



**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 European Public Administration, the Master's programme Public Administration and the Master's programme European Studies, of the University of Twente, Faculty of Behavioral, Management and Social Sciences, Department of Public Administration, Enschede, 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

2. Applicability/Eligibility	
0. Preamble	<p>In addition to joint accreditation by NVAO and EAPAA, the bachelor's programme European Public Administration requested SVT advice for a name change to Management, Society and Technology. The SVT addressed this request during the site visit and was positive in its advice regarding the name change.</p> <p>The bachelor's programme European Public Administration offers an accredited full-time joint degree specialization with the Westfälische Wilhelms-Universität Münster: Public Governance across Borders. A special procedure was agreed upon by its programme management, the NVAO, EAPAA and QANU for the accreditation of the joint degree programme. This joint degree programme was accredited by the German accreditation organization Agency for Quality Assurance (AQAS) on 1 December 2015. On 31 October 2016, the NVAO accredited the joint degree programme in the Netherlands based on its MULTRA agreement with AQAS. The accreditation expires on the same date as the current accreditation of the bachelor's programme European Public Administration. The cooperation between the universities of Twente and Münster provides a highly relevant cross-border environment. Students experience this first-hand, spending their first year in Münster and the second and third year in Twente.</p> <p>Since the joint degree programme was recently assessed and accredited, an adapted process for the current assessment of the programme was agreed upon to reduce administrative burden. The SVT studied the accreditation decisions by AQAS and the NVAO (including underlying documentation), a brief update on the programme since December 2015, and a description of standards 5 and 6 of the NVAO-EAPAA framework. In a separate session</p>

	during the site visit, the SVT had the opportunity to interview management, students and staff of the joint degree programme. Based on these interviews and the documents provided the SVT formed an opinion on the overarching programme Public Governance across Borders.
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 Faculty of Behavioral, Management and Social Sciences, which is situated in the Enschede, as part of the Faculty of Governance and Global Affairs of the University of Twente, 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	All programmes have been accredited by EAPAA before (lastly 2011). The programmes fulfil this criterion.
2.4 Programme variants and locations	There are no variants or other locations.
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.
5. Standards	
5.1 Domain of public administration	The SVT concludes that the core components of the three programmes adequately educate students in the field of public administration. The basic components of public administration are present in the curricula and courses, and are appropriate for the level of the programme.
5.2 Mission of the programme	<p>The bachelor's programme European Public Administration and the master's programmes Public Administration and European Studies at Twente University share a mission to teach public administration focusing on the multi-scale nature of societal challenges. They take a multi-level, multi-actor perspective, with levels of governance ranging from regional to global governments. Many modern-day societal challenges, such as global warming, mass-migration, terrorism and unemployment, are related to technology. The programmes therefore explicitly aim to train their students to connect technology to governance, policy and public management.</p> <p>The <i>bachelor's programme European Public Administration</i> aims to teach its students an understanding of societal challenges in connection to governance, policy and public management. In recent years, the programme has moved away from an institutions-based approach to an integrative approach, focusing on the involvement of multiple actors on multiple levels of so-called wicked problems in public administration, for which no unidimensional solutions exist.</p> <p>The <i>master's programme Public Administration</i> aims to teach its students to independently analyse multi-scale societal challenges from a multidisciplinary perspective.</p> <p>The <i>master's programme European Studies</i> emphasizes an internationally oriented, multi-level public administration perspective driven by multi-scale</p>

	<p>societal challenges.</p> <p>The intended learning outcomes of all three programmes are formulated quite similarly on a high level, using the Dublin descriptors and the public administration domain-specific frame of reference as starting points. As a result, the level, academic orientation and requirements of the field are clearly recognisable in the formulation of the intended learning outcomes of all three programmes. The SVT believes that the intended learning outcomes could be more elaborate in terms of content. The high-level approach results in abstract formulations that describe the knowledge base of the programme in quite general terms. As a result, there is no obvious connection between the intended learning outcomes and the modules educational objectives. Also, the SVT would expect a larger role for technology-based knowledge and skills in the intended learning outcomes for a programme focused on tech-based public administration.</p>
5.3 Level	The intended learning outcomes of the programmes are in line with the level, academic orientation and requirements of the field.
5.4 Practice and internships	<p>The SVT saw various examples of career preparation initiatives for each of the programmes.</p> <p>Professional skills are explicitly included in the intended learning outcomes of the bachelor's programme, and included in the teaching methods. The project structure assists in training students in developing skills needed in the workplace, such as collaboration and team roles. The problems addressed in the courses are often derived from or inspired by real-world challenges. At the master's level, the relationship to practice is less visible. The intended learning outcomes are less specific about professional skills and on the professional content of the courses. Initiatives are mostly left to the individual lecturers. The bachelor's programme features the opportunity to do a 30 EC internship as an elective in the third year. Roughly one in three students decides to do so.</p> <p>The SVT is positive about certain aspects of the relationship to practice of the programmes, especially on the inclusion of and attention to professional skills in the bachelor's programme. However, it misses an overarching vision on the relationship to practice for all three programmes.</p>
5.5.1 Curriculum Content	
5.5.1.1 Core components	<p>The bachelor's programme European Public Administration offers its core components in 8 modules of 15 EC. The programme provides a broad understanding of the field of public administration. The modules cover a wide range of concepts and theories across policy, governance and public management, alongside research methods and academic skills such as academic writing, philosophy and moral leadership.</p> <p>The master's programme Public Administration has 30 EC of required courses, using a generalist approach towards of public administration. The courses cover content across public management, public governance, policy and academic research skills. The other 30 EC are for specialization in electives (10 EC) and thesis work (20 EC).</p> <p>The master's programme European Studies has 30 EC of required courses focusing on global and European governance. It includes courses on</p>

