Maastricht University

2026-
2027

HANDBOOK
PARTICIPATORY BODIES

Everything you need to know about participatory bodies at Maastricht University

This document has been compiled for the participatory bodies of Maastricht University. Use has been made of WHWATISDAT?! (Fifth edition) by János Betkó, Sara Struik, Hester Swart and Lisa Westerveld, published by the LSVB. The text has been adapted and supplemented to provide more targeted information to UM's participatory bodies.

CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION 3

THE CENTRAL LEVEL 4

- **The Supervisory Board** 4
- **The Executive Board** 5
- **The University Council** 6
- **The Local Consultative Body** 6

THE FACULTIES 7

- **The Faculty Board** 7
- **The Faculty Council** 8

THE EXPERTISE CENTRES 9

- **The Service Council** 9

OTHER CONSULTATIONS 9

RIGHTS OF PARTICIPATORY BODIES 11

PRACTICAL INFORMATION 12

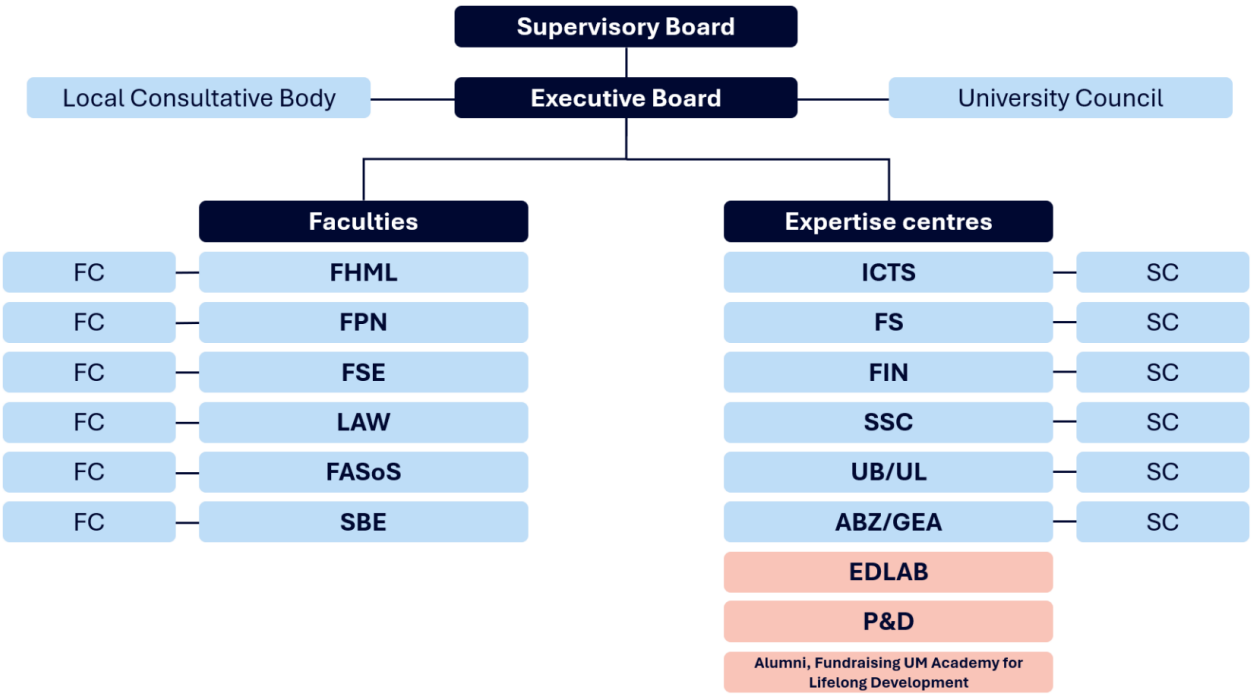
- **Confidentiality** 12
- **Remuneration** 12

GLOSSARY 13

INTRODUCTION

As a member of a participatory council, you have a great responsibility. You are an interlocutor with the board of UM, your faculty or expertise centre and you are a representative of the UM community. It is your task to represent the interests of your constituency to the best of your abilities.

