European Association for
Public Administration
Accreditation

Standards
for the Accreditation and
Certification of Bachelor and
Master programmes

Updated: September 2023

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General background

The standards outlined here are standards that are intended to maintain and improve the quality of public administration programmes. The standards are not intended to dictate specifics for each programme, but are intended to provide a framework within which each programme will be evaluated.

The EAPAA Accreditation and Certification Standards and other regulations concerning the EAPAA accreditation are in line with the European Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area (as issued by DG Education and Culture and ENQA) and the Dublin descriptors. A more elaborate description of how these standards can be applied is in our self-evaluation report guidelines.

For Accreditation procedures, all standards apply. For Certification, only standards 1-13 must be evaluated, while standards 14 (Research Basis) and 15 (Internationalisation) are optional. Standard 16 applies only to joint programmes.

1. Mission, objectives and competencies

- The programme has a clear educational philosophy and mission, leading to a set of realistic and related programme objectives
- Competencies, which describe the qualifications a graduate should have acquired, are clearly derived from the mission and objectives of the programme.

2. Entry into the programme

- The qualifications of the students that enter the programme are in line with the structure, contents and the didactics of the programme.
- Admission and selection procedures should be transparent and should reflect the mission of the programme.
- The programme has an adequate strategy for dealing with the varying backgrounds of students.

3. Curriculum structure

- The structure of the programme should logically and clearly reflect the programme objectives.

4. Curriculum content

- The curriculum covers the broad domain of public administration, with sufficient attention for multidisciplinary perspectives.
- The relation between the programme objectives, the required competencies and the core programme components and specialisations is clear.
- The relation between core components and specialization tracks is clear.
- The programme is up-to-date with recent developments in the field of public administration.
- There is sufficient attention for research methods and ethics.

5. Didactic approach

- The didactic concepts are in line with the aims and objectives of the programme and are realised in the programme.
- The teaching methods in the programme components correspond to the didactic concept.
- There are adequate mechanisms for students to receive feedback on their performance.

6. Student assessment

- The assessment methods adequately reflect the attainment of relevant competencies.
- There is a sufficiently diverse mix of assessment methods in the programme (e.g. exams, essays, presentations, individual and group assignments).
- The programme encourages students to be independent.
- There is sufficient attention for ethics in the assessment of students.

7. Preparation for the labour market

- The programme teaches students sufficient practical skills.
- The programmes includes internships.

8. Results

- The progress of students should demonstrably fit the stated length of the programme.
- Grades have demonstrably achieved the stated competencies.

9. Quality monitoring and improvement

- The programme maintains adequate systems of monitoring.
- The programme periodically undergoes external reviews, which lead to demonstrable change.
- Relevant stakeholders are involved in the development and review of the programme.

10. Faculty

- The faculty teaching the programme should have sufficient capacity. This means that there should an identifiable and sufficiently large faculty nucleus that accepts primary responsibility for the programme.
- Core staff should have sufficient quality, as shown through relevant expertise, a doctorate or equivalent academic degree, proven educational skills and active relations with international academic research networks.

11. Diversity

Staff and student populations should adequately reflect the diversity of society.

12. Responsibility and autonomy

- The governance of the programme should rest upon a clear division of responsibilities.
- The faculty and programme management should have sufficient autonomy to develop the programme effectively and responsively.

13. Supportive services and facilities

- The accommodation and services should be adequate to realize the programme in an effective and efficient way.

14. Research basis

- Core teaching staff are active in academic research.
- The curriculum reflects the academic expertise of staff and is up-to-date with current research in public administration.

15. Internationalization

- Staff are active in international research networks and activities.
- Students are exposed to international environments.

16. Joint programmes (if applicable)

- There is a clear division of responsibilities and coordination between partners.
- The institutions that offer a joint programme should be recognised as higher education institutions by the relevant authorities of their country/countries.

Appendix 1 Dublin descriptors for bachelor and master levels

	Qualifications of Bachelors	**Qualifications of Masters**
Knowledge and understanding	Have demonstrated knowledge and understanding in a field of study that builds upon and supersedes their general secondary education, and are typically at a level that, whilst supported by advanced textbooks, includes some aspects that will be informed by knowledge of the forefront of their field of study.	Have demonstrated knowledge and understanding that is founded upon and extends and/or enhances that typically associated with Bachelor's level, and that provides a basis or opportunity for originality in developing and/or applying ideas, often within a research context.
Applying knowledge and understanding	Can apply their knowledge and understanding in a manner that indicates a professional approach to their work or vocation, and have competences typically demonstrated through devising and sustaining arguments and solving problems within their field of study.	Can apply their knowledge and understanding and problem solving abilities in new or unfamiliar environments within broader (or multidisciplinary) contexts related to their field of study; have the ability to integrate knowledge and handle complexity.
Making judgements	Have the ability to gather and interpret relevant data (usually within their field of study) to inform judgements that include reflection on relevant social, academic or ethical issues.	Can formulate judgements with incomplete or limited information, that rather include reflection on social and ethical responsibilities linked to the application of their knowledge and judgements.
Communication	Can communicate information, ideas, problems and solutions to both specialist and non-specialist audiences.	Can communicate their conclusions, and the knowledge and rationale underpinning these, to specialist and non-specialist audiences clearly and unambiguously.
Learning skills	Have developed those learning skills that are necessary for them to continue to undertake further study with a high degree of autonomy.	Have the learning skills to allow them to continue to study in manner that may be largely self-directed or autonomous.