Community at the CORE
Strategic programme 2017–2021*
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*The Strategic Programme will be implemented in the period between 1/1/2017
Mission

Maastricht University (UM) is a young university in the heart of Europe, with a distinct global perspective and a strong focus on innovative education and research strategies. We see ourselves first and foremost as an open and inclusive academic community, striving for a good mix between Dutch, European and other international students, and addressing European and global issues in our education and research programmes.

The purpose of this new Strategic Programme is, 40 years after the foundation of UM, to take stock of our achievements, adapt them where needed, and add new perspectives and challenges in order to enhance our academic mission.

UM’s mission and strategy for the future are built on four core values:
- To be an innovator in education and research by introducing the CORE philosophy at our university;
- To adopt an inclusive approach and to open our doors to all students and staff who fit with our profile and subscribe to our values;
- To take our social responsibility seriously by linking the university to society, from the local to the global level;
- To be a sustainable institution in the broadest sense.

These four core values will be reflected in all our activities.

The aims of UM are as follows:
- To be an exemplary academic community that embraces mutual respect, democratic principles and transparency;
- To provide an inclusive environment in which students and staff feel at home;
- To provide students from the region, the Netherlands, Europe and beyond with a stimulating educational environment based on the principles of Problem-Based Learning (PBL) and the International Classroom;
- To train highly employable and skilled graduates for key positions in diverse professional environments on the Dutch, Euregional and international labour market;
- To provide an open research environment linked to the educational process, characterised by fundamental and applied approaches and embracing specific focus areas as well as interdisciplinarity;
- To have an impact by deploying high-level research and innovation to resolve societal challenges;
- To create ‘triple-helix’ hotspots on the Brightlands campuses that serve as drivers of Euregional and European development.

CORE

Education and research go hand in hand, and must be integrated within the university context. To this end, UM is introducing CORE: Collaborative Open Research Education, which we believe will enable us to better meet the needs of society and build on the values of our university. CORE is a logical extension of the interdisciplinary approach that has been at the heart of UM’s research and educational strategy ever since our institution was founded.

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Finally, collaborative refers to forging links with different stakeholders in the city, the Euregion, the broader European continent and the rest of the world. Creating meaningful relationships between the university and society and encouraging students to become actively involved in their community is not only beneficial for society, but also contributes to a meaningful study experience and enhances employability.

The emphasis on societal engagement as an inherent part of UM’s character additionally serves to enhance the profile and distinctiveness of our institution.
Mission and vision

O stands for Open. Open means being open minded and innovative. In the area of research, examples include the open research environment used on the Brightlands campuses, but this can be extended to other areas of research as well. Open also means being international and inclusive. With internationalisation forming the common thread that runs through all of UM’s education and research activities, we perceive our institution as a globally linked European university. Furthermore, open means transparency towards the outside world and the broad dissemination of research. UM embraces the concepts of open access and open science to further strengthen the connections with our environment regionally, nationally and internationally. A truly open innovation environment means making the university’s infrastructure and research facilities available for use by all staff members and students. The open approach allows industry, interest groups and individual members of society to adapt UM’s research outcomes to any challenges they may face. Moreover, whilst researchers in top institutions have subscription access to these highly regarded journals, researchers at institutions with smaller budgets (for instance, in developing countries) might not. Therefore, open access also contributes to our international societal engagement. Open access publications can be used in education without any restrictions. Lastly, UM should strive to be not only interdisciplinary but also transdisciplinary in its combination of education, research and societal engagement.

RE stands for Research Education. We explicitly use one and not two separate terms to stress the importance of integrating research and education. It is vital that students be exposed to and involved in research from the very start of their study programmes, not just in the final phase. Participating in international research projects in particular is an ideal means of engaging in integrated learning, synthesising acquired knowledge and skills, and laying the groundwork for future learning in international contexts. Research projects are also excellent tools by which to address values such as innovativeness, sustainability, and personal and social responsibility. In staff development, too, they play an important role: experienced researchers serve as inspiring mentors, not only for students but also for young academics just starting out on their research careers. For their part, educators can stimulate the learning process by drawing students’ attention to pertinent research issues and challenges of the 21st century. In short, integrating research and education is the best way to exploit the passion that is already present: the passion of researchers and educators for what they are good at, and the passion of students to have new experiences and address important issues as part of the learning process.

The development and implementation of CORE will proceed gradually over the period of this Strategic Programme, starting with pilot studies on the Tapijn site and in Randwyck. Throughout the process, exchange of best practices across faculties will be encouraged and facilitated.

Maastricht University
is a globally linked European university

ACTIONS: CORE

☐ Flesh out the CORE concept and address its implications for our HR policy;
☐ Create at least two dedicated centres to facilitate the implementation of CORE as a new way of learning, teaching, conducting research and collaborating.
Economic, geopolitical and societal forces have a significant impact on academic institutions. Over the last decades UM has evolved into a third-generation university, garnering an international reputation and linking research and education to the creation of value – both for society and for the knowledge economy. UM is a university that relies on strong academic and professional networks. These networks run through all of our activities at every level: internal, local and global. With our multi- and transdisciplinary research and the creation of interfaculty structures, the university has entered new research fields that are closely linked to its educational expertise, EDLAB being a prime example. Our campuses are excellent examples of local network communities, where academia meets industry and the local community. UM’s character as an international network university has helped it remain open to innovation and made it an attractive partner in the global university landscape.

At the core of all this, our university is a tight-knit academic community and a high-trust system with a level playing field for staff, students and external partners alike. At a time when other universities are facing the prospect of becoming more management oriented and centralised, UM will remain a decentralised organisation with a common CORE, where research, education and value creation are intrinsically intertwined. Our organisational policy is characterised by close links between all levels and a strong collaborative spirit. The Executive Board, faculties, service centres and participatory bodies respect democratic principles and the need to address challenges together, while at the same time respecting the different roles involved in this process. We will strive to maintain the balance between the activities of individual faculties and joint initiatives at the central level by further building and strengthening our internal networks. We also seek to involve external stakeholders in this process, such as government and industry representatives, alumni and local citizens – in other words, encompassing all of society on a wider scale.

