

## NVAO & EAPAA (NL)

### Agreement

#### Introduction

This agreement between NVAO and EAPAA has been collaboratively developed by both organisations. 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 programmes that opt for a joint NVAO-EAPAA process to receive accreditation from both organisations.

date  
September 12th, 2016

It is important to notice that no formal responsibilities will change because of this cooperation. All responsibilities of the parties involved (EAPAA, NVAO, institutions) will remain the same. This agreement sets out the alignment in the procedures to ensure an efficient process when applying for double accreditation.

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

#### 1. Joint Site Visit Team & 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<sup>1</sup>. 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 has to 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 secretary needs to be added to the assessment panel. Preferably this will be the same secretary for all joint NVAOEAPAA 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

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<sup>1</sup> An NVAO assessment panel consists of members with discipline-specific expertise, practical expertise in the related professional field(s), international expertise, audit expertise, educational expertise and student-related expertise.

Page 2 of 4 briefing has to be compliant with Dutch requirements regarding the training of assessment panel chairs.

The institution submits a proposal for the composition of an SVT to NVAO. The NVAO assesses the members based on its procedure, looking at the different expertise as well as the independence of each member. NVAO will judge the SVT composition within four weeks. Any doubts or comments on its part regarding the SVT must first be clarified. If need be, the composition will have to be modified.

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 has to 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 two frameworks 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) two additional standards;
- d) appendices;
- e) summary of the institutional audit report (*only in case of NVAO limited programme assessment*).

- 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):

- multidisciplinary character of the programme (5.1);
- core components (5.5.1.1);
- other components and specialisations (5.5.1.2);

- Page 3 of 4 - curriculum length (5.5.2);
- relationship to practice and internships (5.4);
  - structure and didactics of the programme (5.5.1.3);
  - admission of students (5.10);
  - intake (5.5.1.4);
  - faculty qualifications (5.9.2).

c) Two additional standards

The additional standards address the following topics from the EAPAA framework:

- external input regarding curriculum development and review (5.6.2 and 5.6.3);
- diversity (5.9.3).

d) Appendices

The programme should add the following information in the appendices to the self-evaluation report: background information on the programme management and the structure of the institute, faculty data sheets, an overview of the curriculum, course abstracts, graduation / dropout rates, the teacher-student ratio and a list of these from the last three years. If deemed necessary, the SVT may ask for additional, existing, documentation.

e) Summary of the institutional audit report

For programmes from institutions whose institutional quality assurance assessment (ITK) by NVAO has produced a positive result, EAPAA's standards 5.6.1 and 5.11 to 5.13 can be covered by providing a summary of the audit report.

EAPAA's standards 5.6.1, 5.11 to 5.13 are addressed in NVAO's extensive programme assessment.

EAPAA will provide the SVT with general information on the institutional background of the programme (EAPAA 5.5-5.8).

#### **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 has to comply with the guidelines set for the procedure, and has to 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 differentiated judgment per standard and programme (unsatisfactory, satisfactory, good or excellent). In order for NVAO to make a decision, the SVT needs to state its

Page 4 of 4 advisory judgements per standard and programme in the report.<sup>2</sup> In addition, a substantive summary of the report needs to be added to the report.

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 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 accreditation period differs: EAPAA grants accreditation for seven years, NVAO for six 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 both make their own decisions and decide on the possible follow-up, based on the Site Visit Report and the assessment frameworks applicable for their respective organisations.

This collaboration agreement between EAPAA and NVAO ensures institutions an efficient and effective procedure for acquiring double accreditation. 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, September 12th, 2016

On behalf of EAPAA



Taco Brandsen  
Secretary-General  
EAPAA

On behalf of NVAO



Paul Zevenbergen  
Member of the Board  
NVAO

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<sup>2</sup> This is not the case for the EAPAA standards. The SVT's task is to provide relevant information to the EAPAA Accreditation Committee.