



**European Association for
Public Administration
Accreditation**

EAPAA Accreditation Committee Evaluation Report

Evaluation Report with respect to the request for accreditation of the Bachelor's programme Public Administration (BPA), the Master's programme Public Administration (MPA), and the Master's programme International Public Management and Public Policy (IMP) of the Erasmus University Rotterdam (EUR), Faculty of Social Sciences, Department of Public Administration and Sociology, Rotterdam, the Netherlands.

At its meetings of September 3 and 4, 2018 in Lausanne (Switzerland), the EAPAA Accreditation Committee evaluated the programmes against the EAPAA Accreditation Criteria.

1. Accreditation Criteria

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| 2. Applicability/Eligibility | |
| 2.1 Domain | The bachelor and master programmes are standard academic degree programmes in public administration. The programmes fulfil this criterion. |
| 2.2 Geography | All programmes are organized by the Department of Public Administration and Sociology, Rotterdam, the Netherlands. The Netherlands is a member of the Council of Europe, therefore the programme falls within the jurisdiction of EAPAA. |
| 2.3 Programme longevity | Both the bachelor's programme and the Master's programme Public Administration have been nationally accredited in 2002 for the first time. The Master's programme International Public Management and Public Policy exists since 2004 and until 2011 was part of the MA Public Administration. All programmes fulfil this criterion. |
| 2.4 Programme variants and locations | In 2016 an international track in the bachelor's programme was launched: Management of International Social Challenges (MISOC). The Master's programme Public Administration has an evening-variant for mid-career students, which is the same as the day programme, with the exception of the internship. |
| 4 Category of accreditation | The bachelor programme opts for the first cycle bachelor level public administration programmes accreditation. The master programmes opt for the second cycle graduate/master level public administration programmes accreditation. The character of the programmes and the structure of the student population are in line with the categories for which they apply. |
| 5. Standards | |

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| 5.1 Domain of public administration | All relevant aspects of the public administration domain are being taught in the programmes. Applicants for the master programmes without an public administration (or related) bachelor, have to go through a one-year pre-master programme to be at the same level. |
| 5.2 Mission of the programme | <p>The mission of both the Bachelor programme and the Master's programme Public Administration is 'to train public administrators who can identify and analyse social issues, advise on policy-relevant solutions and organise the requisite processes.' It has a strong focus on practice. The SVT is of the opinion that this mission of both programmes is clear, but broad. Most importantly, it does not yet take into account the recent changes to and the strong practice focus of the programme.</p> <p>The mission of the Master's programme is 'to make students aware of the increasingly multinational, international and supra-national nature of public management and public policy-making, provide them with the scientific theories, concepts and tools for analysing this international multi-level 'space' and equip them with knowledge and experiences relevant to careers with international dimensions.'</p> <p>The panel is of opinion the mission statement of the programme does not describe the unique characteristics, the academic level that is aimed for and the intended learning outcomes of the programme clearly enough.</p> |
| 5.3 Level | The intended learning outcomes of all the programmes are adequate for the respective levels of the programmes. |
| 5.4 Practice and internships | All three programmes have a compulsory internship and are strongly practice oriented. However there are exceptions for the internship. The evening-programme of the MPA has no internship (because the students are mid-career students), and there is no compulsory internship for the students who choose the 2 MPA specialisations that are internationally oriented (because the organisation is too complicated). Also the students of the MISOC-bachelor variant don't have an internship. |
| 5.5.1 Curriculum Content | |
| 5.5.1.1 Core components | The curriculum of the programmes is adequate. The SVT concludes that each of the three programmes, in its courses and learning lines (<i>bachelor's programme</i>) and 'ateliers' (<i>master's programmes</i>), covers a wide range of subjects across the multidisciplinary field of public administration, as well as the necessary research methods and academic skills. However, at master's level, the SVT is concerned that the amount of EC dedicated to research skills is lower than desirable. The SVT concludes that the programmes are fittingly multi-disciplinary. |
| 5.5.1.2 Other Components | Besides the choices with respect to specialisation and the choice of internship and thesis-project, students (except the evening students) also have electives. The SVT concludes that the BPA and MPA programmes succeeds in offering an impressive amount of diversity in the specialisations, In the IMP there is limited room for students to follow elective courses. |
| 5.5.1.3 Structure and didactics of the | The structure and didactics are generally adequate. The first year of the BPA is problem-based, and in the later years use 'academy-ateliers' are |

