



# APHEA

Agency for Public Health  
Education Accreditation

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY FOR THE ACCREDITATION REVIEW OF

École des hautes études en santé publique  
Avenue du Professeur-Léon-Bernard  
35043 Rennes  
France



**Accreditation granted September 2015 to September 2021**

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AGENCY FOR PUBLIC HEALTH EDUCATION ACCREDITATION  
SITE VISIT DATES: July 1 - 3, 2015

SITE VISIT TEAM:  
Dr. Chris Potter, Chair  
Professor Vesna Bjegović-Mikanović  
Professor Christoph Zenger  
Julien Goodman, Director APHEA

## **Executive Summary**

The site visit Team (hereafter referred to as "the Team") would like to thank all those involved at the EHESP (hereafter referred to as "the School") for the preparation of the self-evaluation documentation (SED), the curriculum validation process, as well as the hospitality during the visit. From the SED and validation documents the Team were able to understand better the unique history of the School and its particular role within the French health system, as well as the hopes and concerns of a variety of stakeholders. We were provided also with a clear framework on which to verify the information with all the respected internal and external partners during the site visit. The Team would especially like to thank the work of the Director, Laurent Chambaud and colleagues at the School including Christian Chauvigné and Françoise Cormerais who had prepared all the documentation and logistics for the site visit.

### **Criterion I. Governance and Organisation of the Institution**

The School was found by the Team to be a very interesting and innovative model for combining both professional and academic education. The School is based upon and within French law which creates a clarity in its laws and statutes but also creates very clear operational structures. One area seen within the MPH programme and which students had raised concerned the formality of student representative feedback, apart from having an opportunity for consultations with faculties at scheduled time ("open doors"). One of the areas noted was the potential high dependence on the Programme Directors who took large role in the programme. Based on the information gleaned from meetings with the students the Team recommended that the School may wish to think about ensuring distribution of the workload among other faculty, for example creating a more formal arrangement for student representatives to meet with faculty on a regular basis.

## **Criterion II. Aims and Objectives of the Public Health Institution and its programmes**

Throughout the site visit the Team had opportunity to see and understand that the mission of the School is very clear and well stated throughout the website, social forums and printed materials. The Team also appreciated how the mission statement of the School was based on the French legal system which included the Public Health Act 2004. The Team observed that all the objectives found within the School are clear and relate well to the three essential public health schools' functions of education, research and service which are clearly formulated and understood throughout the School. The impression of the Team was that all the School as well as the students were proud to be part of an International School of Public Health in France. Through discussions with alumni and other stakeholders it was apparent to the Team that the School is very well interconnected and related well with former graduates and with stakeholders. The international orientation of the School within the mission is well formulated and allows for a positive vision of the School's future activities. The Team believe that the School is in a strong position for the future in terms of mission, objectives but also in terms of the international nature of students, through the academic programs and lifelong learning activities of the School. The Team emphasised the exemplary way in which the School had integrated its mission in practice and would encourage the School to continue to do so.

## **Criterion III. Programmes**

The Team was struck by the multidisciplinary curricula within both faculty, who possess a large range of experience, and also the use of crosscutting modules, the use of case studies and looking at issues from different perspectives.

The impression was of a very strong institution with a long reputation and history in continuing professional development in the field of health management. It was clear to the Team that the people who had been through the training at the School had a lot of affection and identification with the processes of the School. The use of continuous professional development and lifelong learning in the School was found to be inbuilt

into the culture of working at the School. The Team was also impressed with the recent work on competences and their roles within the education and training of public health workforce and how the School integrates this within the teaching and staff development processes. This was seen as an area of exemplary practice in which the School could promote further to the wider world.

Although the integration of ethics was found throughout the programmes it may benefit from being a more overt topic within one of the existing modules or as a new stand-alone module. The Team also felt there was scope for the development of an internal ethics committee looking across a range of issues from student research to student-faculty relationships, although it recognises that the School is already linked to external and national ethics mechanisms. The Team was aware that the School was already considering this and would encourage such a development.

