



European Association for
Public Administration
Accreditation

Procedures for accreditation and certification

EAPAA Accreditation Procedures

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Preamble

The evaluation procedures for accreditation and certification are to a large extent similar. The differences are in the application of criteria (see the self-evaluation report guidelines) and the composition of the site visit team (section 4 in this document).

1. Application

If a programme applies for evaluation by EAPAA for the first time, its eligibility must first be determined before the process may continue. In order to do this, the programme must send in the application form, with the additional information requested in the form.

After review of the material the EAPAA secretariat will inform the programme whether it is formally eligible. This is not based on a decision by the Accreditation Committee and offers no guarantee for a positive decision at the end of the process.

A year before the end of the accreditation or certification period of a previously evaluated programme comes into sight, it should re-apply by sending in the form. No eligibility check is necessary.

When the application has been approved, the EAPAA secretariat will send a contract and an invoice. The programme must return a signed copy of the contract and arrange the payment of the handling fee in order for the procedure to continue.

2. Programme Review Materials: Self-Evaluation

Programmes seeking evaluation by EAPAA must provide complete and detailed information in order for the Site Visit Team and the Accreditation Committee to determine conformity with the standards. The burden of proving that the standards are met ultimately rests with the programme.

The requesting institution will submit the following programme materials to the secretariat:

- The Self-Evaluation Report (with annex); the self-evaluation should comply with the Guidelines for the Self-Evaluation Report;
- Any other material deemed necessary for the review of the programme.

The language of the Self-Evaluation Report must be English, French or German.

The EAPAA secretariat performs a technical review of the material sent in. When the report or additional materials do not comply with the requirements, it will request additional information.

There should be sufficient time left for the content review, the site visit and the reporting. Given that the Accreditation Committee meets in September and site visits usually take place in the period April-June, the Self-Evaluation Report should be submitted no later than March.

3. Content Review

The documents submitted by the programme will be assessed by the chair of the EAPAA Site Visit Team in the light of the Accreditation Criteria. Should they find major flaws or omissions in the report, they will request further information and clarification.

4. Site Visit Team

A site visit is mandatory for all evaluations by EAPAA.

For requests for accreditation, the Accreditation Committee nominates a Site Visit Team consisting of:

- Three experienced, senior academics (not employed in the country of the programme to be reviewed).
- A student not connected to the programme. Programmes may be asked to assist in recruiting a suitable team member.
- For executive programmes, a practitioner from the country of the programme, but not connected to the programme. Programmes may be asked to assist in recruiting a suitable team member.

For requests for certification, the Accreditation Committee nominates a Site Visit Team consisting of:

- Two experienced, senior academics (not employed in the country of the programme to be reviewed).
- A student not connected to the programme. Programmes may be asked to assist in recruiting a suitable team member.

The Accreditation Committee will ensure that at least one of the members has oral and written competence in the language of the programme.

5. Site Visit

The site visit team visits the programme on-site and has meetings with all relevant stakeholders, and inspects relevant material. EAPAA provides a Site Visit Manual as instruction for both the site visit team and the programme. The chair of the site visit team decides on the schedule for the site visit, in consultation with the programme representative.

Since this involves meetings among many busy people, it is advisable to agree on preliminary dates for the site visit at an early stage. However, the visit will not be definitively confirmed until the Self-Evaluation report has been submitted and the handling fee has been transferred.

6. Site Visit Report

On the basis of the SER and the site visit, the site visit team assesses the performance of the programme on each of EAPAA's standards. It also makes recommendations on possible improvement.

The draft report is first sent to the programme for feedback. The programme has the option to react within two weeks, to point out factual errors. The site visit team then corrects its report, where appropriate, and submits a final version to the Accreditation Committee.

7. Assessment and decision

The Accreditation Committee examines the Self-Evaluation Report, the Site Visit Report, and the reaction from the programme. On this basis, it evaluates whether the programme can be accredited. In assessing the programme for accreditation, the Accreditation Committee will base its conclusion on the EAPAA standards. Deviations from the standards must be justified in light of a programme's mission and success in fulfilling its mission.

The assessment by the Accreditation Committee is summarized in the Evaluation Report, which are sent to the programme and published on the website.

The Accreditation Committee may (1) grant full accreditation or certification, (2) grant conditional accreditation or certification for a limited period, or (3) deny it. The decision of the Accreditation Committee will be provided in writing to the institution within fifteen calendar days.

If the programme fulfils all or nearly all criteria, it will receive unconditional accreditation for seven years. If there are major deficiencies, but there are sufficient grounds to believe that these can be addressed in the short term, the Accreditation Committee may grant conditional accreditation for a shorter period. The length of the period (3 years at the most) depends on the time the programme needs to implement changes. If conditional accreditation is granted, the Accreditation Committee will determine the period for the conditional accreditation. Before the end of this period, a second review will be conducted, based on a written update from the programme, possibly on a second visit by a few members of the original team. This will be followed by a decision of the Accreditation Committee whether to extend the accreditation to the full six years.

If the programme does not fulfil the accreditation criteria, with no serious prospects for improvement in the short term, the Accreditation Committee will deny accreditation.

Decisions of the Accreditation Committee will be published on the EAPAA website, with the evaluation report.

8. Obligations following the decision

After the Accreditation Committee has made a decision, programmes are obliged to report fundamental changes in the content, structure or other features of the programme to EAPAA. The Accreditation Committee can decide to further investigate such changes if necessary. If the programme does not inform EAPAA about such changes, the Accreditation Committee can rescind its earlier decision.

In the case of conditional accreditation, the respective programme is obliged to report within the given timeline about the implementation of the changes which were the conditions for continuation of the accreditation. The Accreditation Committee can decide to send another review team for verifying the changes.

9. Appeal

There is no right of appeal to decisions of the Accreditation Committee.

10. Language

The language of the Self-Evaluation Report and of the site visit must be English, French or German. The Site Visit Report and the evaluation by the Accreditation Committee will be in English.

Other documents that have to be available during the site visit for the site visit team may be provided in the language of the programme. Should some of the interviewees not speak one of these three languages, the programme should provide an adequate translation.

11. Costs

The accreditation fee covers the handling costs of the accreditation by the EAPAA secretariat and Accreditation Committee. Furthermore, there are the costs of the site visit. These costs are:

- The travel costs for the site visit team members;
- The costs of transportation, accommodation and meals during the site visit for the members of the site visit team.

The travel and accommodation costs of the Site Visit will be included in the invoice from the secretariat.

Fee type	Amount
Accreditation	€ 5,000
Reaccreditation	€ 5,000
Certification	€ 3,000
Recertification	€ 3,000
Annual EAPAA fee EGPA members*	€ 400
Annual EAPAA fee NISPAcee members*	€ 300

Fees are subject to change. Changes are announced on the website.

*For accreditation/certification an EGPA membership or NISPAcee membership is required.
