



**European Association for
Public Administration
Accreditation**

EAPAA Accreditation Committee Evaluation Report

Evaluation Report with respect to the request for accreditation of Netherlands Institute of Government, University of Twente, Enschede, The Netherlands, Public Administration and Political Science Doctorate Programme.

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

Criteria	Summary evaluation
1. Mission, objectives, and competencies	The NIG has a clearly stated mission. The site visit team recommends to spell out concrete, actionable objectives that would guide the NIG in making strategic decisions about the future. All of the expected exit qualifications for PhD graduates in the NIG programme have been derived from the European Higher Education Qualification Framework, and are fully in line with the mission of the programme.
2. Entry into the programme	NIG's PhD candidates are selected by the NIG member institutions. The NIG has a well-designed strategy for dealing with the varying backgrounds of students. The annual NIG intake is a valuable tool in guiding the students in their course selection.
3. Curriculum structure	The curriculum has a clear structure: the courses have been divided between common core courses and electives. The structure of the curriculum is fully in line with the mission of the programme and also with the underlying values of flexibility, customization, and complementarity.
4. Curriculum content	The NIG-curriculum covers the domain of public administration to an adequate degree. In the future, when developing additional electives, further sub-domains of PA could be covered in order to make the programme more comprehensive. The programme pays sufficient attention to research methods and ethics.
5. Didactic approach	The didactic principles of the NIG are fully in line with the mission of the programme, and are well implemented. The teaching methods utilized in the programme are fully in line with the didactic principles. The diverse range of assignments offer the PhD-candidates ample opportunities to receive feedback on their performance.

6. Student Assessment	The programme consists of a sufficiently diverse mix of formal and informal assessment methods, including individual written assignments, individual oral presentations, plenary discussions, working in pairs, written group assignments, and in-class discussions. These assessment methods adequately reflect the attainment of crucial competencies for the PhD-candidates found in the general objectives of the programme.
7. Transferable skills	The NIG training programme primarily aims to develop broad theoretical and methodological skills in the field of (and political science. This particular disciplinary focus complements the more general academic courses taught by local graduate schools. Rather than via the official programme, the development of skills outside of the academic world is achieved via several extracurricular activities. These are very positively valued by the stakeholders during the site visit and can be upgraded and expanded by the NIG.
8. Results	The site visit team considers sufficient the academic success of the cohorts of PhD-students in the NIG-programme. It boasts a high number of alumni in positions as (full) professors, or with an equally impressive career outside of the academic world. The performance of current and prospective PhD-students can be facilitated by promoting the completion of the coursework in the early phases of the research, via the annual intake and the flexibility of the programme itself. This personal trajectory that suits students' individual needs allows them to excel in their research.
9. Quality monitoring and improvement	The programme maintains excellent systems of monitoring and evaluation, based on input from different stakeholders (students, advisory councils and directorate). NIG also periodically undergoes external reviews. This shows that NIG and its governing bodies are very much a 'learning organisation', constantly focused on improving the quality of the education provided.
10. Faculty	The teaching faculty in the NIG-programme satisfies even the highest standards in the academic public administration community. These standards can be defined in terms of didactic qualifications as well as a strong research- and publication-based record of accomplishment. These professional and scholarly merits are matched by high levels of dedication and commitment to teaching and mentoring PhD-students of high caliber.

11. Diversity	The diversity of both staff and students relates in this context to gender and ethnic and or social minorities, but also to diverse professional backgrounds and career patterns of the PhD students. The NIG-programme representatives show high levels of sensitivity to questions of diversity policies and self-critically report a gender gap in the composition of their faculty with more than two-thirds of course instructors or coordinators being male. It could be helpful, if the NIG-programme were to take more active steps to acknowledge this student group in view of both their needs and their potential role as a resource for the programme.
12. Responsibility and Autonomy	The governance arrangements of the NIG reflect the complexity of a multi-level activity involving the collective of member institutions (i.e. degree-awarding universities), internal and external stakeholders of the NIG and finally the individual course instructors and coordinators. The governance structure and procedures are designed to safeguard the academic autonomy of the NIG (as an institution vis-à-vis its member universities) and the course instructors as individual scholars.
13. Supportive services and facilities	NIG programme participants (as both teachers and students) have wide-ranging access to high-quality support facilities across the Netherlands, including libraries, technical support units for necessary hardware or software for teaching or research, and adequate space for class or office work. Being members of their home universities as well as NIG programme participants enhances their access to excellent teaching and research resource.
14. Joint programmes	While the NIG-programme might not technically qualify as a “joint degree programme”, because individual member institutions reserve the power to confer degrees, the programme is definitely a joint activity of an inter-university network with its own two-tier governance structure and division of labor. This networked arrangement and its added value cannot be taken for granted, but requires constant maintenance in form of highlighting its positive impact vis-à-vis internal and external stakeholders.

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.