

IMPLICATIONS OF THE SOUTH AFRICAN HIGHER EDUCATION QUALIFICATIONS FRAMEWORK FOR THE MASTER OF PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION

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ABSTRACT

This article describes the implications of the South African Higher Education Qualifications Framework (HEQF) for the structuring of the Master of Public Administration (MPA) that are offered at South African universities. The MPA programmes in South Africa are compared with the MPA programmes that are offered in the United States of America (USA). The research shows that not all the South African MPA programmes meet the HEQF's requirements for a course work master's degree. Most of the MPA programmes will therefore have to be adapted to meet the requirements of the HEQF. The requirements of the HEQF for a course work master's degree will give the South African MPA programmes a higher research component than the MPA programmes that are offered in the USA. The implications of this will be that the research component of South African programmes with below average research components will have to be increased.

INTRODUCTION

The Master of Public Administration (MPA), a course work master's programme, is offered worldwide by various universities primarily "to educate practicing public servants...that they can carry out their day-to-day work in a manner that is informed by broad understandings and relevant conceptual perspectives" (McSwite, 2001:111). In South Africa this mainly course work qualification is especially aimed at public officials in managerial positions who want to improve their qualifications in the field of Public Administration.

On 5 November 2007, the South African Minister of Education published the Higher Education Qualifications Framework in terms of Section 3 of the *Higher Education Act, 1997* (Act 101 of 1997) in the *Government Gazette*. The purpose of this qualifications framework is to “guide higher education institutions in the development of programmes and qualifications that provide graduates with intellectual capabilities and skills that can both enrich society and empower themselves and enhance economic and social development” (Pandor, 2007:3). The HEQF makes special provision for master’s degrees whose primary purposes are “to educate and train researchers who can contribute to the development of knowledge at an advanced level, or prepare graduates for advanced and specialised professional employment”. The framework provides for two types of master’s degrees: one that can be obtained by “completing a single advanced research project”; and one that is earned by “successfully completing a course work programme requiring a high level of theoretical engagement and intellectual independence and a research project, culminating in the acceptance of a dissertation”. The total credit value of the course work master’s degree should be 180, of which one third (60 credits) should be for the dissertation. The minimum admission requirement for both types of master’s degrees are the same, namely a relevant *Bachelor Honours Degree*, a professional bachelor’s degree with a minimum of 96 credits at level 8, or a postgraduate diploma (South Africa, 2007:27.)

With regard to the master’s programmes, this framework provides for two purposes, two types of degrees and one common admission requirement. One would have expected a direct relationship between the purpose statements and the type of degrees. The purpose of training and educating researchers seems to have a direct relationship to the master’s degree that can be obtained by completing a single advanced research project. If an advanced research project is regarded as an appropriate way to educate and train researchers, the inclusion of a research project that culminates in the acceptance of a dissertation as part of the core of a degree which is aimed at the preparation of graduates for advanced and specialised professional employment is peculiar, to say the least.

The purpose of this article is to investigate the implications of the HEQF for the structuring of the MPA programmes that are offered at South African universities. In order to do this, this study will be contextualised in the scholarly discourse on the MPA programme. The MPA programmes in South Africa will then be compared with the MPA programmes that are offered in the USA and also with the requirements and the possible implications of the HEQF.

LITERATURE REVIEW AND METHODOLOGY

A variety of articles on the MPA degree have been published in the last few decades: Gore & Holzer, 1975; Baldwin, 1988; Bowman, 1988; Cleary, 1990; Bowman, Chen, Tinkersley & Hilliard, 1993; Hays & Duke, 1996; McSwite, 2001; Denhardt, 2001; Cunningham & Weschler, 2002; Brinkerhoff & Brinkerhoff, 2006; Card & Fairholm, 2007; Koven, Goetzke & Brennan, 2008). These articles were mainly published in scholarly journals in the USA and covered various issues about the programme. As far back as 1975, research by Gore and Holzer (1975:411) found that MPA degree holders believed

that the professional competence which they had gained with the degree was a significant benefit to them. However, they also found that the respondents had a relatively low regard for statistics and research design courses, raising a question about the respondents' engagement in or review of research activities. In fact, the elimination of the master's thesis as a requirement or an option was not supported by their research as a *useful long-term decision* (Gore & Holzer, 1975:411).