The present Strategic Programme is a reflection of this working atmosphere, and was arrived at by means of a genuinely bottom-up process. After initial discussions between the Executive Board, the Supervisory Board and the University Council, a broad process was initiated to engage think tanks composed of staff and students in formulating the cornerstones of the strategy: education, research, internationalisation and societal engagement. All members of the academic community were given the chance to provide input for this process, both through the think tanks and by way of two ‘town hall’ style meetings. This open, democratic process led to the development of a truly community-driven strategy – a programme designed by the university, for the university.

This community spirit will be the hallmark of our institution, both in the implementation of the Strategic Programme and in addressing the challenges of the future. And also, perhaps, by demonstrating what a healthy 21st century university should look like.

“UM’s character as an international network university has helped it remain open to innovation and made it an attractive partner in the global university landscape.”
3 Education

Today’s students are seeking an education that is stimulating and that helps them to develop personally as well as academically. An education that, above all, prepares them for an ever-changing future: an increasingly diverse student population in partnership with an ever more complex society, changing labour markets, new forms of learning and new market players. UM is a pioneer of PBL and renowned for its strong tradition in the innovation of education. To remain competitive, we must make strategic choices regarding our regional and global positioning and the type of education we wish to provide.

Enriched student experience

UM is focused first and foremost on students who share our philosophy and are attracted by our academic CORE as well as our vision – wherever they come from. We are also aware of our social pedagogical responsibility: the education we provide should not only be limited to the top-performing students but available to a student population which reflects a diverse student population in partnership with an ever more complex society, changing labour markets, new forms of learning and new market players. UM is a pioneer of PBL and renowned for its strong tradition in the innovation of education. To remain competitive, we must make strategic choices regarding our regional and global positioning and the type of education we wish to provide.

Academic and personal development

At UM, the main purpose of education is to facilitate the integrated academic and professional development of the student. Learning, therefore, revolves not around courses but around students’ academic and personal development. Students must develop a sense of responsibility and ownership of their education and a feeling of control in their studies. This requires creating personalised pathways through programmes and courses, and producing educational modules that recognise that different students might end up in different places, allowing them to follow ideas and arguments wherever they may lead.

UM graduates are prepared to become engaged, lifelong learners who can solve complex problems, think critically, be responsible citizens who have ethically and thrive in international settings. They are able to adapt in the face of change and cope with uncertainties. They can absorb new subject matter, adapt to new situations, and take on new challenges, and asks them to diagnose the problem, identify gaps in their knowledge, fill those gaps, and use the newly acquired knowledge to resolve the issue at hand. The aim is not only to cement the knowledge in their minds, but also to train them in self-regulated learning.

Lifelong learning

Learning doesn’t stop once students have completed their studies. Lifelong learning is an integral concept in higher education as well as an essential 21st century skill. To address the need for continuous learning and professional development, UM will further develop its portfolio of lifelong learning opportunities for alumni and professionals.

Problem-Based Learning

UM was founded and has built its reputation based on the concept of Problem-Based Learning. PBL is an active form of education that calls on students to take the lead in the educational process, requiring them to chair tutorials, interact with their peers and engage in student-to-student teaching. It requires them to define their own problem statements and goals, and gives them autonomy in how they approach them. By activating prior knowledge, it invites them to draw links with other courses and their own background, as well as with social developments. At its best, PBL confronts students with unfamiliar challenges, and asks them to diagnose the problem, identify gaps in their knowledge, fill those gaps, and use the newly acquired knowledge to resolve the issue at hand. The aim is not only to cement that new knowledge in their minds, but also to train them in self-regulated learning.

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Optimally prepared for the labour market in the Netherlands and beyond. They have ample opportunities to develop their talents, for instance through our excellence programmes and a rich package of extracurricular activities. We also encourage students to become active members of the university community, the city and the Euregion, offering them many different ways of getting involved. We see this as a means of stimulating their development as responsible global citizens who not only have ethically and thrive in international settings. They are able to adapt in the face of change and cope with uncertainties. They can absorb new subject matter, adapt to new situations, and take on new challenges, and asks them to define their own problem statements and goals, and gives them autonomy in how they approach them. By activating prior knowledge, it invites them to draw links with other courses and their own background, as well as with social developments. At its best, PBL confronts students with unfamiliar challenges, and asks them to diagnose the problem, identify gaps in their knowledge, fill those gaps, and use the newly acquired knowledge to resolve the issue at hand. The aim is not only to cement that new knowledge in their minds, but also to train them in self-regulated learning.

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CORE education

We believe that the CORE principles will help UM students to adopt a globally minded attitude, acquire the skills needed for a lifetime of learning, and engage with the academic environment and the world around them by infusing them with a sense of engagement as a logical extension of PBL. To create the ideal educational landscape, we need to enhance and expand our approach to teaching and learning, for instance by introducing long-term projects in which students work together in diverse groups in addition to their core courses. Ideally, these projects will be connected to industry or society and pose problems which require innovative and sustainable solutions, foster a sense of responsibility among students and integrate research and education in a natural manner. To nurture this integrated research and education environment, we will explore the development of an ‘academic playground’ in line with the CORE principles, for instance by creating multidisciplinary open learning spaces in which researchers and students can collaborate in a dynamic, inspiring and inclusive atmosphere.

Placing initiatives such as the long-term projects and open, collaborative learning labs in a broader context should facilitate the development of a learning ecosystem: a system that connects disciplines UM wide, allows the co-creation of knowledge across disciplines, and furthers the university’s aim of becoming a more collaborative and inclusive academic community. Reaching out to industry partners and other external parties, too, will be vital in connecting the university to the outside world.

Role of the teacher

Teachers play an essential role in education. They need to be inspiring mentors to students and have advanced knowledge of the subject matter at hand. To address the implications of this new Strategic Programme, such as the implementation of CORE and the facilitation of teaching careers. The Basic University Teaching Qualification (BKO in Dutch) will be updated and harmonised and the Senior University Teaching Qualification (SKO in Dutch) will be developed.

Quality assurance

In the coming years, attention will be paid to UM’s internal quality assurance system to smooth the path towards institutional reaccreditation. Further, we will measure the impact of innovations in our study programmes by making use of learning analytics. Detailed information will be collected on learning processes, such as learning styles and grades, in order to identify new ways of learning that are fit for new generations of students.

