



**European Association for
Public Administration
Accreditation**

EAPAA Accreditation Committee Evaluation Report

Evaluation Report with respect to the request for accreditation of the Ghent University School of Economics and Business Administration, Ghent, Belgium, Bachelor Programme Public Administration and Management and Master Programme Public Administration and Management.

At its meeting of August 2017 in Milan, the EAPAA Accreditation Committee evaluated the programmes against the EAPAA Accreditation Criteria.

1. Accreditation Criteria

2. Applicability/Eligibility	
2.1 Domain	The bachelor and master programmes are standard academic degree programmes in public administration. The programmes fulfil this criterion.
2.2 Geography	Both programmes are organized by the School of Economics and Business Administration at Ghent University, Flanders, Belgium. Belgium is a member of the Council of Europe, therefore the programme falls within the jurisdiction of EAPAA.
2.3 Programme longevity	The bachelor programmes originated in 1938 as a professional bachelor. The bachelor programme in its current form was established in 2004, and the master programme in 2007. Both programmes fulfil this criterion.
2.4 Programme variants and locations	N.a.
4 Category of accreditation	The bachelor programme opts for the first cycle bachelor level public administration programmes accreditation. The master programme opts for the second cycle graduate/master level public administration programmes accreditation. The character of both programmes and the structure of students are in line with this application.
5. Standards	
5.1 Domain of public administration	Although the programmes are strong in economics and management, and located in the School of Economics and Business Administration, the public administration elements in the programmes are apparent and the programmes are clearly interdisciplinary with enough attention for law and political sciences. However, the amount of courses in the economic discipline should not be enlarged.

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5.2 Mission of the programme	Both programmes have a clear mission, which is specified in a set of competencies and final learning outcomes up to the level of individual courses. However, the set of learning outcomes is rather large resulting in even more sub- (or lower) learning outcomes on the level of individual courses.
5.3 Level	The intended learning outcomes are adequate for the level of the programmes.
5.4 Practice and internships	The practical training in both programmes is more than adequate. In the conversation with students and alumni they also reported that practice was part of the programmes and the assessments. The internship and the support of the faculty were very satisfactory. Internships also help to improve the reputation of the programmes with employers. Important in this respect is that new internship possibilities are explored. Master students and alumni were pleased by the practical training for the thesis in the (year-long) methodological course in the master programme. Also, they praised the permanent and open availability of the staff from the very beginning (choice of theme) and during the entire time of preparation.
5.5.1 Curriculum Content	
5.5.1.1 Core components	The curriculum of the bachelor programme is adequate, with the remark that more explicit attention for ethics is advisable. It is acceptable there is a clear economic emphasis in the bachelor programme, but this should not become even stronger. The emphasis in the master programme on research methodology is in line with the programme mission. The master programme is more than adequate.
5.5.1.2 Other Components	There is enough room for electives and the language courses are considered by a majority of students and graduates as a good element of the programme. However, perhaps these courses could be electives, so there is more space for other compulsory courses. To make sure that the knowledge of English is sufficient, more courses could be taught in English by native speakers. It is advised to investigate in what way more facilities for part-time students can be realised.
5.5.1.3 Structure and didactics of the programme	The structure and didactics are generally adequate. Cases could be used a bit more to realise the connection between different disciplines. Special attention should be paid to courses where students signal persistent problems. The percentage of students that complete their study in the nominal time is very low for the bachelor and the linking programmes. It was low for the master as well, but has improved much during the last years.
5.5.1.4 Intake	Due to Flemish regulations, no intake procedure for the bachelor programme is possible. The intake for the master is more than adequate. By the linking and preparatory programmes students that do not have the public administration bachelor can enter the master programme well prepared. In this way the 'total' master is a two-year programme; only

	students with a completed bachelor in public administration, can (formally) complete the programme within one year.
5.5.2 Length	Both programmes are in line with the European regulations for bachelor and master programmes.
5.5.3 Results	The results of the bachelor and master programmes are good: theses were of good quality and the alumni were very satisfied.
5.6 Quality Improvement and Innovation	
5.6.1 Programme accomplishment	Both programmes have a good system to monitor programme accomplishment.
5.6.2 Curriculum Development	Both programmes are under constant development, based on the accomplishments in the past and under a strict one-year curriculum development cycle.
5.6.3 External Reviews	The programme has followed up on recommendations from other external reviews. The personnel evaluation is more than adequate and, compared with the practice in some other countries, very tough.
5.7 Student Assessment	The assessments in both programmes are more than adequate, diverse and well regulated. Quality is closely monitored.
5.8 Programme Jurisdiction	Although the faculty formally is not in charge of the programme, they have enough participation and influence to say they are the 'owners' of the programmes. The faculty has very limited influence on the budget available for education and research, and the entire public sector is under severe budget constraints. This results in large classes and large workloads for faculty that in spite of the large groups try to realise small group teaching methods.
5.9.1 Faculty nucleus Score:	The numbers of students in the classes of both programmes are too large to realise interactive teaching methods, although they are achieved as a result of an extra effort on the part of some of the core faculty.
5.9.2 Faculty qualifications	The qualifications of the "core" faculty are more than adequate for the two programmes. Practitioners also teach in the programme, although not too a large degree. There are few staff members with limited publications – they are tenured and cannot be replaced other than by retirement.
5.9.3 Diversity: gender and minorities	The programmes make use of the gender policy and implementation of the university and school. At the moment there is no policy with respect to minorities. The department responsible for the programmes should make the composition of the team more representative as soon as possible.
5.10 Admission of Students	The admission procedures are adequate.
5.11 Supportive Services and Facilities	The facilities are good.
5.12 Student Services	The student services are more than adequate. Students and alumni had no complaints about these.

5.13 Public Relations	The public relations of the programmes are more than adequate.
6 Additional Criteria	Not applicable.

2. Conclusion

Based on all material and especially the report of the EAPAA site visit team, the Accreditation Committee has evaluated the programmes. In general, the quality of both programmes is good. Both have a clear academic stature and a focus on research methods. Attention for economics is rather large, but not overly dominant. The programmes have an enthusiastic and well-qualified faculty that, notwithstanding the insufficient personnel budget, realises a good didactic programme. Students and alumni in general are very satisfied with the programmes.

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.