The Team had noted that although plagiarism avoidance was discussed and had policies associated with it, there was no software purchased by the School for either the faculty or students to check their work. As such the school is pursuing the purchase of software and may wish to consider training in the specific software.

The School is encouraged to continue the inclusion of international exposure through secondment and through staff in teaching. There is a potential to integrate some of the non-French examples from the English taught course into the professional training of the School.

The Team noted that although the School has a long history and reputation of health management education within the School it wasn't necessarily reflected as a major topic on the MPH programme. This was explained as being due in part to the language of the professional offerings as distinct from the MPH. The Team understand that the School has recently invested heavily in its capacity for research into management issues and this could be complemented by similar investments on teaching management.

During meetings it became apparent that there had been recent changes in French law concerning regional health authorities and the Team were aware that these changes brought about new markets for the School's training which is something the Team felt that the School could build upon as an institution.

The Team noted several areas for future attention including, appeal systems, re-examination, double marking and the use of external examiners. During the visit it was not apparent that a formal appeal system existed and the School is encouraged to examine this area. It was also noted that students on the MPH programme are permitted to be re-examined in order to receive an improved mark compared to their first attempt. This could lead to strategic application of effort by students and provide a misleading impression of the students' abilities. It already causes some concern to faculty when students require a report of their position within the class – should the second mark be used even though it demotes the position of other students? A common practice in many countries is to 'cap' the re-examination mark (for example students are only able to receive a maximum percentage, often the bare pass mark, on a re-take). If they are legally able to do so under French law the faculty may wish to consider introducing such a policy. The team also had some concerns about the use of double marking, especially given the apparent absence of an appeal mechanism.. The School may find it helpful to calibrate faculty marking through the use of a second person (double marker), internally or externally, to independently assess a selection of the student work either through random selection or "borderline" fails or distinctions. There is also the question of how the School calibrates their standards of marking with the wider world. Within the MPH programme the extensive use of very experienced external international faculty provides a built in mechanism for ensuring international standards, but the Team felt there was potential for the School to look at a more systematic approach which may include the use of an external examiner.

#### **Criterion IV. Students and Graduates**

The Team found that the alumni identified with the School which was a very positive feature. For present students, the faculty operates an open door policy which is very much appreciated by the students when they have problems. However this was deemed very much an informal activity relying particularly on Programme Directors, and students expressed concerns that they feel they may be adding to the burdens of such faculty who already perceived as carrying a heavy administrative and teaching load. The team recommend that the School investigate the potential to formalise this interaction to ensure faculty are available for students under certain written rules, for example

about the procedures in which face-to-face discussions are led and also procedures about written communication, such as timely emails. Involved in this would be assigning functions of counselling and tutoring more widely throughout the School which would reduce individual workloads of the Programme Directors. The students should then be informed of which faculty would be the right faculty to approach their specific issues to and at what time would they be approachable.

Some students mentioned that they found difficulty in finding a personal mentor. This did not apply to all students and it was also noted that some students who attend programmes of CPD felt they did not require this function because of their age and professional experience. The Team didn't recommend a specific activity in this regard but felt it would be helpful to give students assistance in looking for personal tutors.

Within the MPH programme applications are increasing, and with such growth of the School will need to adapt to this situation in terms of human resources and facilities. Some disparities between class sizes were observed. For students in Paris, the Team were given the impression that in the beginning some students feel somewhat overwhelmed as they need to seek accommodation within a foreign culture while also starting a challenging new course of study. This is made more challenging by the problems caused by School's shortage of facilities in Paris.

The Team were impressed by the systematic surveys conducted by the School to both students and alumni and the feedback given back to alumni was deemed a model for other universities.

### **Criterion V: Human Resources and Staffing**

The School relies heavily on international faculty for the MPH programme. Although this has many benefits it also includes constraints as they are not permanently available in the same way as the core faculty. As the MPH becomes more established the School may wish to think about developing the core national capacity. The Faculty in the wider School are very experienced and knowledgeable but their lack of confidence in using English in the classroom is a constraint. The School is already seeking to improve its

capacity to provide faculty who can teach in English and this development is encouraged.