ACTIONS: EDUCATION

- Develop arrangements for students in need of additional guidance and support;
- Enrich the learning experience by offering more personalised learning paths and opportunities for student engagement (Strengthen our lifelong learning portfolio);
- Create open learning spaces where researchers and students can come together to collaborate (CORE);
- Continue to refine and improve Problem-Based Learning;
- Harmonise and update the teaching qualifications BKO and SKO;
- Reinforce and expand the internal quality assurance system.
Research at UM contributes to solving major societal issues within the framework of our primary research themes. While fundamental research remains essential, we also seek to translate UM research findings into economic, financial or social value. The university therefore participates in centres of excellence, both technological and social, to allow scientific discoveries to be swiftly converted into practical applications. Furthermore, research at UM is closely linked to the education process. As an inclusive research university, UM is home to researchers who come together from diverse scientific fields and different cultures to create an inspiring environment where students are trained as academically minded professionals and responsible citizens.

Our focus areas are organised into three university-wide themes – Europe and a Globalising World, Learning and Innovation, and Quality of Life – in which researchers conduct curiosity-driven and applied research across the six UM faculties and various interdisciplinary institutes. To fulﬁl our ambition to be an inclusive, innovative and sustainable university, we intend to strengthen these focus areas while providing sufﬁcient scope for fundamental research. We also aim to maintain the high number of PhD defences achieved over the last few years.

In terms of research funding, we will build further on the goals of the previous Strategic Programme. To become less reliant on direct government funding, a substantial part of academic research time should be ﬁnanced by external grants. We aim to increase the number of Dutch and European research grants acquired, for instance by paying special attention to research projects with links to the Dutch Science agenda. We also seek to tap other sources of research funding at the regional and cross-border level. Alongside a strong focus on investigator-driven, fundamental research, which must be at the core of any university, we will foster more applied research themes, for example in relation to the region-specific hotspots within the Dutch top-sector framework. To provide the best possible support for UM researchers, we will also explore how we can create an infrastructure to enhance funding success, for example through the establishment of a grant writing office.

UM stimulates different forms of research, from curiosity-driven fundamental research to interdisciplinary projects and research carried out on 'triple-helix' campuses where academia interacts with business and society. For UM, interdisciplinary research proceeds from strong disciplinary foundations and is not promoted as an end in itself, but rather as a way to address current and future scientific and societal challenges. An example of the successful clustering of research domains can be seen in the Maastricht Institute for Advanced Studies, where researchers from various faculties work under the umbrella of the focus area Learning and Innovation. Similarly, research in the sciences is highly important for the UM and will continue to remain crucial for UM’s development in the future. In this way, UM encourages scholars and scientists from different disciplines to work together to spearhead euregional knowledge initiatives that involve partners from other knowledge institutions, government agencies and the business sector. On the Brightlands campuses, each of which is committed to addressing specific societal challenges, UM has invested in collaborations with commercial and public partners. At the same time, these satellite campuses are to be integrated into our academic community through strong connections between researchers based on the campuses and those in the humanities and social sciences in the inner city. The study programmes, too, must proﬁt from the multidisciplinary proﬁle that characterises the Brightlands campuses. This will help to strengthen our common goals, ultimately beneﬁting all UM students, staff and the entire Limburg community.

Benefits for society

UM sees value creation as the process that generates beneﬁts from knowledge and innovation by making research ﬁndings available for use in and by society. This involves the transfer of technology and other knowledge leading to new economic activities, products and services for the public and stakeholders beyond the conﬁnes of academia. It means cooperating with triple-helix partners – for instance, in the open, innovative ecosystems of the Brightlands campuses – as well as sharing research results under open-access arrangements and facilitating young entrepreneurs in their startups. Ultimately, it is all about creating value for society at large.

The concept of value creation starts at the student level: legal advice services provided by law students, tax advice from economics students or health advice from students of the Faculty of Health, Medicine and Life Sciences. All these are good examples of how UM can increase its societal impact locally, and such efforts should be expanded through the establishment of ‘knowledge shops’. This philosophy carries right through to PhD level, with our policy requiring all PhD theses to have a paragraph dedicated to valorisation.

Meeting places

The experience from UM interfaculty projects and institutes shows that collaboration between the Randwyck faculties (FHML and FPN) and those in the inner city (RAI, HSS, FL and SBE) holds great potential. The creation of community crystallisation points which are (following the principles of CORE) open to all staff and students should give a further boost to interdisciplinary research and interfaculty collaboration in education and research. ESKLAB can serve as a proto-type of such an inclusive facility. Further, internal networking events will be organised to exchange knowledge and best practices, and to increase the opportunities for young researchers in particular to develop collaborative projects. In this context, the Tapijn site in Maastricht’s inner city will be further developed in the coming years as a meeting place for such activities.

PhD’s were obtained at UM in 2015

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To achieve our ambitions, we need outstanding academics.

**Talent recruitment and talent development**

To achieve our ambitions, we need outstanding academics. We will therefore invest more in developing in-house talent by guiding promising young researchers towards tenure tracks and facilitating their academic careers. Special attention will be paid to involving these researchers in interdisciplinary collaborations, so as to broaden their academic horizons and increase their chances for future funding.

At the same time, we intend to attract talented researchers from outside UM. They will be recruited with a view to strengthening our profile in terms of the three university-wide themes, Europe and a Globalising World, Learning in Innovation and Quality of Life.

**Agenda setting and public affairs strategy**

With its research themes, UM has successfully focused its efforts to address societal challenges at the regional, national and international levels. Further, through its proactive strategy for public affairs and lobbying, UM aims to become an active player in shaping the Dutch and European Science Agenda. To increase their earning power, the faculties will be asked to develop strategic plans for research that dovetail with the overarching UM strategy. The Knowledge Transfer Office (KTO) will be facilitated in further developing in-house grant-writing expertise. In addition, the Brightlands Academy will be established: an expertise centre on public–private partnerships (PPP) that will provide support for current and future interdisciplinary research programmes and collaborations.

**Research facilities**

In recent years, research activities in or related to the area of data science have been on the rise at UM. Databases have become both larger and richer. To extend our expertise in this field, we will invest in creating a research/data infrastructure and establish new chairs to exploit these developments.