There are different levels of governance within the university. Every layer has its own participatory council. The chart below is a representation of the governance and participation layers within UM.



Please note: EDLAB, People & Development and Alumni, Fundraising and UM Academy for Lifelong Development are new expertise centres that do not have a Service Council for this academic year (2026-2027).

THE CENTRAL LEVEL

The Supervisory Board

The Supervisory Board (SB) supervises the general course of affairs within the university and vets the decisions made by the Executive Board. The Supervisory Board also acts as a sounding board for and advisor to the Executive Board. The Supervisory Board is accountable to the Minister of Education.

The Supervisory Board is responsible for appointing and dismissing the members of the Executive Board, among other things. The University Council must be asked for advice on the profile of each member. A list of all responsibilities of the Supervisory Board can be found in the Administrative and Management Regulations UM *(Bestuurs- en Beheersreglement UM, BBRUM)* under chapter II, paragraph 2.

The members of the Supervisory Board are appointed for a term of four years by the Minister of Education. When appointing a member, the University Council is asked to issue advice on the profile of the member in question. In addition, one member of the Supervisory Board has the special confidence of the University Council. The candidate members for this position are nominated by the University Council. Each member of the Supervisory Board is appointed by the Minister of Education.

The current members (as of 28-08-2026) are:

- Mr. A. E. (Annelies) van der Pauw (Chairman)
- Drs. J.H. (Hans) de Groene
- Prof. dr. A.G (Alain) Dupont
- A. (Angelique) Palmen
- Dr. J. (Jennifer) Barnes
    - Member with the special confidence of the University Council

The Executive Board

The Executive Board (EB) bears the final responsibility for the governance of the university. It is responsible for the management of the university as a whole. This concerns, among other things, the appointment of deans, the other faculty board members and professors. The Executive Board can also take the initiative for new study programmes, (affiliated) research institutes and is responsible for the efficient management of finances and all other management tasks. You can find a complete overview of the tasks of the Executive Board in the Administrative and Management Regulations UM *(Bestuurs- en Beheersreglement UM, BBRUM)* under chapter II, paragraph 3.

The Executive Board consists of three members. Each member has their own portfolio of subjects, but the Board as a whole is responsible for everything that happens in the university.

President of the Executive Board: Prof. Dr. Pamela Habibović (interim)

- The President of the Executive Board focusses on strategy, external relations and politics.

Rector Magnificus: Prof. Dr. Jan Smits (interim)

- The Rector Magnificus focusses on research and education. The Rector chairs the Research Platform, the Education Platform, and the Board of Deans.

Vice-President of the Executive Board: Jan-Tjitte Meindersma

- The Vice-President focusses on the operational side of the university, including finances, real estate and personnel policy. The Vice-President chairs the Local Consultative Body and the *Coördinerend Beraad Bedrijfsvoering* (CBB).

Management philosophy
UM's management philosophy is aimed at decentralisation. The Executive Board has mandated a large number of responsibilities to the deans of the faculties. They are therefore ultimately responsible for the total management of their faculty.

The University Council

The University Council (UC) is the democratically elected body that represents the university community to the Executive Board. It assesses new policy and current developments in the field of strategy, research & education and business operations. The University Council acts as a sounding board for the Executive Board, is involved in the assessment and monitoring of new policies and initiatives, and can make proposals.

The University Council consists of twenty members. They are chosen from among the academic staff (6 members), the support staff (4 members) and students (10 members). Elections for the staff delegation take place every two years. The students are elected annually.

The University Council has a technical chair, who is not part of the council and does not have the right to vote. The chair, vice-chair and the chairs of the various subcommittees (Strategy, Research & Education and Operations) together form the Presidium. The Presidium is the day-to-day management of the University Council.

A complete overview of the tasks and powers of the University Council can be found in the UM University Council Regulations under chapters 3 and 4.

For your information: For more detailed information for members of the University Council, see the *UC Takeover Manual*.

The Local Consultative Body

The Local Consultative Body (LO) is the central consultation between the employer (UM, represented by the Executive Board) and the employee organisations. The LO consists of representatives of the four unions (FNV Overheid, CNV Overheid, AOb and AC/FBZ) and the Executive Board.

