes. The learning objectives are aligned with the mission of the two programmes, respectively. Students get familiar with the practices and expectations of their future employers. Internship and project work could have a stronger focus on provincial and municipality sectors.
5.5.1 Curriculum Content	
5.5.1.1 Core components	The core curriculum of both programmes provides teaching of the basic concepts, theories, methods, but some important areas are weak or missing. The components are relevant for training generalists (BA programme) and professionals (MA programme) for public sector and NGOs and for acquiring the competences and skills set as the intended learning outcomes. Students' assignments contribute to their ability to work independently on 'real' problems in the public sector throughout the studies.
5.5.1.2 Other Components	The programme management should address the rationales and broader intended learning outcomes of the two specialisations of the BA programme and ensure that the courses are consistent with them.
5.5.1.3 Structure and didactics of the programme	The programmes have sufficient coherence and they are scheduled adequately by each semester. The didactic approaches and practices are aligned with the intended learning outcomes. The programmes are doable in the prescribed time, but some students need more time mainly because of academic failures (around half of the dropouts in the BA programme). For those students, there are flexible practices in place.
5.5.1.4 Intake	The entrance requirements represent the qualifications of students necessary for completing the programmes and the admission is highly competitive. There is a clear procedure of bridging studies for repairing lacunas in the entrance prerequisites for the MA programme.
5.5.2 Length	Both the BA and the MA programmes are in line with the intended academic performance as well as with the requirements of the accreditation category.

5.5.3 Results	The competencies and skills are in line with the intended learning outcomes of the programmes and the Dublin descriptors of bachelor and master level programmes, respectively. Based on the available information, it is evident that graduates of both programmes are able to work successfully in the public sector.
5.6 Quality Improvement and Innovation	
5.6.1 Programme accomplishment	here are adequate periodic systems in use for monitoring the programmes and their components. On the basis of the documents and interview evidence the SVT concludes that these systems and other instruments are functioning in practice and they are taken seriously by the management, faculty and students alike.
5.6.2 Curriculum Development	The programmes collect feedback information from students, staff, alumni and professional field (employers) about relevant areas of studies and working life. There is also evidence that the information is used. In addition, the programmes have well-thought-out plans about required changes and future needs of education in the field of public administration. More attention should be paid to effective forms of the participation of relevant stakeholders in curriculum development.
5.6.3 External Reviews	There is no information available whether any evaluations conducted by (inter)national reviews have led to any changes in the content or the organisation of the programmes.
5.7 Student Assessment	The principles and practices of assessment of learning are well-developed, linked to intended learning outcomes and mostly known to students beforehand. Students receive timely feedback and are generally satisfied with assessment practices. There should be more systematic and transparent follow-up of the distributions of marks and failures.
5.8 Programme Jurisdiction	The operative responsibilities of the programmes rest with an identifiable group of persons who have the capacity to coordinate and manage the programmes. The faculty and the programme managers and coordinators exercises initiative, and they have determining influence with respect to the content and practical delivery of the programmes. However, important aspects of the programme are decided at higher levels of the organisation. The SVT recommends a more decentralised decision making structure, especially in terms of budget, and more extensive participation of students to ensure that both teaching and studying receive relevant attention.
5.9.1 Faculty nucleus Score:	There is an identifiable faculty nucleus that has the primary responsibility of the programme. The number of faculty is sufficient for taking the responsibility of teaching activities.
5.9.2 Faculty qualifications	The teaching quality of the academic staff of the two programs is adequate. The short-term measures taken to improve the international research standing are convincing. Nevertheless, consistent, long-term actions need to be taken to further converge to the international standards within the field.

5.9.3 Diversity: gender and minorities	The gender balance of the School of Public Administration is relatively good. However, there is no systematic policy practice of gender and minority issues to ensure the positive development of equity of different groups in recruitment, career and salaries in accordance with the societal targets.
5.10 Admission of Students	The admission requirements and procedures are in line with the programmes' mission and objectives to select the best students in the field of PA.
5.11 Supportive Services and Facilities	The facilities are adequate. However, further investment would be advisable. Access for the disabled could generally be improved.
5.12 Student Services	Students' progress in their studies is followed-up, but effective sharing the information with relevant actors who affect the progress of studies may be improved. There are adequate student services for programme advisement and career planning that generally meet the students' needs, but the supervision of students' research work seems to have ambiguities that need attention.
5.13 Public Relations	The programme management has been successful in delivering information about the two study programmes for current and future students and relevant stakeholders. Stakeholder collaboration is vibrant but it could be based on a more systematic approach to ensure that the missions, target groups and other relevant aspects of the study programmes get adequate attention. For this purpose, an advisory committee might provide appropriate support.
6 Additional Criteria	N.a.

## 2. Conclusion

Based on all material and especially the report of the EAPAA site visit team, the Accreditation Committee has evaluated your programme. The BA programme covers the key Public Administration topics offered by the core components of the programme. The topics are relevant to the professional and academic context in which the programme operates. The set of courses is comprehensive in terms of disciplines involved: Public Administration, Management, Law, Economics, Mathematics, humanities, etc. There are many electives and two specialisations. Intended competencies and learning outcomes are apt for the public domain.

The MA programme covers more PA topics than the BA programme, including also Economics, Law, and Management which are all important for working in the public sector organisations and NGOs. The stronger focus on PA is a commendable solution to enhance the synergy of relevant competences and skills.

The curriculum of both programmes miss some elements of Public Administration studies that tend to be part of PA study programmes in many countries. Comparative PA would strengthen the international dimension of public administration which is useful both for changing professional practices and comparative academic research. While comparative aspects are discussed as part of other courses and there are plans already in place to strengthen the comparative elements of the curriculum, also public service ethics (including studies of corruption) and broader provision of public policy studies (policy analysis; policy formulation, implementation and evaluation) should be considered when the curriculum is revised.

Quantitative research methods are taught to some extent, but attaining relevant learning outcomes may need more input, especially in exercises with real-life data and SPSS or some other statistical software package. Qualitative methods (types of textual analysis and discourse analysis, interviewing, participant observation and ethnography, etc.) are not taught systematically as an independent course.

Informatisation or digitalisation of public sector practices increases and broadens the needs for learning the skills related to evidence-based/informed decision making, knowledge management, information systems, e-services, and approaches to utilize big data. The programmes have addressed the improvement of the IT-skills of the graduates, but there is more in this area that is crucial for understanding and improving the practises of the current and future public organisations and public management.

Research seminars constitute a standard part of both programmes. These seminars contribute effectively to understanding of the phases of research process and learning practical research skills. When research seminars are linked to real-life project work, students are introduced to current problem of the public sector. This is also supported by well-functioning internship practices and robust connections to relevant public organisation.

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