**ACTIONS: RESEARCH**

- Maintain high output of PhD theses;
- Increase external funding on the regional, national and European level;
- Create meeting places for researchers based on the principles of CORE;
- Stimulate interdisciplinary and triple-helix research initiatives;
- Develop a strategy to influence and participate in Dutch and European research agendas (public affairs);
- Establish the Brightlands Academy to cluster expertise on PPPs;
- Explore opportunities to forge links between the UM community and wider society (knowledge shops);
- Maintain a healthy balance between fundamental and theme-driven research;
- Nurture and retain young researchers, and recruit outstanding academic staff from outside UM.
UM is a globally linked European university. Within the Netherlands its international profile stands out, as underlined by the Distinctive Quality Feature for Internationalisation awarded by the Accreditation Organisation of the Netherlands and Flanders (NVAO) in 2013. The core elements of UM’s internationalisation strategy are our ‘International Classroom’ and the explicit focus on European and global perspectives in our education and research programmes. Another important emphasis is on building bridges between the southeastern Netherlands and the border areas of Germany and Belgium within the context of the Euregion. A considerable proportion of our students and staff come from this region and, thanks to this cooperation, our graduates are also able to benefit from a multitude of excellent employment opportunities.

Student recruitment

International students, particularly those who are mobile on a global scale, are often less interested in Europe as a microcosm than in the place of Europe and the European Union in a global context. UM programmes with a distinct European profile, such as European Studies and European Law, and those with an explicitly global focus, such as Global Health and International Business, attract international students and staff who see them as providing a unique combination of European and perspectives. This should be reflected in our student recruitment policy and marketing strategy. We strive to create a diverse student population with a well-balanced intake from the region, the Netherlands, the Euregion, Europe and beyond in order to optimise the learning experience in the International Classroom. In the context of recruiting international students from outside Europe, innovative options such as virtual open days merit further investigation.

Mobility

The mobility of our students and staff is a key focus area, in particular in collaboration with our international partner universities and networks. In our HR policy, we strive to provide academic as well as support staff with ample possibilities for shorter or longer visits to international partner universities. In many of our programmes, too, students are encouraged or even obliged to study abroad for a semester. But there are also other ways to gain international experience, and we plan to further explore, develop and promote these options, such as taking part in research-based learning at a partner university (e.g. MaRBLe in the Worldwide Universities Network), following an internship abroad or attending a summer school or other short-term programmes offered by partner institutions all over the world. In the coming years more attention will also be paid to the concept of ‘virtual mobility’.

UM as a network university

We will continue to intensify our joint collaborations with our partners in various networks. We have already established a sustainable, long-term partnership with the Province of Limburg in the context of the Brightlands campuses. On a European level, we will explore the possibilities to create a cross-border university network by further enhancing and formalising collaboration with partner universities in our immediate environment, in the Euregion and beyond (e.g. Aachen, Hasselt, Luxembourg, Brussels, Leuven and Liège). We will also continue to participate in two leading European and international university networks: the Young European Research Universities Network (YERUN) and the Worldwide Universities Network (WUN), respectively. Through these networks and collaborations in the Euregion and around the world, we are developing into a uniquely positioned European institute.

Brussels Campus

The Brussels Campus will function as an education and research hub, an ‘Embassy to Europe’ and a platform for our research theme Europe and a Globalising World. It will therefore need to offer a range of different programmes, including short courses for professionals and non-UM students. Once the present legal restrictions have been removed and it becomes possible to offer full degrees abroad, we will also explore the options for developing and delivering fully accredited study programmes in Brussels. In addition, we aim to leverage our European expertise more, for example by connecting with EU policymakers. The Brussels Campus will form an excellent platform to translate our public affairs strategy into concrete action in the European context.

International Classroom

One of the key factors in the employability of our students is the International Classroom, which trains them in essential competencies for the globalised workplace. This does not come about by itself, however, but needs to be facilitated. To this end, we will provide further professional training in the area of intercultural competencies for both students and staff. Additionally, research on the effectiveness of our internationalisation policy has already been conducted in some parts of the university and will be further expanded.

International community

We believe it is of the utmost importance to create a welcoming atmosphere for and to facilitate the rapid integration of the international members of our community, both students and staff.
Internationalisation

We strive to achieve this by way of language courses and buddy programmes, in close collaboration with the local and regional municipalities and other parties. Another key element in this approach is the further professionalisation of the support services we provide to international students and staff. In particular, support staff who are in close contact with international students should possess the necessary intercultural competencies and English language skills. To ensure that this is the case, we will continue to offer relevant courses and training to these staff.

Regional developments linked to the world

Regional developments such as the Brightlands campuses open up strategic possibilities for further internationalisation in research and education. New study programmes will attract more international students, especially with the further expansion of science-related programmes, enabling UM to tap new student markets. Moreover, new projects and programmes will attract academic staff and highly skilled knowledge workers from abroad. Centres such as the Institute for Transnational and Euregional cooperation and Mobility (ITEM), focusing on cross-border issues, serve as interesting ‘living labs’, helping to create an innovative knowledge region with international appeal right on our doorstep.

Further, UM will remain an active international player in capacity building and development aid projects in the area of education, thereby making a meaningful contribution to societal developments on a global scale.

We will develop and offer training in intercultural competences

ACTIONS: INTERNATIONALISATION

- Further develop our joint collaborations with partners in international networks such as WUN and YERUN and cross-border networks in the Euregion by:
  - Establishing joint research and education projects, including joint/dual degrees;
  - Offering joint PhDs and electronic supervision for long-distance PhD candidates;
  - Building critical mass around societal challenges and innovative research topics;
  - Promoting the exchange of best practices between institutions;
  - Acquire European research funding for joint projects;
  - Create more opportunities for international student and staff mobility, including virtual mobility;
  - Conduct further research on internationalisation and create an internal measurement system;
- Develop and offer training in intercultural competencies for both students and staff;
- Optimise our international student recruitment policy;
- Further professionalise services for (international) students and support staff;
- Strengthen ties between regional developments and internationalisation;
- Increase societal engagement on a global level (e.g. through capacity building and knowledge dissemination).
UM aims to contribute to a healthy and economically strong region, focusing on our immediate surroundings in the city of Maastricht and Limburg, but also in the Euregion and beyond. Our goal is to link societal engagement directly with research and education. If UM wants to take seriously its ambition to be a socially engaged university, societal engagement must be embedded and facilitated at all levels of the institution.