Striking similarities were found in another survey that was conducted amongst recent MPA graduates nearly 32 years later. In their survey Card and Fairholm (2007) identified three major competency fields for the MPA, namely leadership and organisation competencies (more or less related to professional competence), management competencies, and research and technical competencies. According to their research, the top five useful leadership and organisation competencies are oral communication, decision making and problem solving, ethics and democratic values, leadership, and intergovernmental relations. In the category of management competencies the most important competency is budget and financial management, which 69% of the respondents considered extremely or very important. Human resources management is reported to be the least important competency in this category – only 47% of the respondents found it extremely or very important. The competencies in the category research and technical competencies (such as quantitative and statistical techniques) received – as in the survey by Gore and Holzer in 1975 – the overall lowest importance (Card & Fairholm, 2007:6.) If one bears in mind the requirements of the HEQF for a course work master's degree, the weight of the professional nature of the degree and the low regard for the research component of the degree in past research are of special significance for this current research.

The article by Baldwin (1988) focuses on the perceived effectiveness of MPA programmes under different institutional arrangements. Although his data shows that MPA programmes that are administered by public administration departments and separate schools are perceived as being significantly more effective than programmes that are administered by combined departments, he concludes that a variety of institutional structures for the MPA programme appear to be capable of delivering the desirable outcomes of a professional degree programme (Baldwin, 1988:877, 882).

In his article Bowman (1988) focuses on the admission practices for MPA programmes, which is also a relevant issue for the South African situation. His research shows that most *professional schools are selective* in an attempt to *identify those best equipped to benefit from graduate work* (Bowman, 1988:873). Many of these programmes have a probationary policy and consider the results (grades) of previous qualifications as the best single predictor of success. However, little consensus seems to exist on which admission criteria are effective (Bowman, 1988:871.) Bowman's study was followed five years later with an article by Bowman, Chen, Tinkersley and Hilliard (1993) on *patterns in MPA admission decision making*. This study affirmed that there is not a single set of admission requirements that are used for MPA programmes (Bowman *et al.*, 1993:369).

In his article "What do Public Administration masters programs look like? Do they do what is needed?" Cleary (1990) reports on the results of a survey of the 215 Public

Affairs/Public Administration master's programmes that were affiliated with the National Association of Schools of Public Administration (NASPAA). For his survey, he used the following indicators: name of degree; programme setting and organisation; credit hour requirements; internship requirements; common curriculum requirements; additional curriculum components; perceived gaps in responding programmes; and more coverage needed nationally (Cleary, 1990:664 & 665).

From a South African perspective, it is noteworthy that the survey showed that 75% of the course work master's degrees were named Master of Public Administration. These programmes were housed *differently from institution to institution* (Cleary 1990:664 & 665). The credit hour requirements were not standardised. The article shows that internship for *pre-service students* was regarded as necessary in 63% of the programmes. Cleary's research (1990:664 & 665) also shows that neither *common core nor a consistent core pattern* in the programmes were evident, although there was a tendency toward what might be termed an inner core of six areas (namely public administration, research methods, public finance, policy analysis, personnel, and political institutions and processes). The areas of specialisations varied from programme to programme. The most commonly perceived gaps were in the areas of information systems and computer skills, ethics and public finance, and financial management. Although this survey gives valuable insights regarding the names of the programmes, internships and common curriculum requirements, it does not give information about the value or importance of a capstone research project or dissertation (Cleary, 1990:665.)

In their article "Professional certification in Public Management: Status report and proposal" Hays and Duke (1996) discuss the possibility of the inclusion of the MPA programme in the *certification loop*. Their suggestion is that managers who have no interest in a graduate degree could complete a more rigorous Certified Public Manager (CPM) programme. They make a clear distinction between the MPA and the CPM, with the MPA appealing to students who are interested in professional training in a traditional academic setting while the CPM is more clearly job-related. Their findings are specifically relevant for this current research because it highlights two streams of training: purely job-related training on the one hand and professional training with a scientific or scholarly foundation on the other hand (Hays & Duke, 1996:431).

The connection of theory to practice, specifically with the MPA curriculum in mind, is addressed by McSwite (2001:11) in an article on the *theory competency* for MPA-educated practitioners. With *theory competence*, McSwite (2001:112) means a format for working out an understanding of a situation and a frame of viewing situations. This competence should change a MPA-educated public official's way of thinking through *questions of effective action* (McSwite, 2001:114). The theory competence that is instilled through the MPA is clearly highly regarded by this author.

