

EAPAA & NVAO (NL)

Introduction

This agreement between NVAO and EAPAA has been collaboratively developed by both organizations. The goal of this agreement is to increase the efficiency and reduce the administrative burden for institutions in the accreditation process. It only applies to the Dutch institutions and programs that opt for a joint NVAO-EAPAA process to receive accreditation from both organisations.

It is important to note that this agreement does not alter the formal responsibilities of the organizations involved (EAPAA, NVAO, institutions). Its purpose is to set out the conditions and required procedures for applying for double accreditation, in order to ensure an efficient assessment and accreditation process.

This agreement applies exclusively to the activities carried out by the Dutch department of NVAO.

An institution requesting a joint visit must inform both EAPAA and NVAO in due time.

1. Joint panel & joint visit

The EAPAA Site Visit Team (SVT) consists of experts from EAPAA's SVT members pool. These experts will most likely meet the criteria that NVAO has set out for assessment panel members. A NVAO panel is composed of members with domain specific expertise, educational expertise, work field specific expertise, international expertise, audit expertise, and student-experience. Both EAPAA and NVAO require that a student is part of the SVT. Therefore, composing a joint SVT that meets the requirements of both EAPAA and NVAO will probably be very well possible. NVAO and EAPAA agree to engage a panel of experts or SVT that meets both the NVAO and the EAPAA criteria.

At least one SVT member must be acquainted with the NVAO framework. His/her role will be:

- to guide and consult the SVT on performance on NVAO standards;
- to ask questions in order to judge the programme's alignment with NVAO standards;
- to prepare answers to NVAO's questions after the visit. These answers will need to be endorsed by the SVT.

In order to comply with the NVAO accreditation framework and Dutch law a registered secretary needs to be provided for the panel. The secretary is not a member of the panel. Preferably this will be the same secretary for all joint NVAO-EAPAA visits.

All SVT members will receive a briefing on EAPAA's and NVAO's assessment frameworks before the visit occurs. As far as the SVT chair is concerned, the briefing must be compliant with NVAO requirements regarding the training of assessment panel chairs.

The institution submits a proposal for the composition of an SVT and for a secretary to NVAO. The NVAO will assess the panel members and the secretary based on its procedure, looking at the different fields of expertise as well as at the independence of each panel member. The panel members and the secretary must comply with the requirements for independence as formulated in the NVAO framework.

The NVAO will decide on the proposed composition of the SVT and the secretary within four weeks. Any doubts or comments on its part regarding the SVT and the secretary must be clarified before approval of the SVT. This may involve changes to the proposed composition of the SVT.

The joint visit will be planned according to the guidelines set by both EAPAA and NVAO.

2. Self-evaluation report

The self-evaluation report is a concise document that provides information and addresses all standards from both assessment frameworks. The SVT should be able to easily identify the standards from both frameworks, for instance, by means of a list that indicates where relevant information to judge (sub)standards can be found. The self-evaluation report must be written in English.

EAPAA will provide the SVT with general information on the institutional background of the programme. The programme adds information on specific features of the institution.

3. Assessment frameworks

Both EAPAA and NVAO accredit at programme level and the contents of the frameworks they apply are to a very large extent overlapping. This is the case for NVAO's limited as well as extensive programme assessment. The main difference between the accreditation frameworks is the level of detail: the EAPAA framework is specifically focused on the discipline of public administration.

In order to ensure workable conditions, the NVAO framework is used as a starting point, with further and more detailed specifications regarding the following topics:

- a) NVAO standard 1: addition;
- b) NVAO standard 2: expansion;
- c) One additional standard;
- d) Additional information.

- a) NVAO standard 1: addition

In addition to addressing NVAO standard 1, the programme should elaborate on its educational mission and how this mission translates into learning outcomes.

- b) NVAO standard 2: expansion

In the presentation of the teaching-learning environment, the programme should address the following topics from the EAPAA framework (standards referred to between brackets):

- Entry into the programme (2)
- Curriculum structure (3)
- Curriculum content (4)
- Didactic approach (5)
- Faculty (10)

- c) One additional standard

The additional standard addresses the following topic from the EAPAA framework:
- Diversity (11).

d) Additional information

The programme should make the following information available: background information on the programme management and the structure of the institute, faculty data sheets, course abstracts, and a list of theses from the last three years. If deemed necessary, the SVT may ask for additional, existing, documentation.

EAPAA will provide the SVT with general information on the institutional background of the programme.

It should be noted that the NVAO framework requires programs to justify their choice for the teaching language if a program is taught in a language other than Dutch. This also applies if the program uses a foreign language name. The program should also demonstrate that teachers have a sufficient command of the language in which they are teaching. In addition, the extensive assessment framework of NVAO requires programs to demonstrate that staff policy is conducive in this respect.

4. Distinctive feature (optional)

For the allotment of a distinctive feature, the relevant framework used by the NVAO needs to be applied for assessment. This means that the SVT must comply with the guidelines set for the procedure and must assess and judge the standards from the relevant framework.

5. Site Visit Report

The Site Visit Report is the outcome of the work of the SVT. The report should enable both accreditation organisations to make a substantiated decision. Both organisations accept a joint report, as long as all standards from both frameworks are addressed and it is clearly indicated which sections address specific (EAPAA) standards. The Site Visit Team can make commendations and recommendations.

The NVAO assessment framework prescribes the need for a judgment per standard (meets the standard, partially meets the standard, or does not meet the standard) and per programme (positive, conditionally positive, negative). For NVAO to decide on accreditation the SVT needs to state and motivate these judgments in the report. In addition, a substantive summary of the report needs to be added to the report. This is not the case for the EAPAA standards. It is the task of the SVT to provide relevant information to the EAPAA Accreditation Committee.

The draft report is sent to the institution applying for a joint NVAO-EAPAA accreditation process. The institution is given a term of two weeks to respond to any factual inaccuracies in the report, whereupon the chair of the SVT endorses the report after all SVT members have approved its contents. Subsequently, the SVT submits its final report and recommendations to the EAPAA Accreditation Committee and to NVAO.

The reports will be published on the NVAO website for any stakeholder to access and read.

6. Duration of accreditation

The duration of the NVAO accreditation is six years for new programmes and for an indefinite period for existing programmes. All programs must be assessed by an NVAO approved panel of independent experts and apply for the continuation of their

accreditation every six years. EAPAA grants accreditation for seven years. The programmes themselves need to decide whether they will use the possibility of the joint process and therefore apply for the EAPAA accreditation within six years (instead of seven).

7. Separate decision processes

The EAPAA Accreditation Committee and the NVAO board will each make their own decisions and decide on the possible follow-up, based on the assessment report and the assessment frameworks applicable for their respective organizations.

This collaboration agreement between EAPAA and the NVAO ensures institutions an efficient and effective procedure for acquiring double accreditation. The NVAO strives for as much reduction of the administrative burden of accreditation processes as possible and therefore strives, when possible, to combine all accreditation processes an institution is involved in.

The Hague, 18 May 2021 (update to the original agreement of September 12th, 2016)

On behalf of EAPAA

On behalf of NVAO

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