Social engagement

Our students and staff play a crucial part when it comes to fulfilling our societal aspirations. Under the umbrella of the Student Services Centre, an integrated, student-run platform will be established that brings together the many individual initiatives in the area of societal engagement. Students will be able to connect with and integrate into neighbourhoods to help address problems, provide financial, legal and health advice, and support budding entrepreneurs.

Wherever possible, societal engagement will become part of the curriculum or be promoted in the context of extracurricular activities. If integrated within a curriculum, specific goals for societal engagement should be set (e.g. via an exam, paper or some other deliverable) and acknowledged by means of ECTS or certificates. We plan to build on successful projects such as PREMIUM and the UCM Think Tank, which already have a strong emphasis on societal engagement in that students work on real-life problems set by external clients. More students will be given the opportunity to participate in multidisciplinary projects on societal issues (governance, democracy, healthcare) in collaboration with researchers, citizens, companies and government agencies. Social engagement will also be stimulated by offering students short research-based internships in which they can use their knowledge in practical settings.

Brightlands: knowledge crossing borders

Brightlands is the continuation of the Knowledge Axis investment programme initiated in 2012, a ‘triple-helix’ collaboration between the Province of Limburg, knowledge institutions (UM, AZM/ MUMC+, Zuyd and Fontys universities of applied sciences) and industrial partners. This programme is intended to serve as a backbone for the further development of the Limburg knowledge economy by focusing on core themes that link the region’s economic strengths with university research teams and education programmes. The initiative forms the basis for a Euregion with a vital, healthy, mobile and well-educated population with sufficient highly skilled workers. We will continue to work to this end, together with our partners from the public and private sector in and across the Euregion, on the development of the Brightlands ecosystem. In this way our research institutes will contribute to societal developments and solutions to future challenges, such as the growing demand for safe and healthy food, affordable care, materials with new properties, cybersecurity and so on. At a regional level, our research will help to address societal needs and welfare issues. The Brightlands campuses will also provide space for new research and education initiatives (e.g. in the natural sciences), and create employment opportunities in the region for both Dutch and international graduates. Moreover, we will explore different ways to further connect and interact with the local municipalities and communities in our Campus locations. Looking beyond the borders of Limburg and the Euregion, the campuses offer many opportunities for European and international cooperation in research and education. Collaborating with European partners and acquiring joint European funding will also further increase our earning power.

Maastricht University Medical Centre +

The Maastricht UMC+ is one of eight university medical centres in the Netherlands and the only one in the south of the country. It operates on the basis of a cooperative model involving close collaboration between two legal entities, UM and the Maastricht academic hospital (AZM). This model will remain in place for the foreseeable future as it offers a good fit with the local academic landscape and traditions. The Board of Directors of the Maastricht UMC+ is composed of the board of UM’s Faculty of Health, Medicine and Life Sciences and the executive board of the AZM, which meet periodically and take joint decisions. The strategic course of the institution is also jointly determined in regular meetings between UM’s executive board and the Maastricht UMC+ board. This cooperative approach between UM and the Maastricht UMC+ has led to a large number of shared initiatives, such as the appointment of university professors and the development and implementation of the Brightlands agenda. The two institutes will continue to collaborate closely on joint areas of interest, including the development of data sciences and ICT services, and as major partners on the Maastricht Health Campus.

ACTIONS: CONNECTED WITH OUR COMMUNITIES

- Continue to make a key contribution on the Brightlands campuses;
- Develop a student-run platform that brings together existing initiatives in the area of societal engagement and that creates more opportunities for students to engage with the local community;
- Embed societal engagement more explicitly in our curricula, including by means of social work placements;
- Continue to collaborate closely with the Maastricht UMC+ on joint areas of interest.
Our goal is to link societal engagement directly with research and education.
UM has more than 58,000 alumni, who are our ambassadors and the backbone of our global network of professionals. Being a Maastricht alum should start on the first day of a student’s studies. Those who feel part of our community are more likely to feel a lifelong connection to the university and the city of Maastricht, starting at the programme and faculty levels. After graduation, alumni and the university should together continue to foster a mutual, meaningful relationship. An important element of our alumni policy is improving our alumni database with information about all our alumni (from bachelor’s to PhD graduates). Alumni are already involved in university endeavours, but we believe these relationships can be further deepened. Many alumni express an enthusiasm to ‘do something’ for the university, with different levels of engagement: from attending alumni events to providing financial support. We aim to increase our insight into these different levels of engagement.

Alumni Circles and Star Lectures
Currently there are 32 UM Alumni Circles all over the world, which organise a range of academic, social and networking activities. As an example, in 2015 the ‘Star Lectures’ were introduced: a successful series of events that keep our alumni connected with their alma mater. In the coming years, we will further invest in these Alumni Circles and events as concrete ways of maintaining the relationship between alumni and university.

Lifelong learners and professional education
We assist our alumni in becoming lifelong learners and remaining active members of the academic community in a range of different ways. They can, for instance, contribute to career events, give guest lectures, sit on faculty advisory boards and join our professional education programmes.

Mentor system
To connect our students to the labour market and enhance their employability, we intend to develop a mentor system in which alumni act as coaches for current students (at bachelor’s, master’s and PhD level), providing advice in the areas of career and life planning. This also forms part of UM’s new employability strategy.

Involvement in societal projects
We are seeking ways to involve alumni who are still living in the region in activities with a societal impact. These include the refugee projects set up by UM in the wake of the migrant crisis (which offer, for instance, Dutch language courses through the UM Language Centre) and the sustainability activities organised by our Green Office. LaunchBase programmes can also play a vital role in connecting alumni to the university and stimulating economic development in the city and region.

ACTIONS: ALUMNI
- Continue and expand our alumni activities and events;
- Implement a system to measure and keep track of alumni’s levels of engagement;
- Develop and improve our alumni database;
- Develop an alumni mentoring system for current bachelor’s, master’s and PhD students.
To support its students’ transition to the labour market, UM will develop an embedded employability strategy. Although the employment rate of UM graduates is already high, as demonstrated by the annual ROA Graduate Survey, we aim to take further steps in the area of employability over the coming four years. In this context, a project group will be installed to work towards the establishment of a Centre for Employability.

