



*European Association for
Public Administration
Accreditation*

EAPAA Accreditation Committee Evaluation Report

Evaluation Report with respect to the request for accreditation of Potsdam University, Germany, Executive Master of Public Management Programme.

The EAPAA Accreditation Committee, at its meeting of 10 September 2019 in Belfast – UK, has evaluated this programme against the EAPAA Accreditation Criteria.

1. Accreditation Criteria

2. Applicability/Eligibility	
2.1 Domain	The programme is eligible as an academic degree programme.
2.2 Geography	Germany is a member of the Council of Europe; therefore the programme falls within the jurisdiction of EAPAA.
2.3 Programme longevity	The programme meets the longevity requirement.
2.4 Programme variants and locations	The programme is provided at one location only, at the Griebnitzsee Campus of Potsdam University.
4 Category of accreditation	The programme belongs to the category of executive master programmes.
5. Standards	
5.1 Domain of public administration	The programme is multidisciplinary, bridging public administration, environmental and development studies. Two mandatory courses (Foundations of Public Management + Applied Policy Analysis) cover the basis of public administration/management and at least one course in each specialist track relates to issues of governance. As a whole, the programme clearly falls within the domain of public administration.
5.2 Mission of the programme	The general mission of the programme is clearly defined, but for the sake of coherence and curriculum development, it needs to invest in defining specific learning objectives and competences, courses and methods of assessment.
5.3 Level	The aims of the programme are in line with the required qualifications for an academic master degree.
5.4 Practice and internships	The relation to practice of public management is established through different channels including an obligatory study tour, practice-oriented

	tasks as part of the curriculum and , guest speakers and external curricular events. The absence of an internship component is acceptable, considering the duration of the programme and the practical experience of students. Particularly in the view of the important labour market connections both students and alumni bring to the program, networking opportunities and exchange with practitioners should, however, be further strengthened, for example, through a professional perspectives series, short-term (voluntary) seminars, alumni presentations or visits to public institutions in Germany.
5.5.1 Curriculum Content	
5.5.1.1 Core components	The core curriculum covers the large topic areas implied by the programme's target audience and mission. The module curricula reflect the in-depth expertise of the core faculty. The foundation modules offer a sound introduction to key areas of public policy and management. They employ a multidisciplinary approach and integrate results of a broad range of disciplines and theoretical traditions. However, on the basis of alumni and employer interviews as well as based on their own assessment, the SVT considers the coverage of general analytical and methodological skills somewhat underdeveloped.
5.5.1.2 Other Components	The Stream Modules reflect a broad and in-depth coverage of their respective topic areas. The combination of topics and disciplinary perspectives has a clear added value. The students are offered a wide range of choices.
5.5.1.3 Structure and didactics of the programme	In overall the didactics seem to be of high quality and effective, meeting student needs to a high extent.
5.5.1.4 Intake	In general, the admission procedure and the composition of admitted students reflects the requirements and mission of the program well. There seems to be some room for development in terms of adjusting the process a little bit better to the program's didactic approach. The student attrition is close to zero, which reflects the program's predominantly developmental (as opposed to assessment oriented) character. Whereas this approach is not unusual among executive programs it implies a recruitment and admission process that is able to guarantee that those – and only those – meeting the entry criteria and qualifications are admitted indeed. The mostly document-based admission procedure could therefore be supplemented with some additional components (such as a written assignment, a professional interview, or some combination of these). (For further evaluative claims see the sub-section on Admission of students.)
5.5.2 Length	The programme length is in accordance with the general requirements for PPM executive programs.
5.5.3 Results	In overall, the programme meets the intended learning outcomes. Nevertheless, there seems to be some room for further improvement in terms of added labour market value of the programme.

5.6 Quality Improvement and Innovation	
5.6.1 Programme accomplishment	The programme adequately assesses the quality of the programme.
5.6.2 Curriculum Development	There is a steady process of incremental curriculum development. However, the SVT wonders whether there is sufficient attention for long-term strategic development. Referring to the evaluative comments given to "Programme jurisdiction" the programme's ability to plan and implement more than marginal changes to the curriculum seems to be limited by the dispersed nature of strategic steering and oversight of the whole programme.
5.6.3 External Reviews	The programmes is sufficiently evaluated externally. The recommendations have on the whole been followed up adequately.
5.7 Student Assessment	The programme has a credible approach to assessment. However, a more transparent coordination of different types of assessment is advisable.
5.8 Programme Jurisdiction	The governance arrangements of the programme reflect the historical path through which the programme was initiated, sustained and developed. They definitely have important positive features; first of all, they are able to mobilise and put into effective use the self-initiative and academic excellence of key programme staff.
5.9.1 Faculty nucleus	The faculty nucleus is more than adequate to run the programme effectively.
5.9.2 Faculty qualifications	The programme faculty are highly qualified to teach their courses and transfer research results into the curriculum. A majority of teaching staff demonstrate strong international publication records and are highly acknowledged as the leading research in European and broader academic community. The administrative support provided by the committed UP Transfer staff significantly enhance the programme results.
5.9.3 Diversity: gender and minorities	The overall gender balance is appropriate and exemplary on the faculty level/teaching staff, including chairs. In addition, there is a bit of mismatch between the programme core students and teachers' affiliation regarding the non-OECD origins.
5.10 Admission of Students	In general, the admission process performs well. There is, however, some room for improvements. In particular, the SVT considers the technical difficulty of ensuring a high -quality process of assessing applications. The relevance and the well-founded nature of supporting documentation (degrees, letters of recommendation, etc.) may frequently be difficult to properly assess. On the other hand, the didactics of the programme – involving a short, focused and intensive (1-year) learning experience and a close-to-zero failure rate (both on the level of individual courses and the programme as such) – implies that high-quality student intake is essential to achieving the intended learning outcomes.

	But these two elements together the SVT considers that increasing the efforts to create a sounder system and process of assessing applicants would be important. These could include elements such as the handing in of written pieces produced in a small -time window, and/or extensive and compulsory personal interviews for all (or at least most) applicants.
5.11 Supportive Services and Facilities	The accommodation and material services are adequate and supportive in realising the programme efficiently and effectively. At the same time, some adjustments related to the students' profile of this programme might enhance the outcomes, such as titles of the rooms and instructions in English. According to some interview evidence collected the supply of accommodation facilities for students with children may be below the actual demand.
5.12 Student Services	The students feel able to fulfil their studies and the requirements that accompany them. They feel that their studies are important and receive adequate support to conduct them.
5.13 Public Relations	The public relations strategy works for now, but the programme should prepare for future uncertainties.
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.