The Collective Labour Agreement for Dutch Universities (CAO-NU) lays down many matters that apply to all employees, but many subjects are regulated or further elaborated per university. Examples of this are terms of employment, the social plan in the event of reorganisations and the legal status of employees. The four unions consult with the Executive Board in the LO about these matters. The LO meets ten times a year.

The LO is not a participatory body, as the members are not elected and do not have a term of office. However, it plays an important role in decision-making within UM, and is therefore mentioned in this handbook.

THE FACULTIES

Maastricht University has six faculties: the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences (FASoS), the Faculty of Law (LAW), the Faculty of Health, Medicine and Life Sciences (FHML), the Faculty of Psychology and Neuroscience (FPN), the Faculty of Science and Engineering (FSE) and the School of Business and Economics (SBE).

As you have already read, Maastricht University is decentralized. This means that the faculties have a high degree of independence in how they approach various matters. Each faculty has its own strategy, its own regulations and therefore its own culture. Of course, they all fit under the umbrella of UM.

The Faculty Board

Due to UM's decentralised approach, the structure of the Faculty Board differs per faculty. Each Faculty Board is chaired by a dean and also has at least two and a maximum of four other members. The exact details of the Faculty Board are laid down in the Faculty Regulations.

Below you will find an overview of the different roles you can find within the Faculty Board.

Dean	Chair of the Faculty Board. The dean is in charge of the faculty. The dean is responsible for research and education within their faculty. In addition, the Executive Board has also assigned management responsibilities to the dean. As a result, the dean is ultimately responsible for the functioning of the faculty.
Vice Dean	Member of the Faculty Board with a specific portfolio of responsibilities. Each faculty board has a vice dean for education and a vice dean for research, but a faculty can also decide to appoint other vice deans with portfolios such as internationalisation or recognition and rewards. The vice-deans of research and education are also part of the Research and Education Platforms, respectively.
Director	Member of the Faculty Board with the portfolio of operations. The director is a part of the *Coördinerend Beraad Bedrijfsvoering* (CBB).
Student advisor	A student who advises the Faculty Board. The student advisor is nominated by the student section of the Faculty Council.

The Faculty Council

Just like the Faculty Boards, the Faculty Councils (FC) within UM are not the same everywhere. The smallest Faculty Council (FASoS) has twelve members, the largest (FHML) has eighteen. Regardless of the number of members, each council has an equal number of students and staff members. The division between academic and support staff also differs per faculty council. Staff members are appointed for two years, students for one year. Unlike the University Council, the Faculty Councils always elect a chair from among their members.

An overview of the tasks and powers of the Faculty Councils can be found in the Administrative and Management Regulations UM *(Bestuurs- en Beheersreglement UM, BBRUM)* under chapter III, paragraph 4.

Please note: Agreements may have been made about the powers of the Faculty Council that only apply to your Faculty. Therefore, always check the Faculty Regulations to be sure what your rights are!

THE EXPERTISE CENTRES

The expertise centres are organisational units that provide specialised knowledge, support and services. The staff have specific expertise in a particular field, such as HR, finance, educational development, library services or student support. The aim is to support the university's primary processes – education, research and valorisation – efficiently, qualitatively and professionally.

Maastricht University has eight centres of expertise: Facility Service (FS), the Student Service Centre (SSC), Finance (FIN), ICT Service Centre (ICTS), the University Library (UL), People & Development (P&D), EDLAB, and Alumni, Fundraising and UM Academy for Lifelong Development. The latter three are new additions and therefore do not yet have Service Councils for this academic year (2026-2027).

Please note: In addition to the centres of expertise, UM also has the department General Executive Affairs (GEA/ABZ). GEA supports the Executive Board, but also has a Service Council.

The directors of the expertise centres and GEA are appointed by the Executive Board. They are responsible for managing the resources allocated to their unit. They make decisions about this within the agreed limits of their mandate and the frameworks, rules and guidelines established by the Executive Board. The directors of the expertise centres and GEA participate in the *Coördinerend Beraad Bedrijfsvoering* (CBB).