Workshops and career counselling
UM Career Services provides a range of workshops that will be further optimised and tailored to the needs of faculties and students on the basis of evaluations (perception and effectiveness studies), research findings and developments within the faculties and externally. Services also include professional career counselling, with counsellors assisting students with specific questions as they seek to enter the labour market (e.g. CV and/or motivation letter consultations). Additionally, the counsellors provide advice on competence development in all study phases (bachelor’s, master’s and PhD level).

In addition to the workshops offered by our Career Services, UM has already started to develop language and culture minors to further enhance students’ opportunities on the regional and global labour market.

Internships and placements
It is essential that students gain relevant, practical work experience before they enter the labour market. As an academic institute, UM must maintain the balance between helping students acquire this practical work experience while preserving its academic profile. Therefore, an important task for the new centre will be to build a coherent and transparent network of internship and placement providers. Our international alumni will be indispensable in this regard, in addition to being connected to students via the buddy system.

Tools, systems and information structure
The process of enhancing employability will be increasingly supported by planning tools, in which students will document the links between their education, work and extracurricular activities. One such tool is a database containing all internships and placements.

Research
A professional Centre for Employability needs to be supported by sound evaluation, research and communication of research outcomes. A research programme to support the implementation of an embedded employability strategy will therefore be developed in close cooperation with the Research Centre for Education and the Labour Market (ROA).

Towards a Centre for Employability
The quality of our educational programmes is the main performance indicator of our students’ employability. Our success in this area will be affected by the way in which we support, facilitate and inform students about the links between the study programmes and the labour market. The project group will initiate a variety of activities aiming to facilitate students in their academic and personal development and to raise awareness of issues surrounding employability. Expertise will be developed in four main areas, which are outlined in the sections below.

ACTIONS: EMPLOYABILITY
- Create a Centre for Employability, focusing on four main areas:
  - Workshops and Career counselling;
  - Internships and placements;
  - Supporting tools, systems and information structure;
  - Research on the effectiveness of our employability strategy (in collaboration with ROA).
UM strives to remain an attractive employer. We are convinced that we can achieve this by challenging and encouraging staff and students to get the best out of themselves, by deploying staff in those areas in which they perform best and feel most at home, and by hiring and retaining staff who fit with UM’s profile and ambitions.

Create (y)our future

Our HRM policy ‘Mobilising minds’ was recently updated with the policy paper ‘Create (y)our future’, which lays the foundation for the development of a forward-looking HRM policy for the coming years. This policy will rest on three pillars: health, work–life balance and career and personal development. Surveys show that our staff have experienced an increased workload in recent years. By taking the results into account, we will look for ways to reduce this to an acceptable standard. Every UM employee should have a clear career perspective, including ample opportunities for personal development based on their personal and professional needs. This entails, besides the development of skills and competencies, a healthy lifestyle and a sound work–life balance. Employees are expected to take charge of their own development, while UM plays a facilitating role.

Diversity

For a thriving working environment, diversity of staff (in terms of nationality, age and gender) is essential. Increasing diversity is therefore one of UM’s primary goals for the coming period. One particular point of attention lies in stimulating the career development of young academics by rolling out special provisions such as career advice classes and a mentoring programme. In this context, special emphasis will be placed on the appointment of women to leadership positions, for example by increasing the proportion of female professors. By 2025, at least 25% of UM professorial staff should be female.

UM is already a highly international institution, with 40% of the university’s academic staff coming from abroad. Nevertheless, we will continue working to attract outstanding international (scientific) staff members, both on a permanent basis and with temporary appointments (e.g. guest researchers). We expect the redesigned tenure track system and increasing attention for personal development of scientific staff will have a positive influence on the recruitment and retention of young, scientific talent from all over the world. This not only provides a boon to Maastricht, but also increases our visibility in the international academic landscape. To drive home the importance of diversity for our future HRM policy, a member of the Executive Board will take on the role of chief diversity officer.

Research and education

Academic staff are expected to be engaged in both research and teaching. In the coming years, they will be challenged and encouraged to participate in the ‘academic playgrounds’ or open learning spaces that we intend to develop as part of our CORE initiative. To facilitate career development and nurture top talent, a university-wide tenure-track system will be developed, based on existing best practices. Attention will be paid to support staff, too, with mobility stimulated both internally (e.g. through job-shadowing activities in other departments) and externally (e.g. by spending time at a partner institution abroad). Furthermore, uniform principles to harmonise the Basic and Senior University Teaching Qualifications (BKO and SKO) will be developed, including the option for academic staff to pursue teaching careers.

ACTIONS: STAFF DEVELOPMENT

- Develop a modern HRM policy, including the following goals:
  - Increase staff diversity (gender, age, international composition);
  - Develop strategies for improved recruitment and retention of staff;
  - Stimulate the participation of academic staff in interdisciplinary, UM-wide projects such as CORE;
  - Implement strategies to reach the goal of 25% female professors by 2025;
  - Enhance the internal and external mobility of support staff;
  - Establish diversity as a key portfolio of the Executive Board.
10 Operations

Our operations portfolio is guided by the principles of transparency, reachability, sustainability and accessibility. Operations at UM must be designed so as to serve our primary process (education and research) and to support staff and students alike. We aim to keep bureaucracy to a minimum. In the coming years, the increasing digitalisation of our environment and our institution will have an impact on our investments in areas such as IT. Additional investments in IT and services are foreseen using the financial resources gained by halting the growth in overhead; to this end, an investment strategy will be developed with a view to providing further support for our primary process.

Housing

UM strives to develop and maintain attractive, sustainable and financially balanced facilities to support the primary process. Our educational facilities will continue to be student-centred and flexible. These, as well as our conference and meeting spaces, are multifunctional and will provide adequate space for interacting with the community, for example on the Tapijn site. Facilities include tutorial and education rooms, learning spaces, libraries, cafeterias and catering services. On the Brightlands campuses, too, educational activities will be supported by open-libraries, cafeterias and catering services. On the Brightlands Facilities include tutorial and education rooms, learning spaces, are multifunctional and will provide adequate space for and flexible. These, as well as our conference and meeting

Our educational facilities will continue to be student-centred financially balanced facilities to support the primary process. UM strives to develop and maintain attractive, sustainable and IT

Over the last two years, efforts in the field of IT have mainly focused on the development of the new website, the student portal and the research system PURE. As a network university, we will seek possibilities to work together with our partners in the context of IT. Guiding principles are to reduce the complexity of the present IT infrastructure, identify those parts of the IT infrastructure that need to be specific to UM and those that can be shared with partners, and establish an IT governance model that addresses the particular needs of our organisation.

