



**European Association for
Public Administration
Accreditation**

EAPAA Accreditation Committee Summary Evaluation

**Master in Public Administration (MPA), Institute of Social and Political Sciences (ISCSP),
Public Administration Department, University of Lisbon, Portugal.**

Summary evaluation with respect to the request for accreditation of the Master in Public Administration (MPA), Institute of Social and Political Sciences (ISCSP), Public Administration Department, University of Lisbon, Portugal.

In consideration of the Self-Evaluation Report of the above programme, the Site Visit Report of 23 March 2022 of the EAPAA Site Visit Team for this programme, and the response of the programme to the draft of the Site Visit Report, the EAPAA Accreditation Committee, at its meeting of 6 September 2022 in Lisbon, Portugal, has evaluated this programme against the EAPAA Accreditation Criteria (version 9, September 2013).

Criteria	Summary evaluation
Mission, objectives and competencies	The programme's objective to combine theory and practice, although important, is a rather open objective that does not necessarily encompass a specific understanding of the nature and aims of public administration. The choice of theoretical fields the programme management has made follows basic understandings of public administration, but can be more tailored to the position the particular programme at ISCSP.
Entry into the programme	The programme enrolls students holding a relevant BA degree or equivalent. A majority of enrolled students are PA practitioners, from early to mid-career. Their educational backgrounds are diverse, as are their countries of origin. There seems to be little formalized strategy of dealing with the above diversity, but evidence suggests that there are mechanisms, though informal, aimed at dealing with the diversity.
Structure of the curriculum	Generally, the program's structure is clear and logical, and reflects the program's intention to integrate theoretical and practical knowledge and skills. However, there is some question of whether the required student workload involved in the 60 ECTS per year framework is actually achieved.
Content of the curriculum	The curriculum starts with general courses on the discipline (public management, public policy, financial management). The specialization courses are diverse, but in most cases the relationship with the general field of public administration is evident. Research and methods are sufficiently covered. Overall, the curriculum content is balanced and meets EAPAA's standards.
Didactic approach	In the didactic approach there is a strong focus on critical reflection through in-class discussion and debate, linking theoretical insights to

	practical cases, and personal tutoring. The small group size and the participation of a mix of academic practitioner teachers allow such an approach to be implemented. The thesis project is strongly tailored to the needs of the student, with extensive autonomy for them to choose their own topic of specialization.
Student Assessment	The mix of assessment methods is sufficiently varied, although it would be worth considering more diversity, with the addition of innovative new methods. The procedure for the master's thesis quite elaborate, which is appropriate given its importance within the program.
Preparation for the labour market	The relationship of the program to the practice of public administration is specific and strong at the same time. The deep embeddedness of the department in real-world public administration enables the program to offer a significant and elaborate array of internship possibilities, didactically well-integrated into the programme curriculum.
Results	A relatively large number of students do not finish the programme or does not finish the programme in the stated length of the programme, Of those who do finish, the master's theses are of sufficient quality.
Quality monitoring and improvement	Students are represented on various faculty councils and there are regular digital questionnaires at the course level. Otherwise, quality control is organised formally. Further quality improvement is desirable, but limits to staff recruitment are a major obstacle in this respect.
Faculty	There is a sufficient faculty nucleus with the necessary expertise and academic qualifications. However, there is room for improvement both with respect to teaching qualifications and internationalisation.
Diversity	The mix of students is varied and interesting. Staff diversity is a point for improvement, especially with respect to age distribution, but not one where swift action by the institute is possible.
Responsibility and autonomy	Despite a complex system of governance, the coordination unit appears to be sufficiently autonomous to make necessary changes to the programme.
Supportive services and facilities	The facilities at ISCSP are well developed and the necessary services are available.
Research basis	There is a strong difference between those teachers that come from research and those that come from public administration. The latter are generally not engaged in research or publishing. Given the high intensity of the teaching, the time devoted to research remains relatively limited. However, there have been some demonstrable attempts to strengthen the research basis.
Internationalisation	The internationalization of the academic staff is, qualitatively and quantitatively, at an adequate level in terms of international academic networking. A lack of European connectedness is seen as a problem not only for the academic staff but even more so for students.