The Service Council

The Service Councils represent the employees of the centres of expertise and GEA in their consultations with the directors of their expertise centres. Service Councils have four or five seats. Members of the Service Councils are appointed for a term of two years. The Service Councils, like the Faculty Councils, elect a chair from among their members.

An overview of the tasks and powers of the Service Councils can be found in the Service Council Regulations.

OTHER CONSULTATIONS

Chairs's meeting
The chairs of all participatory councils and the staff delegation of the LO meet every six weeks for an informal consultation where they update one another about the current discussions in their respective councils.

LAWS AND REGULATIONS

Higher Education and Research Act (WHW)

The Higher Education and Research Act (WHW) forms the legal framework for higher education and scientific research in the Netherlands. The act regulates, among other things, the structure and management of universities and universities of applied sciences, the quality of education and research, the rights and obligations of students and staff, and participatory within institutions. You can find the WHW here.

Administrative and Management Regulations UM (BBRUM)

The Administrative and Management Regulations UM (BBRUM) are the internal regulations that set out the administrative structure and organisation of the university. Within the framework of the Higher Education and Research Act, the regulations form the basis for the governance and day-to-day management of the university. You can find the BBRUM here.

Faculty Regulations

The Faculty Regulations describe the administrative structure and organisation of a faculty. The regulations lay down the tasks, powers and responsibilities of the faculty bodies and officials and contain rules on decision-making and the internal organisation of the faculty. Within the framework of the Higher Education and Research Act and the BBRUM, the faculty regulations form the basis for the management and day-to-day affairs within the faculty. The faculty regulations also contain the rights and powers of the Faculty Council.

University Council Regulations

The University Council Regulations describe the composition, working methods, powers and procedures of the University Council as the central participatory body of UM. The regulations lay down how the council exercises its rights of advice, consent and initiative, how decision-making takes place and how consultations with the Executive Board are organised.

Service Council Regulations

The Service Council Regulations describe the composition, working method, powers and procedures of the Service Councils as the participatory bodies of the expertise centres. The regulations lay down how the Services Councils exercise their rights of advice, consent and initiative, how decision-making takes place and how consultation with the director of the expertise centre is organised. There is one overarching set of regulations for all Service Councils.

Rules of Procedure

Rules of procedure describe how a council works practically and organizationally. It contains agreements about, among other things, meetings, the duties and powers of the chair and the vice-chair and voting. It also lays down how a council carries out its work, how proposals are dealt with and how the council reports on its meetings and activities.

RIGHTS OF PARTICIPATORY BODIES

Right of consent

The participatory council has the right of consent on a number of points. The right of consent means that the Executive Board, the Faculty Board or the director needs the consent of the representative advisory bodies in order to be allowed to implement a plan or to adopt regulations.

Right to advice

The right of advice of the participatory council includes both ***requested advice*** and ***unsolicited advice***. The right to requested advice means that the Executive Board, the Faculty Board or the director must first request formal advice from the participatory bodies before adopting a certain regulation. If the council does not follow the advice of the representative advisory bodies, this must be adequately substantiated.

The right to unsolicited advice means that the representative advisory bodies may at all times advise the Executive Board, the Faculty Board or the director on any matter. This advice does not have to be followed, but the decision to deviate from the advice must be adequately substantiated.

Right to information

Participatory bodies also have the right to information. This means that the Executive Board, the Faculty Board or the director must provide the representative advisory bodies with all the information they need to be able to perform their duties in a reasonable manner. In addition, the Executive Board, the Faculty Board or the director is obliged to provide the participatory bodies with the information that the participatory bodies request and that they need to be able to perform their duties properly.

Right to discuss

The participatory bodies have the right to discuss topics with the board that are important to the organisation and employees. This offers room to ask questions, bring up points of attention and to exchange ideas with the board or director.

Right of initiative

The participatory bodies have the right to take the initiative at any time to submit a proposal or to put a subject on the agenda. The Executive Board, the Faculty Board or the director is obliged to respond to a proposal from the participatory bodies.