The theoretical focus of the MPA is also touched on by Denhardt (2001:526) in his article on the big questions of Public Administration education. He poses the following four basic questions:

- Do we seek to educate our students with respect to theory or to practice?
- Do we prepare students for their first jobs or for those to which they might aspire later?

- What are the appropriate delivery mechanisms for MPA courses and curricula?
- What personal commitments do we make as Public Administration educators?

With regard to the question on the theory of practice focus of the MPA, Denhardt (2001:531) found that students with more experience seems to be more interested in the theoretical context of Public Administration. The theory issue has been taken further by Cunningham and Weschler (2002:104–111) when they ask whether Public Administration theory is useful to practitioners. They are concerned that current MPA programmes are educating students and practitioners primarily for staff positions and that *these students may not be getting the theory they need* (Cunningham & Weschler, 2002:104). They argue that students heading to line management would benefit for exposure to and confrontation with publics operating from alternative theories in use (Cunningham & Weschler, 2002:109). However, they are concerned that the reflective voice is not reaching reflective practice (Cunningham & Weschler, 2002:109).

In an article in the *PA Times International* supplement, Jennifer and Derrick Brinkerhoff (2006:6 & 7) reflect on the continued relevance of the MPA. According to them, the curricula of MPA programmes incorporate skills and knowledge in three required areas, namely the *lay-of-the-land* (general understanding of how things work), technical skills (e.g. a basic understanding of economics, budgeting, financial management, planning and evaluation, policy analysis and performance measurement, and management) and people skills (relationship management, self-awareness and social awareness). The MPA therefore enables students to acquire the necessary analytic and management skills and also more technical competencies such as expertise in governance (Brinkerhoff & Brinkerhoff, 2006:6).

The literature reveals that accreditation and the rating of MPA programmes in especially the USA are regarded as highly important (PA Times 2007:22–31; Koven, Goetzke & Brennan (2008:691–710). Accrediting in the USA is done, since 1996, by the Council on Higher Education Accreditation (CHEA). The Commission on Peer Review and Accreditation of the National Association of Schools of Public Affairs and Administration (NASPAA) was recognised in 2003 by the CHEA for a period of ten years. NASPAA has 254 member institutions that offer undergraduate and graduate degrees in Public Affairs and Administration. Of the total number of programmes that are entitled to participate in the peer review process, 158 programmes at 151 schools (59% of the member institutions) have been accredited (PA Times 2007:22–31.)

This peer review process that leads to official accreditation is, however, *not the only* way of reviewing MPA programmes in the USA. The *U.S. News & World Report* does a bi-annual ranking of top master's programmes in Public Affairs. In their study Koven, Goetzke and Brenna (2008:691–710) review the web sites of the top 76 Public Affairs programmes that are offered at the top 50 institutions which were cited by the *U.S. News & World Report* in 2006. Their study shows that not all these top programmes are accredited – highly ranked programmes at institutions such as Princeton, the University of Michigan and the University of Chicago are, for example, not accredited (Koven, Goetzke & Brenna, 2008:693).

The importance of Koven, Goetzke and Brenna's study (2008) for this research is the possible replication of their methodology or, at least, parts of it. If one bears in mind the research requirements of the HEQF for the course work master's degree, a crucial determinant of any survey will be whether the MPA programmes should include a dissertation and what the credit value of the research component is. Because qualifications in South Africa are all supposed to meet specific minimum credit value requirements, it will have no value to focus on the semester hours of these programmes or whether they are accredited. Consequently, this study takes the following determinants from Koven, Getzke and Brenna's study (2008:693, 696 & 698):

- name of the degree/programme (e.g. MPA, MPP, MPAf, other)
- core as a portion of the total number of course work
- in College of Arts & Science
- in Political Science Department
- in PA Unit of school or college
- in unit of institute or centre
- modules/papers as part of the core:
 - o Human Resource Management
 - o Budgeting and Finance
 - o Microeconomics
 - o MIS/IT course
 - o Ethics and Leadership
 - o Policy Evaluation
 - o Decision Making/Problem Solving
 - o Research Methods
 - o Public Administration (theory)
 - o Politics and Legal Institutions
 - o Economics and Social Institutions
 - o Organisational Concepts and Institutions
 - o Capstone or Final Research Project