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| programme | <p>used. The curriculum of the BPA is structured along four learning lines: policy and governance, organisation and management, research methods and a skills line. The SVT concludes that overall the bachelor's programme is coherent in its contents and didactic approaches.</p> <p>The coherence of the MPA is ensured in a number of ways. Every specialisation has its own coordinator and is delivered by a small number of staff. With the exception of the evening specialisation, which students combine with a daytime job, the set-up of the master's programme is deliberately non-sequential. The didactic approach of the master's programme is that of the academy-atelier, with the ateliers (practicals) being the place where academic skills are being practised and deeper insights should be gained. The SVT concludes that the programme is structured in a logical and convincing manner.</p> <p>This master's programme makes use of the same didactical academy-atelier approach as the other Public Administration programmes. In addition to working with small groups of students, it uses a wide number of teaching formats. The IMP is a coherent and well-structured programme. The SVT is enthusiastic about the wide range of teaching formats employed by the programme.</p> |
| 5.5.1.4 Intake | <p>See the 5.10 for details about the admission criteria of students. The panel concludes that the structure, contents and didactics of the programmes match the students' qualifications. It is reassured to see that problems due to students' different backgrounds are addressed when they arise.</p> |
| 5.5.2 Length | <p>All three programmes are in line with the European regulations for bachelor and master programmes.</p> |
| 5.5.3 Results | <p>The SVT concludes that students of all three programmes have achieved the intended learning outcomes. The results of the bachelor and master programmes are good: theses were of good quality and the alumni were very satisfied. Most bachelors proceed to one of the public administration master programmes. Most of the master graduates find a job within a year. The alumni to whom the panel talked felt that their programmes connected well with the job market.</p> |
| 5.6 Quality Improvement and Innovation | |
| 5.6.1 Programme accomplishment | <p>All three programmes have a good system to monitor programme accomplishment.</p> |
| 5.6.2 Curriculum Development | <p>All three programmes share one Programme Committee. The SVT concludes that the Programme Committee is functioning adequately. It summarizes the results from course evaluations and provides teachers with useful feedback.</p> <p>The programme management explained that there is an Advisory Board with representatives from the most important organisations where students work in both the public and private sector. This Board is regularly asked for feedback. The SVT thinks that alumni and employers could be consulted in a more structured way.</p> |
| 5.6.3 External Reviews | <p>The programmes were reviewed twice in the past six years. Comments from</p> |

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| | the previous panel have been adopted, as well as those from the midterm review committee that visited the programmes in 2013. The SVT praises the initiative of undertaking a midterm review. |
| 5.7 Student Assessment | The programmes have an adequate assessment system in place. The panel concludes that the newly established Examination Board (which has responsibilities for all three programmes) takes a thorough and professional approach. It not only monitors the quality of exams, but also organises workshops for examiners on how to set good tests that match the learning objectives of the course. The assessment policy is adequate, but the SVT concludes that there is an emphasis on knowledge reproduction. During the assessment visit, the panel asked questions about the assessment policy of allowing the compensation of low grades in the first year of the BPA. It understands the rationale but advises to monitor this closely. In general the SVT could agree with marks given for theses, but also concludes that the assessment procedures of theses needs to be more transparent. |
| 5.8 Programme Jurisdiction | Covered in the Institutional Accreditation |
| 5.9.1 Faculty nucleus Score: | Covered in the Institutional Accreditation |
| 5.9.2 Faculty qualifications | The SVT is content with the quality of the teaching staff in all three programmes. Students spoke highly of the staff delivering the programmes, and described them as 'focused' yet 'easy to contact'. |
| 5.9.3 Diversity: gender and minorities | The gender mix at student level is more or less balanced in all three programmes. At staff level, however, the number of female staff is low, especially beyond the level of Assistant Professor. The SVT is content to see that the programmes increasingly succeed in attracting international students. |
| 5.10 Admission of Students | The BPA admits students with a completed pre-university education (vwo) degree, a similar foreign diploma, or a completed first year of higher professional education (hbo). In addition, students in the MISOC track have to submit a CV and motivation letter. The MPA directly admits students to one of the five Dutch tracks (including the evening specialisation) with an academic bachelor's degree in Public Administration or a closely related bachelor's programme such as political science or urban planning. All other students must first complete a pre-master programme. For the two English tracks, students must hold a relevant degree and submit proof of adequate command of English, as well as a CV and (for the MGN programme) written evidence of motivation. Students of the IMP are selected on the basis of their grades during their bachelor's degrees (for Dutch programmes, the average grade needs to be at least a seven), as well as on the relevance of prior education (Public Administration, Political Science, European Studies, International Relations or a pre-master programme in Public Administrations), their motivation, CV and English proficiency. An Admission Board, which in turn is supported by |

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| | an admissions office, carries out the selection process. |
| 5.11 Supportive Services and Facilities | Covered in the Institutional Accreditation |
| 5.12 Student Services | Covered in the Institutional Accreditation |
| 5.13 Public Relations | Covered in the Institutional Accreditation |
| 6 Additional Criteria | N.a. |

2. Conclusion

Based on all material and especially the report of the NVAO-EAPAA site visit team, the Accreditation Committee has evaluated the programmes.

In conclusion: a strong programme both for the Dutch as well as for the international students. However, there seems a mismatch between the formal quality assurance processes and reality.

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