PRACTICAL INFORMATION

Confidentiality

Members of participatory councils handle confidential information they receive in the course of their work with care. Information that is marked as confidential, or the confidentiality of which should reasonably be assumed, should not be shared with third parties.

Please note: This confidentiality does not cease after you stop being a member of a participatory council.

Remuneration

The remuneration for the members of the participatory councils is laid down in the *Regulations on the Remuneration of Board Activities*. For more information about the fees, please contact the secretary or registrar of your council.

GLOSSARY

GEA	General Executive Affairs. The central administrative department of UM. GEA advises and supports the Executive Board, the faculties and expertise centres of Maastricht University. Formerly: *Maastricht University Office (MUO).* Dutch: *Algemene Bestuurlijke Zaken (ABZ).*
GDPR	General Data Protection Regulation. The European privacy legislation that sets rules for the collection, processing, storage and sharing of personal data. Dutch: *Algemene Verordening Gegevensbescherming (AVG)*.
azM	The academic hospital in Maastricht.
BBRUM	Administrative And Management Regulations UM. Dutch: *Bestuurs- en Beheersreglement UM*.
CLA	Collective Labour Agreement. This is a written agreement between employers (or employers' organisations) and unions in which agreements are laid down about terms of employment, such as wages, working hours, annual leave and pensions. Dutch: *Collectieve Arbeidsovereenkomst (CAO).*
CBB	*Coördinerend Beraad Bedrijfsvoering*. Periodic consultations between the Vice-President of the Executive Board and the directors of the faculties and the expertise centres on matters relating to the operational management of the university.
CCP	Concerns and Complaints Point. A central point of contact for UM employees and managers for questions, reports or concerns about social safety, undesirable behaviour, bullying, discrimination or intimidation
CDHO	*Commissie Doelmatigheid Hoger Onderwijs*. Advises the Minister of Education on the effectiveness of the provision of higher education programmes. The committee assesses, among other things, applications for new programmes and changes to the existing programme offer.
CeQuInt	Certificate for Quality in Internationalisation. A European quality mark for programmes and institutions that demonstrably pay attention to the quality of internationalisation in higher education.
CIO	Corporate Information Office. Gives direction to, facilitates and accelerates the further digital development and innovation of UM. The team offers clear frameworks for this and works in co-creation with internal and external partners.
EB	Executive Board. The central governing body of the university. The Executive Board is responsible for the management of the university. Dutch: *College van Bestuur (CvB).*
Board of Deans	Periodic consultation between the Rector and the deans of all six faculties. Dutch: *College van Decanen (CvD).*
CPD	Continuing Professional Development. The programme for the continuous professional development of lecturers at Maastricht University.
DEI+	Diversity, Equity and Inclusion+. Focuses on promoting diversity, equity and inclusion within the organization. This is facilitated by the DEI+ Office.
SC	Service Council. Participatory body of an expertise centre that represents the interests of employees and has a say in the policy and organisation of the expertise center. Dutch: *Dienstraad (DR).*
DS	Disability Support. The team within UM that students can go to to access support facilities, for example: extra exam time, smaller exam rooms and supporting technology.
R&R	Recognition & Rewards. Striving for a working environment in which all employee achievements are equally recognized and valued. Dutch: *Erkennen & Waarderen (E&W).*
EDLAB	The centre for educational development and innovation at Maastricht University. It supports teachers and study programmes in improving and renewing education and stimulates innovation and knowledge sharing in the field of learning and teaching.
FC	Faculty Council. Participatory body of a faculty in which students and staff have a say in the policy and organisation of the faculty. Dutch: *Faculteitsraad (FR)*
FIN	Finance department.
FS	Facility Services. Expertise centre responsible for building management, purchasing, safety and security, cleaning and waste management, hospitality, and food and beverage.