	<p>international relations and politics, legal frameworks, regulatory and policy design and academic research skills. The other 30 EC are for electives (5 EC) and thesis work (25 EC).</p> <p>The SVT studied the content of a number of core courses of the three programmes and discussed the issue of multidisciplinary in several of the interviews. It concludes that all three programmes use research methods, concepts and theories from the disciplines relevant to public administration within the courses.</p>
5.5.1.2 Other Components	<p>The bachelor's programme European Public Administration offers specialization in two tracks (Public Administration and European Studies, both 30 EC), in the university-wide electives semester (30 EC) and in the joint degree <i>Public Governance Across Borders</i> with the Westfälische Wilhelms-Universität Münster (full-time). The SVT concludes that the specialization opportunities have clearly defined goals and objectives, and provide students with ample opportunities to specialize.</p> <p>The master's programme Public Administration has 30 EC for specialization, which includes two electives and the master's thesis. Students can choose between seven domain profiles offered by experts in these fields throughout the university. The specializations are composed by the programme management from relevant master's level courses offered at the university that tie within the intended learning outcomes of the programme.</p> <p>Students of the master's programme European Studies choose a 5 EC elective course from a list of courses predefined by the programme management. The SVT thinks the amount of room for electives is appropriate. The master's programme itself is more focused than a broad-range Public Administration programme, as it specializes in European and global governance, limiting the need for further specializations.</p> <p>Additionally, students have the opportunity to pursue a one-and-a-half year double degree programme with the Universität Münster. In this double degree, students follow six extra courses (for a total of 30 EC) in Münster, in addition to their master's programme European Studies in Twente, leading to a second master's diploma in European Studies from the Universität Münster.</p>
5.5.1.3 Structure and didactics of the programme	<p>Structure and didactics of the bachelor's programme European Public Administration are strongly interwoven in the Twente Onderwijs Model (TOM). This university-wide educational model is closely tied to the university's multidisciplinary 'high-tech, human touch' profile, and was adopted by the bachelor's programme in 2013. Each academic year is structured in four ten-week thematic modules, in which students engage in problem-oriented, project-based learning in small groups. A module integrates several courses and a project, using an overarching theme that emphasizes a certain aspect of the political administrative system. The SVT has studied the content of several modules, and is very impressed by the structure and coherence of the programme. The three-year success rates have significantly improved since the implementation of the TOM approach, raising from 50% to 81% in the first cohort, and still going up.</p> <p>The master's programme Public Administration is organized into four</p>