Since the author of this article's preliminary reading of the curricula of the various South African universities reveals a variety of names for the capstone research documents, this survey also includes the following types of capstone or research documents:

- dissertation
- dissertation of limited scope
- mini-dissertation
- research report/seminar
- extended dissertation
- thesis, and
- treatise

The relative weight of the research project, in comparison to the course work, is calculated where possible. This article also reviews the web pages of all the South African

universities that are offering course work master's degrees in Public Administration, bearing the abovementioned criteria in mind. For the purpose of this article, the following hypotheses are tested:

- The current MPA programmes that are offered at South African universities share characteristics with the MPA programmes that are offered in the USA.
- Not all the MPA programmes that are offered at South African universities meet the requirements of the HEQF for a course work master's degree.
- Most of the MPA programmes that are offered in South Africa will have to be adapted to meet the requirements of the HEQF.
- The HEQF's requirements for a course work master's degree will give the MPA programmes that are offered at South African universities a higher research component than the MPA programmes that are offered elsewhere in the world.

MASTER OF PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION IN THE USA

The MPA is offered at numerous universities all over the world. The highest concentration of MPA programmes are in the USA (PA Times 2007:22). Since South Africa is a member of the British Commonwealth, it is worthwhile to take note of examples in the Commonwealth. In Australia and New Zealand, for example, the Australia and New Zealand School of Government (ANZSOG), with its 15 partner universities and business schools, offers an Executive Master of Public Administration (ANZSOG 2009:online). Some of these partner universities, such as the University of Canberra, also offer a separate MPA (University of Canberra 2009:online). However, because this article tries to build to some extent on the research by Koven, Goetzke and Brennan, (2008), universities in the USA will be the main comparative focus.

The research that was conducted by Koven, Goetzke and Brennan (2008) reveals the following characteristics of the 76 course work master's programmes that are offered by the top 50 universities in the USA:

- **Name of the qualification:** The majority (60,52%) of these programmes are called Master of Public Administration (MPA); while 23,68% is called Master of Public Policy (MPP), 7,89% is called Master of Public Affairs and 7,89% has a variety of other names (Koven, Goetzke & Brennan, 2008:694).
- **Institutional home of course work programmes:** Koven, Goetzke and Brennan (2008) identified four possible homes in USA universities for these programmes, namely the College of Arts and Science, a Political Science Department, a separate unit of a school or college, or a unit of an institute or centre. Their survey has shown that an overwhelming majority of these programmes (82,90%) are housed in a unit or department of Public Administration in a school or college (Koven, Goetzke & Brennan, 2008:696).
- **Capstone research project:** From a South African perspective and with the HEQF in mind, it is noteworthy that only 36,84% of all the course work programmes and 28,3% of the MPA programmes have a capstone or final research project (see table 1 below). The implications of this are that more than 71% of the top 46 MPA programmes

Table 1: Percentage of programmes that require specific courses as part of the core (n=76)

Courses/Papers/Modules	All Programmes (n=76)	MPA (n=46)
MIS/IT Course	19,73	23,90
Research Methods	27,63	26,10
Capstone or Final Research Project	36,84	28,30
Human Resources Management	19,73	32,60
Decision Making/Problem Solving	46,05	34,80
Microeconomics	48,68	37,00
Economics and Social Institutions	48,68	45,70
Politics and Legal Institutions	55,26	52,20
Ethics and Leadership	52,63	58,70
Public Administration	59,21	73,90
Budgeting and Finance	63,16	84,80
Organisational Concepts and Institutions	75,00	87,00
Policy Evaluation	90,79	87,00

in the USA will not meet the HEQF's requirements for a master's programme (Koven, Goetzke & Brennan, 2008:698.)

- **Courses as part of the core:** Koven, Goetzke and Brennan's research (2008: 698) has shown that a higher percentage of MPA programmes, the traditional programmes for professional public managers, focus on course work in the more applied skills-based courses such as human resources management, budgeting and finance, general public administration, and organizational concepts". Table 1 is an adaptation of their research results and gives an overview of the percentage of programmes that require at least one course as part of the core.