iBabs	A digital meeting management platform. It is used to share agendas and documents for (council) meetings.
ICTS	ICT Service Centre. Expertise centre responsible for the management and maintenance of MAASnet, UM's computer network, as well as the maintenance of servers and applications and the support of end users.
IO	International Office. The department that deals with the procedural and strategic activities related to internationalization.
ITK	*Instellingstoets Kwaliteitszorg*. An assessment of the internal quality assurance of a higher education institution by the NVAO. This involves looking at whether the institution is properly monitoring its educational quality and working on structural improvement.
LA	Legal Affairs. Dutch: *Juridische Zaken (JZ)*.
LO	Local Consultative Body. Consultation between the employer (UM) and the representation of unions on behalf of the employees about terms of employment, personnel policy and other matters that concern employees.
M&C	The Marketing & Communication department.
MT	Management Team. The Management Team consists of the Executive Board, the university secretary, the deans of the faculties and the directors of Finance and M&C. The MT discusses administrative, administrative and strategic topics.
MUMC+	Maastricht University Medical Centre. The partnership between the academic hospital in Maastricht (azM) and the Faculty of Health, Medicine and Life Sciences (FHML) of Maastricht University.
NVAO	The organization that assesses and monitors the quality of higher education in the Netherlands and Flanders. The NVAO assesses programmes and institutions, among other things, and grants accreditations on the basis of this. Dutch: *Nederlands-Vlaamse Accreditatieorganisatie*.
NWO	Netherlands Organisation for Scientific Research. The national organization that finances and stimulates scientific research in the Netherlands. Dutch: *Nederlandse Organisatie voor Wetenschappelijk Onderzoek*.
OCW	Ministry of Education, Culture and Science.
Ombuds Officer	An independent and neutral discussion partner for UM employees. This officer can advise on employment law laws, regulations and procedures. In addition, the ombuds officer can mediate, identify bottlenecks and conduct independent investigations, both on their own initiative and in response to a report.
Education platform	Periodic consultation between the Rector and the vice-deans of education. Dutch: *Onderwijsplatform*.
Research platform	Periodic consultation between the Rector and the vice-deans of research. Dutch: *Onderzoeksplatform*.
P&D	People and Development. The HR department.
PDCA	Plan-Do-Check-Act. A cyclical method for planning, executing, evaluating and improving processes and results.
PBL	Problem-based learning. Teaching method in which students learn actively and independently in small groups on the basis of practice-oriented problems. Dutch: *Probleemgestuurd Onderwijs (PGO)*.
PSA	Psychosocial workload. Strain that can arise from work pressure and undesirable behaviour at work and that can affect the health and well-being of employees. Dutch: *Psychosociale Arbeidsbelasting*.
SB	Supervisory Board. Independent supervisory body that supervises the governance, policy, finances and general affairs of Maastricht University. Dutch: *Raad van Toezicht (RvT)*.
S&P	Strategy & Policy. S&P advises the Executive Board and the faculties in the field of research, education, knowledge valorisation, campus development and the university's strategy. Formerly: *Academic Affairs (AA)*. Dutch: *Strategie & Beleid (S&B)*.
SSC	Student Service Centre. Expertise centre that supports students with administrative and practical matters related to their studies.

SToF	Student Support Fund. Fund that supports students financially when special circumstances (such as a board year) lead to study delay or financial problems. Formerly: *Profileringsfonds*. Dutch: *Studentenondersteuningsfonds*.
SUM2030	Sustainable UM 2030. Maastricht University's strategic programme to make the institution fully sustainable through education, research and operations.
UL	University Library. Dutch: *Universiteitsbibliotheek*.
UC	University Council. Central participatory body in which students and staff have a say in important policy and decision-making processes. Dutch: *Universiteitsraad (UR)*.
UNL	Universities of the Netherlands. Association that represents the common interests of Dutch universities and represents them towards politics, government and society. Dutch: *Universiteiten van Nederland*.
W&T	Work pressure & Talent. Resources from the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science for reducing workload and promoting talent development within the university.
WHW	Higher Education and Scientific Research Act. Law that regulates higher education and scientific research in the Netherlands and sets frameworks for institutions, study programmes and students.
WIB	The Internationalisation in Balance Act. Bill that aims to ensure a better balance between internationalisation and the quality, accessibility and efficiency of Dutch higher education. It aims to impact the influx of international students and the use of Dutch as the teaching language.
ZDN	A memo in which all necessary information about a proposal or topic is clearly included.