



**European Association for
Public Administration
Accreditation**

EAPAA Accreditation Committee Evaluation Report

Evaluation Report with respect to the request for accreditation of KU LEUVEN – Faculty of Social Sciences, Public Governance Institute, Leuven, Belgium, Master in Public Management and Public Policy

The EAPAA Accreditation Committee, at its meeting of 3-4 September 2018 in Lausanne has evaluated this programme against the EAPAA Accreditation Criteria.

1. Accreditation Criteria

2. Applicability/Eligibility	
2.1 Domain	The site visit revealed that the MPMP has a well-balanced mix of academic and practice orientation. Various stakeholder groups – students, alumni and employers – identified and appreciated this balance between academic research orientation and professional knowledge and skills. MPMP graduates are in high demand for their critical reflective capacities concerning real life public policy issues. Students and graduates particularly stress that a stronger practical orientation would be desirable as they feel that the academic orientation dominates the practical orientation currently.
2.2 Geography	Belgium is a member of the Council of Europe, therefore the programme falls within the jurisdiction of EAPAA.
2.3 Programme longevity	The programme fulfils the longevity criteria, particularly as it has successfully been accredited by EAPAA in 2009. The current accreditation procedure thus can be regarded as a re-accreditation.
2.4 Programme variants and locations	The programme complies with this criterion.
4 Category of accreditation	The core character and self-understanding of the programme reflects the requested category, yet the programme also offers part-time options. In sum and in its current design, it complies and fits the requested category.
5. Standards	
5.1 Domain of public administration	The programme is multidisciplinary covering all relevant disciplinary perspectives for a public administration programme (with the exception of Economics). It has a strong practice-orientation but due to its theoretical ambition, its training of reflection and analysis and the master

	thesis its embedded training in research design and training it is also an ambitious academic programme.
5.2 Mission of the programme	The programme has an explicit mission statement and clearly set out learning outcomes which give clear orientation of the educational philosophy and programme objectives. The mission and objectives are ambitious (since they address three different graduate profiles at the same time) but realistic. The programmes structure and design is in line with and appropriate to fulfil the mission.
5.3 Level	The SVT team comes to the conclusion that the standards for a master level degree according to international standards are met.
5.4 Practice and internships	The programme has defined the reflective practitioner, the practice oriented expert and the policy oriented researcher as personal profile types in their mission and all three roles have an explicit and clear practice orientation. Learning objectives related to practical skills and practical applications are systematically included in the courses. Practice-orientation is effectively granted by a variety of means throughout the programme.
5.5.1 Curriculum Content	
5.5.1.1 Core components	The core curriculum covers all but one of the respective disciplinary fields on a master level standards. Basic and foundations courses are not part of the core curriculum but are considered as prerequisites to the MPMP. Consequently, they are offered and taught in the preparatory and transitional programme (see 5.5.1.4. Intake). The requirements of the criterion are therefore met.
5.5.1.2 Other Components	Not applicable, no specialisations though students have extensive flexibility in selecting courses from the programme that meet their interests and needs best.
5.5.1.3 Structure and didactics of the programme	Content, didactics and methods of teaching of the programme are coherent and in line with the mission. The programme is doable within the regular duration of one year even though there is an increasing trend to outstay regular duration.
5.5.1.4 Intake	There are clear and transparent frameworks for intake criteria. Further, well-suited and clearly defined preparatory and transitional programmes have been set up to prepare students with other backgrounds for the MPMP programme.
5.5.2 Length	The programme is designed as one-year programme and its objectives and structure are in line with this duration. Sufficient flexibility is provided to allow for a part-time or even individualised trajectory.
5.5.3 Results	The programme meets its set of objectives and qualifies students for jobs in the public and non-profit sector, but also in academia.
5.6 Quality Improvement and Innovation	
5.6.1 Programme accomplishment	The programme is embedded in various quality assurances processes that ensure that it is in line with its objectives. However, the strategic process and future focus of the programme itself is not clearly defined and seems

	to yield potential with regard to more actively and focused leveraging the alumni network and the data available within the programme.
5.6.2 Curriculum Development	Curriculum development has taken place and is done by involvement of various – predominantly internal – stakeholders.
5.6.3 External Reviews	External feedback has been considered and incorporated in the programme in adequate and reflected ways.
5.7 Student Assessment	<p>The variety of forms of assessment ensures that students are exposed to a variety of evaluation forms as well as types of feedbacks. This richness appears to be appreciated by students and to reflect the multiplicity of skills and competences that are requested to work in the public sector and thus ensures that students who complete successfully the programme should be better ready to face the challenges of working in a complex and uncertain environment.</p> <p>In general, there is recognition among the faculty of the importance of ensuring feedback to students. The students also appear to acknowledge the presence of feedback and its usefulness. However, they also appear to point to a possible diversity of forms under which students receive feedback, which may well reflect differences in needs and contents and aims of courses, but may also be seen as too wide. This suggests a need for a stronger structure, institutionalisation or alignment of experiences regarding feedback provision to students.</p>
5.8 Programme Jurisdiction	The programme is well embedded in the activities and faculty of the Public Governance Institute, the Faculty of Social Sciences as well as the KU Leuven as a whole. While the people responsible for the programme are identified in line with overall rules within the university, this embeddedness allows the programme to rely on a strong nucleus of staff (which is partially funded by the Institute), to enjoy good connections with the Belgian public administration, and, hence, to enjoy enough autonomy to decide on important aspects of the programme.
5.9.1 Faculty nucleus Score:	The faculty of the programme is well identifiable, and takes clear and direct responsibility for its development, design and delivery.
5.9.2 Faculty qualifications	<p>The programme academic faculty is hired, promoted and evaluated in ways that appear to guarantee their expertise and competences. It appears to be generally professionally qualified, research active, with a workload that allows both commitment to the programme and time to develop research in the disciplinary areas that are of relevance to the programme. The university has clear and institutionalized systems for hiring, promoting and evaluating academic staff. It also has initiatives in place for training and ensuring the professional development of staff. Individual staff evaluations every five years form a good input for their professional development.</p> <p>The guest lecturers contribute to the programme bringing practical experiences and cases, complementary to the academic staff's contribution.</p>

5.9.3 Diversity: gender and minorities	The programme appears to ensure a certain balance of men and women in the professional staff, with clear targets at the overall university level to strengthen the presence of women among the full professors. Such policies may further reflect positively on the gender balance of the programme and thus it may be useful to keep their effects monitored in the future. Other types of diversity balance are not explicitly taken into consideration.
5.10 Admission of Students	The programme has clearly stated and identified pre-requisites for entrance. While balance is considered satisfactory in terms of gender and previous experience and background, the programme may explore ways to ensure a stronger involvement of ethnic minorities.
5.11 Supportive Services and Facilities	The material facilities appear to be adequate to ensure the success of the programme. Students make intense use of the library services, study spaces and services provided and appear to be satisfied with the various services offered.
5.12 Student Services	Student services appear to be adequate in relation to the mission of the programme. Student attrition (dropout rates) has improved in the last few years, but may still remain an area to be kept monitored in the future, exploring whether further solutions may be found to keep them under control.
5.13 Public Relations	Adequate information on the programme is available to potential students. Opportunities to strengthen forms of institutionalization of the contacts with alumni may be explored in the future.
6 Additional Criteria	Not applicable.

2. Conclusion

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.