MASTER OF PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION AT SOUTH AFRICAN UNIVERSITIES

A survey of the web pages of 12 South African universities that offer course work master's degrees in Public Administration was done. This survey did not include the universities of technology and their course work MTech programmes. In the survey the following questions were asked:

- What is the name of the course work qualification?
- What percentage is the core (and compulsory fundamentals) of the total course work?
- Where in the structure of the university is the course work master's degree housed?
- Which of the courses that were included by Koven, Goetzke and Brennan (2008) in their survey are present as the core in the South African programmes?
- What are the admission requirements for the programmes?
- What is the form of the research output?
- What percentage is the final research project of the total weight of the programme?

The full data of this survey is available from the author of this article. Table 2 shows that in South Africa the name Master of Public Administration is (with 66,67%) the most popular name for the course work degree. South African universities do not use names such as Master of Public Affairs or Master in Public Policy, although a variety other names for course work master's degrees exist.

Where the research by Koven, Goetzke and Brennan (2008) shows that the core courses or modules consist of between 55,60% and 57,10% of the total weight of the course work in the USA programmes, the percentage is considerable higher in South Africa. The core (and fundamental) modules in the South African course work master's degree consist of 77,92% of the total course work weight. The implication of this is that the course work master's programmes in South Africa are shown to be more focused with fewer electives than the USA programmes.

The institutional home of the course work Master of Public Administration in South Africa has shown to be similar to the trend in the USA because 75% of these programmes are offered in a dedicated unit or Department of Public Administration in a school or college (see Table 3). This qualification is therefore not the product of multidisciplinary co-operation between more than one institutional unit, but predominantly a single-disciplinary programme.

Table 4 gives a summary of the courses that are part of the core (and fundamentals) of a course work programme. It shows that the South African course work master's degrees differ significantly in terms of the presence of core modules from the US course work master's degrees. Where only 36,84% of all the course work master's degrees in the USA have a final research project, all (100%) the South African course work master's degrees

Table 2: Name of the course work qualification (n=12)

Name of qualification	%
Master of Public Administration (MPA)	66,67%
Master of Public Policy (MPP)	0,00%
Master of Public Affairs (MPAf)	0,00%
Other	33,33%

Table 3: Institutional home of course work MPA (n=12)

Institutional setting	%
College of Arts & Science	8,33%
Political Science Department	16,67%
Public Administration unit or department in a school or college	75,00%
Unit in an institute or centre	0,00%

Table 4: Percentage of programmes that require specific courses as part of the core – a comparison between the top 50 institutions in the USA and 12 South African universities

Courses/Papers/Modules	All USA Programmes (n=76) %	USA MPA (n=46) %	SA Course Work Master's Degrees (n=12) %
MIS/IT Course	19,73	23,90	16,67
Research Methods	27,63	26,10	83,33
Capstone or Final Research Project	36,84	28,30	100,00
Human Resources Management	19,73	32,60	66,67
Decision Making/Problem Solving	46,05	34,80	0,00
Microeconomics	48,68	37,00	0,00
Economics and Social Institutions	48,68	45,70	8,33
Politics and Legal Institutions	55,26	52,20	16,67
Ethics and Leadership	52,63	58,70	33,33
Public Administration	59,21	73,90	91,67
Budgeting and Finance	63,16	84,80	75,00
Organisational Concepts and Institutions	75,00	87,00	33,33
Policy Evaluation	90,79	87,00	66,67

in Public Administration have some or other research project. Related to the research project is the presence of research methods as a module/course. In comparison with the 27,63% presence of this course in all the USA programmes, it is present in 83,33% of all the South African programmes. The South African programmes have a stronger presence of the traditional Public Administration courses such as Public Administration, Budgeting and Finance and Human Resource Management, but are relatively weak with regard to non-traditional Public Administration courses such as Microeconomics, Economic and Social Institutions, Politics and Legal Institutions, and MIS/IT courses.

An aspect that was not covered by the research of Koven, Goetzke and Brennan (2008) – but earlier by Bowman (1988:871) and Bowman, Chen, Tinkersley and Hilliard (1993) – is the admission requirements. The survey showed that for 58,33% of the South African course work master's degrees an honours degree was required; for 41,67% of the programmes, a bachelor's degree was considered sufficient; and for 50% of the programmes, practical experience was also required before a candidate was accepted into the programme (this requirement was especially present in cases where only a bachelor's degree was considered a sufficient admission qualification).