Sustainability

Sustainability will be one of UM’s focus points in the next four years, and in the realisation of our sustainability policy, operations play an important role. The only way to become a truly sustainable university is by taking action together. To reach our sustainability goals, it is of the utmost importance that all members of our academic community embrace sustainability as one of our core values, and thus wholeheartedly participate and share in the responsibility for increasing sustainability in all UM portfolios. In the past years, we have taken steps in this direction by, for instance, offering a broad selection of organic food for staff and students. Nevertheless, more effort is needed, not only to reduce our ecological footprint, but also to achieve a higher sustainability score with respect to other Dutch and European universities.

We will continue to foster student engagement as a means of helping us reach our sustainability goals. In this regard the UM Green Office (UMGO), founded in 2010, will, among others, make a substantial contribution. Run by students and supported by staff, UMGO ultimately aims to turn UM into a sustainable university. By initiating and coordinating sustainability projects and acting to inspire, link, advise and monitor, it plays a prominent role in the realization of our sustainability policy, operations play an important role. The only way to become a truly sustainable university is by taking action together. To reach our sustainability goals, it is of the utmost importance that all members of our academic community embrace sustainability as one of our core values, and thus wholeheartedly participate and share in the responsibility for increasing sustainability in all UM portfolios. In the past years, we have taken steps in this direction by, for instance, offering a broad selection of organic food for staff and students. Nevertheless, more effort is needed, not only to reduce our ecological footprint, but also to achieve a higher sustainability score with respect to other Dutch and European universities.

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Bachelor’s programmes

Arts & Culture
- Cultuurwetenschappen / Arts and Culture (BA) 3

Behavioural Sciences
- Psychologie / Psychology (BSc) 3

Business & Economics
- Econometrics and Operations Research (BSc) 1
- Economics and Business Economics (BSc) 1
- Fiscale Economie / Fiscal Economics (BSc) 2
- International Business (BSc) 1

Governance and Political Sciences
- European Studies (BA) 1

Health & Life Sciences
- Biomedical Sciences (BSc) 1
- European Public Health (BSc) 1
- Geneeskunde / Medicine (BSc) 1
- Gezondheidswetenschappen (Health Sciences) (BSc) 2

Law
- European Law School (LLB) 1
- Fiscaal Recht (Tax Law) (LLB) 4
- Rechtsgeneeskunde (Dutch Law) (LLB) 4

Liberal Arts & Sciences
- Maastricht Science Programme (BSc) 1
- University College Maastricht (BA/BSc) 1
- University College Venlo (BA/BSc) 1

Sciences
- Knowledge Engineering (BSc)* 4

Master’s programmes

Arts & Culture
- Arts and Heritage: Policy, Management and Education / Kunst, cultuur en erfgoed (MA) 3
- Art, Literature and Society / Kunst, literatuur en samenleving (MA) 3
- Cultures of Arts, Science and Technology (research master) (MSc) 1

Behavioural Sciences
- Forensic Psychology (MSc) 1
- Human Decision Science (MSc) 1
- Psychology, 6 specialisations (MSc) 3

Business & Economics
(The School of Business & Economics is Triple Crown accredited: AACSB, EQUIS and AMBA)
- Business Research (research master) (MSc) 7
- Econometrics and Operations Research, 4 specialisations (MSc) 1
- Economic and Financial Research (research master) (MSc) 1
- Economics, 6 specialisations (MSc) 3
- Financial Economics, 3 specialisations (MSc) 1
- Fiscale Economie / Fiscal Economics (MSc) 1
- Global Supply Chain Management and Change (MSc) 1
- Human Decision Science (MSc) 1
- Information and Network Economics (MSc) 1
- International Business, 12 specialisations (MSc) 1
- Economic Studies, 6 specialisations (MSc) 1
- Management of Learning (MSc) 1
- Public Policy and Human Development, 3 specialisations in Business & Economics (MSc) 3

Graduate programmes for professionals
- Business Administration (MBA) 1
- Executive Master of Finance and Control (MSc) 3

Languages of instruction:
1 Only in English
2 Part Dutch; part English
3 Available in both English and Dutch
4 Only in Dutch

The programmes under ‘New initiatives at UM’ are currently in the process of NVAO accreditation. More information about these programmes and their expected starting dates will be published on our website: www.maastrichtuniversity.nl

*The bachelor programme Knowledge Engineering is at the time of writing in the process of a name change, awaiting a decision of the NVAO; its proposed new title is Data Science and Knowledge Engineering. The master programme Operations Research is at the time of writing also in the process of a name change. The proposed new name is Data Science for Decision Making.
Law
- European Law School (LLM) 1
- Fiscaal Recht / Tax Law (LLM) 4
- Forensica, Criminologie en Rechtspleging / Forensics, Criminology and Law (LLM) 3
- Globalisation and Law (LLM) 3
- International and European Tax Law (LLM) 1
- International Laws (LLM) 3
- Nederlands Recht (Dutch Law) (LLM) 4
- Public Policy and Human Development, specialization in Law (MSc) 1
- Recht en Arbeid (Law and Labour) (LLM) 4
Graduate programmes for professionals
- Advanced Master in Intellectual Property Law and Knowledge Management (LLM, MSc) 1
- Advanced Master in International and European Economic Law (LLM) 1
- European Master in Human Rights & Democratization 1

Media, Technology & Innovation
- Media Culture (MA) 1
- Cultures of Arts, Science and Technology (research master) (MSc) 1
- European Studies on Society, Science and Technology (MA) 3

