



**European Association for
Public Administration
Accreditation**

EAPAA Accreditation Committee Evaluation Report

Evaluation Report with respect to the request for certification of Matej Bel University (UMB), Faculty of Economics, Department of Public Economics and Regional Development Banská Bystrica, Slovak Republic, Bachelor of Territorial Management and Master of Territorial Studies.

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

1. Certification Criteria

2. Applicability/Eligibility	
2.1 Domain	Because the Self Evaluation report and the programme documents classify these programmes as belonging to the domain of public administration and because both programmes are Bologna-type degree programmes, and since Slovakia is member of the Council of Europe, the programmes are eligible for certification.
2.2 Geography	The Slovak Republic is a member of the Council of Europe, therefore the programme falls within the jurisdiction of EAPAA.
2.3 Programme longevity	Both programmes fulfil this criterion.
2.4 Programme variants and locations	There are no programme variants or other locations where the programmes are taught. Both programmes could be studied part-time until last year. The bachelor programme no longer can be studied in a part-time format. The part-time possibility for the Master's programme only means that a student can study at a slower pace; there are no special classes or other adaptations to the programme. So the part-time possibility is not a variant in the terms of this criterion.
4 Category of accreditation	The bachelor programme asks for certification as a public administration bachelor level programme (3 or 4 years). The master programme asks for certification as a public administration master level programme (1 or 2 years).
5. Standards	

5.1 Domain of public administration	Although the site visit team understands the limitations put on the curriculum by the national regulations and the policy of the Faculty of Economics, it is of opinion that the programmes in their present form lack certain essential elements of the domain of public administration with respect to political science (and especially public policy) and law.
5.2 Mission of the programme	The site visit team was not able to identify a clear-cut and forward-looking mission and strategy of the programmes under review. The implicit mission of the programs is to educate professionals for PA-functions with a strong focus on economics, but also with some background in public sector specifics. There seems to be a lack of a strategic vision of the future development of the programmes after the expected flexibilisation of legislative requirements in the near future. Since the site visit we have been informed that a strategic planning process commenced in January 2019.
5.3 Level	The site visit team is generally convinced that the level of both programmes is according to what might be expected for academic level bachelor and master programmes. Nevertheless, there are some concerns with regard to the level of knowledge in the broad multidisciplinary field of public administration.
5.4 Practice and internships	The criterion is met. The site visit team is convinced that the relation with practice gets quite some attention in many of the courses in both programmes. However an obligatory internship in the bachelor programme would be an improvement of the programme.
5.5.1 Curriculum Content	
5.5.1.1 Core components	The site visit team is aware that a large part of the curriculum is prescribed by national legislation and that both study programmes are accredited in the study field Public Administration and Regional Development in Slovakia. Nevertheless, the team believes there would have been possibilities to include more courses with a clear focus on public administration in the programme. The present bachelor programme is too economic in nature to be considered a public administration programme. The site visit team would describe the programmes more as a public economics degree or an economics degree with a public sector specialisation. The master's programme is even more a public economics programme; there are hardly any public administration courses apart from the electives in block D which haven't been offered in recent years. In light of the certification criteria of EAPAA, it is the opinion of the site visit team that this criterion is not currently met.
5.5.1.2 Other Components	Both programmes offer electives in a sufficient extent.
5.5.1.3 Structure and didactics of the programme	Most faculty members seem to be particularly committed to teaching and adjust their courses to reflect recent developments. Although various didactical methods seem to be in use, a clear articulation of the didactical

	philosophy of the programmes is needed. Also the high number of contact hours may need critical revision.
5.5.1.4 Intake	Both programmes fulfil this criterion.
5.5.2 Length	Both programmes fulfil this criterion.
5.5.3 Results	The criterion is met.
5.6 Quality Improvement and Innovation	
5.6.1 Programme accomplishment	Course evaluations are standardised and used each year. Program accomplishment is more or less informal and “continuous” and the national accreditation plays an important role, as does the university’s review system. There could be improvements with regard to the involvement of students and the analysis and comparison of the annual course evaluations.
5.6.2 Curriculum Development	The curriculum development is rather informal, and mainly dependent on the national accreditation cycle. There is no formal involvement of students, alumni or employers. The conclusion of the site visit team is that this criterion is not fully met.
5.6.3 External Reviews	The last external review was the 2014-2015 national accreditation, and both programmes were accredited.
5.7 Student Assessment	A variety of assessment methods is used. The site visit team is satisfied with the assessment system of the programmes.
5.8 Programme Jurisdiction	Within the strict national and faculty regulations for the programmes, the department has a reasonable de-facto programme jurisdiction.
5.9.1 Faculty nucleus	The program has an appropriate faculty nucleus.
5.9.2 Faculty qualifications	The majority of faculty members hold a doctoral degree. However, the composition of the faculty is weighted very much towards economics. The department lacks public administration or political science specialists.
5.9.3 Diversity: gender and minorities	The number of female teaching staff and female students is considerably higher than male. Care needs to be taken that the programmes do not become overly ‘feminised’.
5.10 Admission of Students	The admission criteria are clear and adequate. There is, however, a problem that not all students have studied English during their secondary school, which limits the use of English literature in the courses of the programmes under review.
5.11 Supportive Services and Facilities	The site visit team is in general satisfied with the supportive services and facilities.

5.12 Student Services	The student services are satisfactory.
5.13 Public Relations	The site visit team is satisfied with the public relations approach of the programmes.
6. Additional Criteria	Not applicable.

2. Conclusion

Based on the above evaluation of the specific criteria, the EAPAA Accreditation Committee concludes that the programmes can be *conditionally* certified for three years.