

# Information on placement and research reports for Master's degree programmes in Health Sciences\* at Maastricht University

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*\*Master's degree programmes in Health Sciences: Epidemiology; Governance and Leadership in European Public Health; Global Health; Healthcare Policy, Innovation and Management; Health Education and Promotion; Health Sciences Research Master; Human Movement Sciences; Mental Health; and Work, Health and Career.*

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## 1. General

Within each Master's programme in the Faculty of Health, Medicine and Life Sciences (FHML), ten to twenty weeks have been allocated for a 'placement' and for writing the Master's research report. This report must be written as a journal article (i.e., a paper that can be submitted to a scientific journal) or as a classical thesis (hereinafter referred to as 'article/thesis'; see appendix 1 and 2 for more information).

The placement is centred on independent preparation, planning and conducting of academic research, which means that the student is to gain experience with executing academic research under supervision. This research will be the basis for the Master's article/thesis. Obviously, the subject of the placement and the article/thesis will have to be in line with the chosen Master's degree programme/specialisation. The student must have fulfilled the requirements laid down in the examination regulations before he/she can start with the placement.

This brochure contains general guidelines. Please note:

- Each master's programme can have additional and/or specific guidelines. These will be provided by the respective placement coordinators.
- Also, not all guidelines are applicable to all master's programmes. This is usually indicated by phrases such as 'Most programmes ...'.

Therefore, you are advised to consult the placement coordinator of your programme about the guidelines that are applicable or not.

## 2. Placement coordinator

For each master's programme a placement coordinator has been appointed, who will be the student's first port of call as regards the preparation and contents of the placement. The coordinator ensures a steady supply of placements each year, and gives students advice and information on the placement: the possibilities and impossibilities, the procedure, the conditions necessary to start, etc.

The coordinator has contact with students about the choice of subject, helps them to find or assign them to a Faculty supervisor (depending on the programme) and to make contacts with the institution that provides the placement. The placement coordinator makes an annual analysis of the available placements and any pattern in the choices for placements by students, and reports the findings to the programme group of the master's programme.

## 3. Preparation

Before the placement period, usually around October, students choose a placement and a research subject. The respective placement coordinators present the options to do a placement to the students by means of a list with descriptions of subjects and/or institutions that have placements available (usually via the student portal), or in a personal interview, which enables students to make an informed choice from the various options. In a number of

programmes, students may look for their own placement and research subject (in consultation with the placement coordinator). The placement coordinators will provide information about the placements in a special lecture.

### **3.1. Contact with the (external) institution**

The placement coordinator, the Faculty supervisor or the student (after prior consultation with the placement coordinator) contacts the institution that provides the placement and asks whether it will be possible for the relevant placement to take place at the institution. If this institution responds positively, an exploratory meeting may take place with the institution. The Faculty supervisor, the student and the supervisor at the institution may be involved in this meeting. The meeting has a double purpose: it serves as an initial introduction and it allows the specification of the subject.

### **3.2. Agreements**

Prior to the start of the placement, the student and the supervisor at the institution must agree on the following issues:

- Specification of the research subject
- Preconditions for the research that must be fulfilled by the institution that provides the placement
- Duration of the placement
- Time of supervision and contents of supervision
- The time the student is to spend working at the institution per week, including working hours
- The number of holidays
- Agreements about any allowances to be paid by the institution that provides the placement (personal allowances and research costs)
- Any use of facilities and secretarial support

## **4. Duties of the institution supervisors**

At the institution that provides the placement, supervision must be in the hands of an institutional supervisor, preferably with knowledge and experience of conducting research. Depending on what is feasible, the supervisor at the institution supervises and supports the student in the course of his/her research, for instance by trying to help in case problems or bottlenecks occur in the research, or by trying to facilitate access to data or data sources otherwise not accessible, etc. The institution's supervisor is not an examiner and therefore does not assess the article/thesis or the research process.