Politics & Governance
- European Public Affairs (MA) 1
- European Studies (MA) 1
- European Studies (research master) (MSc) 1
- European Studies on Society, Science and Technology (MA) 1
- Governance and Leadership in European Public Health (MSc) 1
- Politics & Society (MA) 3
- Public Policy and Human Development, specialisations in Politics & Governance (MSc) 1
- Sustainability Science and Policy (MSc) 1

Sciences
- Applied Statistics (TUL at UHasselt) (MSc) 1
- Artificial Intelligence (TUL at UM) (MSc) 1
- Biobased Materials (MSc) 1
- Biomedical Sciences (TUL at UM and UHasselt) (MSc) 1
- Biomedical Engineering (TUL at UM) (MSc) 1
- Operations Research (TUL at UM) (MSc) 1
- Systems Biology (MSc) 1

New initiatives at UM
- Business Intelligence and Smart Services (MSc) 1
- International Joint Research Master Work & Organizational Psychology (MSc) 1
- European Master in Translational Neuroscience (MSc) 1

Faculty of Humanities and Sciences
- Aachen-Maastricht Institute for Biobased Materials - AMIBM
- International Centre for Integrated assessment and Sustainable development - ICIS
- Department of Data Science and Knowledge Engineering
- Top Institute for Evidence Based Education Research - TIER

Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences
- Research Institute of the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences – FASoS
- Centre for Gender and Diversity - CGD
- Centre for the Social History of Limburg - SHCL

Faculty of Health, Medicine and Life Sciences
- School for Public Health and Primary Care – CAPHRI
- School for Cardiovascular Diseases – CARIM
- School for Oncology and Developmental Biology - GROW
- Mental Health and Neuroscience - MHeNs
- School of Nutrition and Translational Research in Metabolism - NUTRIM
- School of Health Professions Education - SHE

Faculty of Health, Medicine and Life Sciences, Faculty of Psychology and Neuroscience and Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences
- Maastricht Centre for Systems Biology – MaCSBio

Faculty of Health, Medicine and Life Sciences, in cooperation with Sciences of Faculty of Humanities and Sciences, within the LINK programme (Limburg invests in its Knowledge Economy)
- Institute for Technology-Inspired Regenerative Medicine - MERLIN
- Maastricht MultiModal Molecular Imaging Institute – M3I

Faculty of Law
- Institute for Corporate Law, Governance and Innovation Policies - ICGI
- Institute for Globalization and International Regulation - IGIR
- Maastricht European Private Law Institute - M-EPLI
- Institute for Transnational Legal Research - METRO
- Montesquieu Institute - MI
- Maastricht Centre for European Law - MCEL
- Maastricht Centre for Human Rights - MCFHR

Faculty of Psychology and Neuroscience
- Experimental Psychopathology - EPP
- Maastricht Brain Imaging Centre – M-BIC
- Neuropsychology and Psychopharmacology - NP&PP
- Work and Social Psychology - WSP

School of Business and Economics
- Graduate School of Business and Economics - GSBE
- Business Intelligence and Smart Services Institute - BISS
- Research Centre for Education and the Labour Market - ROA

Interfaculty Research Institutes and Centres
- Faculty of Health, Medicine and Life Sciences, Faculty of Psychology and Neuroscience and Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences
- Maastricht Centre for Systems Biology – MaCSBio

Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences and Faculty of Law
- Centre for European Research in Maastricht – CEBIM

Faculty of Law, Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences, Faculty of Humanities and Sciences and School of Business and Economics
- Institute for Transnational and Euregional cross border cooperation and mobility – ITEM

Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences, Faculty of Humanities and Sciences, School of Business and Economics and Faculty of Law
- Maastricht Centre for Arts and Culture, Conservation and Heritage – MACCH

Faculty of Humanities and Sciences and School of Business and Economics
- United Nations University – UNU-MERIT

Graduate Schools
- Maastricht University Graduate School of Sustainability Science & Policy - MUST
- Maastricht Graduate School of Governance - MGSoG
- Graduate School of Arts & Social Sciences – GSASS
- Maastricht Graduate School of Law - MGSL
- Graduate School of Psychology and Neuroscience - GSPN
- Graduate School of Business and Economics – GSBE
- School for Public Health and Primary Care – CAPHRI
- School for Cardiovascular Diseases – CARIM
- School for Oncology and Developmental Biology – GROW
- Mental Health and Neuroscience - MHeNs
- School of Nutrition and Translational Research in Metabolism – NUTRIM
- School of Health Professions Education - SHE
The strategic programme is based on the advice of four think tanks:

1. **Think tank education**
   - Chair: Rolf van der Velden (ROA/SBE)
   - Members: Mien Segers (SBE), Teun Dekker (UCM/FHS), Walter Jansen (EdLab), Tom Smeets (FPN)
   - University Council: Olav de Wit (student), Dirk Tempelaar (SBE), Ricarda von Kleist-Retzow (student)
   - Support: Nieke Guillory (MUO)

2. **Think tank research**
   - Chair: Ron Heeren (FHS/FHML)
   - External member: Bert Kip (Chemelot Campus)
   - Members: Jaap Bos (SBE), Ellen Vos (Law), Anita Jansen (FPN), Tamar Sharon (FASoS), Blanche Schroen (FHML)
   - University Council: Dirk Tempelaar (SBE), Maarten van Wesel (University Library), Michael Dijkstra (student), Mark Spigt (FHML)
   - Support: Daniela Trani (MUO) & Bakir Bulic (FHML)

3. **Think tank internationalisation**
   - Chair: Peter Schröder (FHML)
   - External member: Nadine Burquel (EFMD)
   - Members: Michael Geary (FASoS), Sjoerd Claessens (Law), Melissa Siegel (Governance), Mark Vluggen (SBE), Han Aarts (Mundo)
   - University Council: Franca Feisel (student), Chris Leonards (FASoS), Marlou Kerssens (student), Chris Leonards (FASoS)
   - Support: Alexandra Rosenbach (MUO)

4. **Think tank societal engagement**
   - Chair: Saskia Klosse (Law)
   - External member: Leo Penta
   - Members: Pascal Breuls (SSC), Andries de Grip (ROA/SBE), Petra Kömmedy (INBETWEEN), Tim van Wannei (Maastricht-LAB)
   - University Council: Roberta Haar (UCM/FHS), Rik Krouvel (student)
   - Support: Niels Harteman (MUO)