	<p>quartiles. The first and third quartile are reserved for core courses and electives, the second and fourth quartile are dedicated to thesis work. The aim of this structure is to allow students to make a good start on their thesis, and to allow them to use the third quartile to gather data and deepen their knowledge on aspects in the courses that are relevant for their thesis. The symmetry of the quartile structure also allows the programme to have two intake moments per year. Apart from the academic skills course which is offered twice per year, all courses are offered once per year, mixing students from both intake moments. The SVT finds the structure of the programme adequate and established that students are generally content with it. The distribution of the thesis work over two separated quartiles makes it hard to combine the thesis with an internship.</p> <p>In the master's programme European Studies, In the first quartile, students investigate challenges in European and global governance and the framework they are situated in. The second quartile teaches students to design and implement policy and regulatory solutions and research skills. This is all integrated in the master's thesis in the last two quartiles. The SVT liked the structure of the master's programme. The approach that takes students from challenges to the design of solutions is fitting to the aims of the programme to analyse societal challenges from the perspective of global and European governance. The didactics of the programme is based on student-centred, small-group learning. This approach is well-suited to the programme.</p>
5.5.1.4 Intake	<p>The structure, contents and didactics of all three programmes are generally in line with the qualifications of the students entering the programme. The SVT sees room for improvement for the master's programme Public Administration with differing learning experiences for students entering the programme at two separate moments in the year. Also, the master's programme European Studies could improve the premaster to repair knowledge deficiencies of students entering the programme from a variety of backgrounds. Aside from this, the SVT finds no structural differences for groups of students, including international students and students entering with a non-academic bachelor's degree.</p>
5.5.2 Length	<p>The bachelor's programme (180 EC) and both master's programmes (60 EC) fulfil the length criteria for academic bachelor's and master's programmes in Europe.</p>
5.5.3 Results	<p>The SVT was generally satisfied with the theses. In all cases, the students demonstrated that they had achieved the minimum level required by the programme. The demonstration of research skills was appropriate, and in several cases in all three programmes quite strong. In most cases, the theses has practically relevant topics with a multidisciplinary approach. The SVT was struck by the remarkably high thesis grades in all three programmes. In the theses the SVT studied, it found no grounds to assume that the theses were of an exceptionally high quality, and in multiple cases felt that the grading was too generous.</p> <p>The alumni of the bachelor's programme feel adequately prepared for the</p>

	<p>master's programmes they enrol in. Roughly 35% of the students stay in Twente for either the Public Administration or European Studies master's programme, the rest enrol in other master's programmes, usually elsewhere in the Netherlands or Germany.</p>
5.6 Quality Improvement and Innovation	
5.6.1 Programme accomplishment	<p>The master's programmes Public Administration and European Studies have conducted an extensive alumni survey, trying to track the profession of all alumni of the programmes. The survey shows that the alumni usually find an appropriate job in many levels of governance, non-profit organizations or (government) consultancy, which is fitting to the multi-level focus of the programmes. The alumni the SVT saw in the interviews for both programmes were enthusiastic and satisfied with their education. They mention research skills and multidisciplinary as strong points of the programmes.</p> <p>The SVT is convinced that the alumni of each of the programmes function well after completing the programme, and have achieved the goals of the programmes.</p>
5.6.2 Curriculum Development	<p>All three programmes have undergone several curriculum changes in the past six years, mostly as a result of adapting to the 'high tech, human touch' profile of the university. This is most apparent in the bachelor's programme, where the entire curriculum was redesigned around the TOM approach and the increasing tech-focus of the programme. This also resulted in a proposed name change of the programme to Management, Society and Technology. The master's programme Public Administration has moved away from institutions-based tracks to multidisciplinary profiles. It is also planning to reintroduce a Dutch-language track into the master's programme to better connect their students to regional governance. The master's programme European Studies has shifted its focus from the EU to include more global governance. The SVT concludes from the interviews during the site visits that these curriculum developments have been discussed with many stakeholders in the programmes.</p> <p>The three programmes share an educational committee, with student and staff representatives for each of the programmes. The educational committee has an active role in the quality assurance of the programmes. It comments on all course evaluations, and has the opportunity to advise the programme management on possible improvements.</p> <p>The programmes have recently introduced a PCDA (Plan, Check, Do, Act) cycle for quality assurance. The programme management composes an annual programme improvement plan. In composing this, it uses internal input from course evaluations and stakeholders such as the Educational Committee and the Board of Examiners. These plans are formally discussed with the Board of Examiners, the Educational Committee and course/module coordinators. They serve as the basis for curriculum and organizational improvement. External input is not a regular part of the PCDA cycle, but is collected on an <i>ad hoc</i> basis.</p> <p>On the macro level of curriculum development, the bachelor's programme has had most attention in the past years as a result of the curriculum overhaul. The SVT is less convinced about the process of curriculum</p>