The Team found the connection between the faculty and the health system was clearly a strength of the School where curricula can remain up-to-date and pertinent. Another strength was seen in the attention to pedagogy through staff development, MOOCS and the development of innovative didactic methods.

### **Criterion VI: Supportive Services, Budgeting and Facilities**

The School is engaged in university networks such as in IT and libraries and as such the Team felt the School could benefit from continuing to expand these networks.

The Team were impressed by the extensive and progressive use of new technologies, for example the video studio and experimental "wheelie chairs" in the pedagogic suite. The School was evidently making efforts to keep up-to-date with its infrastructure, services, facilities. The Team felt that the School could use its innovative approach in these areas more explicitly in its publications and marketing to enhance its profile. Within Paris the dispersal of facilities throughout the city may be worked on by the School through consolidation of facilities over the longer term.

### **Criterion VII: Internal Quality Management**

There is a department specified for dealing with internal quality management systems. All the representatives of the School including administration, students, faculty et cetera had expressed their satisfaction with the systems in place.

Some respondents indicated that they would welcome additional opportunities for faculty get-togethers or retreats to reinforce the esprit de corps and increase motivation of the faculty group. This activity would complement the smaller faculty meetings which take place regularly with a larger cross department meeting.

## Summary of Conclusions

| <b>Criterion I: Governance and Organisation of the Institution</b>                            |                   |
|---|-------------------|
| Sub – Criterion 1.1   | Met               |
| Sub – Criterion 1.2   | Met               |
| Sub – Criterion 1.3   | Met               |
| Sub – Criterion 1.4   | Met               |
| <b>Criterion II: Aims and Objectives of the Public Health Institution and its programmes.</b> |                   |
| Sub – Criterion 2.1   | Met               |
| Sub – Criterion 2.2   | Met               |
| Sub – Criterion 2.3   | Met               |
| Sub – Criterion 2.4   | Met               |
| <b>Criterion III: Programmes</b>  |                   |
| Sub – Criterion 3.1   | Met               |
| Sub – Criterion 3.2   | Met               |
| Sub – Criterion 3.3   | Met               |
| Sub – Criterion 3.4   | Met with comments |
| Sub – Criterion 3.5   | Met               |
| Sub – Criterion 3.6   | Met               |
| Sub – Criterion 3.7   | Met               |
| <b>Criterion IV: Students and Graduates</b>   |                   |
| Sub – Criterion 4.1   | Met               |
| Sub – Criterion 4.2   | Met               |
| Sub – Criterion 4.3   | Met with comments |
| Sub – Criterion 4.4   | Met               |
| Sub – Criterion 4.5   | Met               |
| Sub – Criterion 4.6   | Met               |

| <b>Criterion V: Human Resources and Staffing</b>                   |                   |
|--|-------------------|
| Sub – Criterion 5.1  | Met               |
| Sub – Criterion 5.2  | Met with comments |
| Sub – Criterion 5.3  | Met               |
| Sub – Criterion 5.4  | Met               |
| Sub – Criterion 5.5  | Met               |
| Sub – Criterion 5.6  | Met               |
| Sub – Criterion 5.7  | Met               |
| Sub – Criterion 5.8  | Met               |
| <b>Criterion VI: Supportive Services, Budgeting and Facilities</b> |                   |
| Sub – Criterion 6.1  | Met               |
| Sub – Criterion 6.2  | Met               |
| Sub – Criterion 6.3  | Met with comments |
| Sub – Criterion 6.4  | Met               |
| Sub – Criterion 6.5  | Met               |
| <b>Criterion VII: Internal Quality Management</b>                  |                   |
| Sub – Criterion 7.1  | Met               |
| Sub – Criterion 7.2  | Met               |
| Sub – Criterion 7.3  | Met               |
| Sub – Criterion 7.4  | Met               |