With regard to a form of research project, there seems to be a wide variety present in South African programmes. A total of 33,33% of the programmes called their document a mini-dissertation or minor dissertation, 16,67% called the document a research report or a research seminar, and the rest (8,33%) called the research document either an extended dissertation, thesis or treatise, or an extended assignment. There was no correlation between the weight of the research document and what it was called. In the South African situation, the relative weight of the research project varied from 6% to 50% of the total credits of the qualification, with an average weight of 34,88% of the total credits.

HEQF AND ITS IMPLICATIONS FOR THE MASTER OF PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION AT SOUTH AFRICAN UNIVERSITIES

What are the implications of the HEQF for the South African Master of Public Administration and equivalent course work master's programmes? The implications can be categorised into three categories, namely admission requirements, weight of the research project and credits at level 9.

With regard to the admission requirements, the survey showed that 41,67% of the South African course work master's degrees in Public Administration only had a three-year bachelor's degree as the entrance requirement. The HEQF requires an honours bachelor's degree or a professional (four-year) bachelor's degree. A revision of the admission requirements of nearly 42% of the South African programmes will therefore be mandatory.

The second implication is the weight of the research project "culminating in the acceptance of a dissertation" (South Africa 2007:27). The HEQF requires a weight of at least 33% of the total weight of the qualification. Currently, six of the programmes exceed this requirement because the weight of their research projects is 50% of the total weight of the programmes. However, the weight of the research projects in four of these

programmes is below this requirement (6%, 9%, 12,5% and 25%). Their research projects will therefore have to be upgraded. The implication of the upgrading of the weight of the research component is that the programmes of particular institutions will become more academic and less professional. Special measures will be necessary to assist professionals who experience problems with the research part of the programme.

A third implication of the HEQF is that at least 60 of the 120 course work credits have to be on level 9 of the qualifications framework. The course work of some MPA programmes (e.g. at Unisa) are currently on NQF level 8 and will have to be upgraded to level 9.

CONCLUSION

Four hypotheses were set at the beginning of this article.

- The current MPA programmes that are offered at South African universities share characteristics with the MPA programmes that are offered in the USA.

The research has shown that the current MPA/course work programmes in South Africa have the following common characteristics with the MPA programmes that are offered in the USA:

- The overwhelming majority of the course work master's programmes are known as the Master of Public Administration (MPA).
- The institutional home of the majority of these programmes is a dedicated Public Administration unit or department in a school or college.
- The programmes consist of cores and electives, and the core modules are more than 55% of all the modules.
- There is a common preference for certain courses in the core, such as Policy Evaluation, Budgeting and Finance, and Public Administration.

There are also sharp differences, of which the low preference for research in the USA course work programmes compared to the high preference for research in the South African programmes is especially evident.

- Not all the MPA programmes that are offered at South African universities meet the requirements of the HEQF for a course work master's degree.

This hypothesis also seems to be true because the total relative weight of the research component of at least four course work master's degrees in South Africa are lower than the 33% (60 credits) that is required by the HEQF.

- Most of the MPA programmes that are offered in South Africa will have to be adapted to meet the requirements of the HEQF.

Although the weight of the research component of only four master's programmes are lower than the requirement and will have to be adapted, there are also other aspects that require changes. The most important one is the upgrading of the credit levels of master's courses that are currently shared with honours programmes.

- The HEQF's requirements for a course work master's degree will give the MPA programmes that are offered at South African universities a higher research component than the MPA programmes that are offered in the USA.

South African course work master's degrees already have a higher research component than at least 71% of the programmes in the USA. The implications of the HEQF's requirements will be that the weight of the research component of South African programmes with below average research components will have to be increased. This will mean that the weight of their research component will be increased relatively to the weight of the research component of the programmes in the USA. A question for future research is whether the requirements of the HEQF with regard to the research component of course work master's degrees do not restrict the ability of higher education institutions to use the MPA programme to prepare graduates for advanced and specialised professional employment.

NOTES

- ¹ Based on a paper delivered at the Annual General Meeting and Conference of ASSADPAM, 28–29 October 2008, University of the Free State, Bloemfontein.
- ² The online curricula of the course work master's degree in Public Administration (or related titles) of the following universities were included in the survey conducted in October 2008:
 Fort Hare University
 Limpopo University
 Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University
 North-West University, Potchefstroom Campus
 School of Government, University of the Western Cape
 School of Public Management and Planning, University of Stellenbosch
 University of Cape Town
 University of Johannesburg
 University of Pretoria
 University of South Africa
 University of the Free State
 Wits Graduate School of Public and Development Management

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