	<p>development in the master's programmes. For instance, both programmes do not have a clear process in place to make a successful transition towards a technology-oriented programme.</p>
5.6.3 External Reviews	<p>The previous accreditation in 2011 resulted in a number of recommendations, which played an important role in improvements made in the past years. The recommendations concentrated on the further development of skills in the programmes, the improvement of the didactical approach and the strengthening of the quality assurance within the programmes.</p> <p>The SVT concludes that the programmes have in general responded adequately to these recommendations. The bachelor's programme specifically was very successful in strengthening the development of professional skills and the didactical approach through the TOM approach. To a lesser extent, the master's programmes also improved their skills education and didactical approaches. The recommendations on quality assurance were also adequately addressed, most prominently on strengthening the role of course evaluations and the introduction of the PCDA-cycle.</p>
5.7 Student Assessment	<p>All three programmes use a programme assessment plan, which is discussed and updated by the programme management and the Board of Examiners at least twice a year. The plans link the intended learning outcomes to the tests throughout the programme in a test matrix, and pays attention to variety of tests, especially the balance between individual tests and group tests. The plan also described the policy on retakes and repairs. Internships are always assessed by an assessor of the programme, using criteria determined before the internship starts.</p> <p>The SVT is satisfied with the assessment plans, and praises specifically the diversity of testing methods and the attention to the balance between group and individual work.</p> <p>In all stages of their thesis, students are supervised by two assessors from within the university, with at least one from within the Faculty. For the joint bachelor's degree and the double degree in the master's programme European Studies, this is always both a Twente and a Münster-based assessor.</p> <p>From interviews with staff and students of the programmes, the SVT concludes that the supervisors put a lot of work into the thesis assessment, and provide great support to students throughout the process. The SVT is however surprised by the role of the second assessor. By being involved from the beginning and providing ample feedback throughout the process, the second assessor acts in a similar role as the first assessor. This could hinder the role of the second assessor in the quality assurance of the thesis as safeguard against overinvestment of the first supervisor in the student.</p> <p>To further validate the quality of the theses, the bachelor's programme has appointed a thesis carousel committee to independently evaluate a sample of bachelor's theses and compare the results with the original assessment. The SVT studied a number of theses and the accompanying assessment forms for each programme. It was not impressed by the transparency of the assessment form. A second point the SVT noted is that the discussion of the</p>

	<p>two supervisors in which they decide upon the final mark is not reflected in the assessment forms.</p> <p>The three programmes share a Board of Examiners together with three other master's programmes in the faculty. The SVT finds that the Board of Examiners functions adequately, yet could take on a stronger role.</p> <p>The joint degree programme Public Governance Across Borders has its own Board of Examiners consisting of equal membership of Twente and Münster staff. Based on the recent German assessment of the joint degree, the SVT concludes that the quality of assessment is adequately handled by the formal Board of Examiners and the two local boards.</p>
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	<p>All three programmes are taught by experienced, established researchers in public administration or related fields. All teachers hold a PhD degree and have a University Teaching Qualification (BKO), are in the process of qualifying for one or have a dispensation due to extensive teaching experience. The programme directors are responsible for assembling the teaching staff for their programme from experts within the Faculty, and in some cases outside the faculty. Most teaching staff are affiliated with the Public Administration department, with some staff coming from departments specializing in policy domains such as energy and sustainability, or science and technology.</p> <p>The SVT is content with the qualifications of the teaching staff in all three programmes. Students are very satisfied with the level of staff support they receive in all programmes, and mention the student-oriented approach of the staff as a great asset.</p>
5.9.3 Diversity: gender and minorities	<p>All three programmes strive for diversity among students and staff, and equal opportunities for all groups of students. To reach these goals, the university has several central policies in place. This includes policies on gender diversity in higher research and management positions, and regulations for studying with disabilities.</p> <p>The gender diversity of the student population is properly balanced, with roughly equal male and female students in all three programmes. The gender balance in the teaching staff leans more towards male staff, with roughly 25% of the faculty teaching staff being female. In terms of international and ethnic background, all three programmes have a substantial number of international students.</p> <p>The SVT is satisfied by the gender balance in the programmes, although the number of female staff could be higher. The percentage of international students and staff is fitting to the aims of the respective programmes.</p>
5.10 Admission of Students	<p>The bachelor's programme admits all students with pre-university education (vwo) degrees, as is common for academic Public Administration programmes in the Netherlands. German students in the joint degree need the corresponding <i>Abitur</i>. Due to the increasing role of technology in the</p>

	<p>programme, the SVT recommends the programme to keep track of the performance of students with non-technical backgrounds, especially those with entering with a Dutch so-called Culture & Society profile.</p> <p>Both master's programmes directly admit students with an academic bachelor's degree in Public Administration, European Studies or Political Sciences, or a similar foreign qualification. Students with a bachelor's degree from a university of applied sciences are admitted after successful completion of a premaster programme (30 EC). This premaster programme offered jointly by the two master's programmes. The premaster programme consists of an introduction to Public Administration, academic writing, statistics and either the module European Challenges or the module Smart Governance for Regional Innovation of the bachelor's programme Public Administration. However, the public administration courses offered in the premaster do not cover much European Studies content. To get all European Studies students adequately prepared for the programme, the SVT recommends that more European Studies content should be added into the premaster.</p>
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: the identity and mission need implementation. There should be more external inputs in the programme development. The board of examiners needs more influence/weight. The diversity of the staff needs attention. The educational philosophy can be commended to the EAPAA members.

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.