

**Minutes of the public part of the 210th meeting of the FHML
 Council**

dated Tuesday 10 February

2025 Present: see attendance

list

1. Opening, announcements and adoption of the agenda

The Chair opens the meeting.

2. Integration of UM and Maastricht UMC⁺

The agenda item is discussed in the presence of R. Letschert (Chair of the Executive Board of Maastricht University), J.-T. Meindersma (Vice-Chair of the Executive Board of Maastricht University), H. Mertens (Chair of the Board of Directors of Maastricht UMC⁺) and D. Snackers (programme manager).

The discussion begins with the issue of 'dual roles'. The chair of Maastricht UMC⁺ will also serve as co-chair of the Executive Board. When asked, H. Mertens explains that alternative models were considered, but emphasises the importance of board members who are closely involved in day-to-day operations, on both the university and hospital sides. The Executive Board will consist of five members; at the request of the employee representative body, this has been adjusted from an earlier model with three members, partly to mitigate the potential disadvantages of dual roles. An evaluation protocol has been drawn up to assess the model's effectiveness. The model is not final and may be adjusted on the basis of evaluations. When asked, H. Mertens indicated that, in principle, separation is possible if the integration is not functioning properly, but that this is a complex process.

The Council notes that there is a perception that the decision to adopt this model was made before the employee representative body was informed. It also asks why the model does not align with the model used by other university medical centres or other ways of working more closely together. H. Mertens emphasises the importance of timely information and the involvement of the representative body, and regrets that this impression has arisen. She explains that Maastricht University has opted for this far-reaching integration due to the broad profile of the Faculty of Health, Medicine and Life Sciences (FHML), which encompasses not only Medicine but also Biomedical Sciences and Health Sciences. In addition, societal challenges play a role, with other faculties, such as FSE and Law, also being relevant to the hospital. Erasmus MC is cited as an example, where the UMC has become further detached from other faculties, a situation deemed undesirable in Maastricht.

R. Letschert adds that a joint board can strengthen cross-disciplinary collaboration and make the organisation less reliant on informal coordination between board members. This puts the organisation in a better position to respond to external developments, such as changes in funding and societal pressure on the healthcare sector. The risks of potentially separating Biomedical Sciences and Health Sciences from Medicine are discussed. The Dean emphasises that these disciplines have been closely integrated in teaching and research since 2007 and that the broad profile of the FHML is, in fact, a strength.

The Council has expressed concerns about the complexity and the addition of an extra layer of management.

R. Letschert points out that the Executive Board does not constitute an additional layer, as the management team is being disbanded. The previous model, which included an additional administrative layer, has been scrapped at the request of the employee representative body.

In addition, attention is drawn to the focus of the integrated UMC, which must encompass all core tasks – research, education and patient care. H. Mertens explains that this integrated focus actually contributes to the development of the academic hospital.

With regard to responsibilities and finances, it is explained that the legal entities and funding streams will remain separate; the transfer of funds is not possible and is not intended. However, the integration does allow scope for a shared agenda and joint decisions. R. Letschert adds that the Executive Board must take unanimous decisions and that the rector represents the votes of the six deans in this regard.

With regard to staff participation, it is noted that the FHML Faculty Council must be positioned more explicitly within the governance structure.

H. Mertens and R. Letschert emphasise that existing employee participation rights will be retained and, where possible, expanded. In addition, efforts will be made to improve coordination between the various bodies, including through regular coordination meetings. The practical details of this will be worked out in the next phase of the process.

The Council asks whether the integration will lead to less bureaucracy, given that both institutions will retain their own legal personality, with their own budgets and IT systems. J.-W. Meindersma states that the formal integration of support services will take place at a later date and will be resubmitted to the relevant bodies. It is expected that operational management can be organised more efficiently through further coordination.

Finally, R. Letschert notes that, in practice, many decisions are already taken jointly by the FHML and Maastricht UMC⁺. The current naming conventions will remain unchanged and will also be applied to grant applications. This means that researchers can choose for themselves whether to use Maastricht University or Maastricht UMC⁺ in applications and publications.

With regard to governance, it is stated that temporary appointments will also be applied at the hospital.

The Council thanks the Executive Board and the Board of Directors for their explanation.

3.a Adoption of the text of the public section of the report of the 209^e meeting dated 13 January 2026

-26.0144o – dated 27-01-26 – report

See the approved version, reference 26.0144/lo.

3.b Comments following the public part of the report

There are no comments.

4. Announcements by the Dean

The Dean has no announcements.

5. Additional agenda items

There are no additional agenda items.

6. Any other business

There are no questions under 'Any other business'.

K. Luijten