

**Report public part of 196th FHML Council meeting
dated Wednesday, 6 November 2024**

Present: see attendance list

1 Opening, announcements and adoption of the agenda

The chairman opened the meeting.

2a Adoption of the text of the public part of the report of the 195^e meeting held on 8 October 2024

-24.1611o - dated 28-10-24 - report

At the chairman's request, the question asked about the installation of charging stations for electric cars was added to agenda item 4.

See the approved version with reference 24.1611/Io.

2b Comments on the public part of the report

In response to the postponed agenda item, M. old Egbrink indicated that there will only be a temporary stop for enrolments of the part-time variant of the master's programme 'Health Education and Promotion' (HEP) from September 2025 and not for the master's programme 'Occupational Health and Sustainable Work'.

Regarding the question in the roundtable question about the dropout rates of the first year BMS, she then indicated that the dropout rate of 22% is lower than in the years without numerus fixus (30-40%).

3 Dean's announcements

The dean indicated that the review of the GROW Research Institute had recently taken place. The initial feedback was positive. In particular, points such as the networking function, positioning mid-career staff within the MT, and encouraging academic leadership were highlighted as valuable points by the visitation committee. The relationship with the region and the involvement of affiliate professors were also evaluated positively.

4 Housing/area development and new construction Randwyck

The FHML director informed the council about the renovation of Uns50. The FHML is still waiting for quotes from the contractor, which are expected before the end of the year. Further planning will be discussed internally with the groups involved. An update on the Endepols Domain (SPD) and Deb1 will follow shortly as well as the state of affairs regarding the area development in Randwyck, including the Green Carpet.

5 Budget FHML 2025

-24.1619/I - dated 01-11-24 - FHML Council Budget Committee report dated 29 and 31 October 2024

-24.1519/I - dated 22-10-24 - draft budget

The chairman indicated that the draft budget had been gone through by the FHML Council Budget Committee. Several questions have already been answered by the Director and Controller FHML, see the present report. The unanswered (substantive) questions will now be submitted to the FHML Board and answered.

Chapter 2: Main points of policy

Education

Quality and Development of Education

Page 3 - Further developing and innovating training courses

How is the progress of educational innovation evaluated and in what way are students involved? Is there structural policy and student participation in these developments. How does this relate to the different programmes?

Students are always involved in programme revision and innovation. This is part of the remit of the curriculum committee that prepares a revision. This can take various forms (curriculum committee membership, focus groups, surveys, etc.) depending on the programme (bachelor/master, major/minor, specialisations/no specialisations).

Developments are discussed regularly (including mid-term) in the relevant Education Committee (OC), in the Management Team (MT) and in the Executive Consultation (DO), in which students are always represented.

Student input is highly valued and valuable. However, interest among students seems to be declining. When asked, M. old Egbrink explains that the student associations actively promote the different roles and are also responsible for the application process. This practice seems to work well, unlike sending e-mails. Interestingly, the decline in interest in student participation is also widely observed within UM.

Page 4

By September 2025, the BaMed curriculum review will be completed and the implementation of the revised curriculum in Dutch-language education will start. How is the BaMed programme scaling up and what are the opportunities and risks?

It was agreed that the BaMed programme coordinator would be invited to a future FHML Council meeting to give an explanation.

Page 5 - Reducing workload among teachers

Reference is made to ongoing measures to reduce workload. Are any new initiatives or policy changes in this area? Fees for teaching roles have been unchanged for some time, while the content of these roles has changed. The central initiative to review this has been discontinued; what is the current position? For instance, is the standard hourly fee being looked at?

New tasks are usually compensated extra, e.g. completing MSF forms in BBS, introducing the Study Smart programme, etc. Sometimes this is made visible separately in BROS (MSF-BMS : ~800 hours in 2023-2024). In other roles, an adjustment does take place based on the exact tasks and hours allowance, e.g. in the mentor role (extra hours for delivering the Study Smart training, feedback training).

Furthermore, a new staff member has been assigned to the Education Institute (OI) to provide tailored support to coordinators on tasks not done by blocksupport on a regular basis. Block support takes over various administrative tasks from block coordinators.

In case of possible cuts, the norm hours will be the last option to save.

The council appreciates these initiatives, but notes that teaching roles, partly in the context of programmatic testing, are constantly being expanded. Signals from the field show that staff experience more work pressure as a result. Perhaps the various teaching roles should be evaluated, not only reviewing the hours allocated, but also taking a critical look at the essential content of each role. Outcomes of this evaluation will possibly lead to necessary adjustments of norm hours, but will also contribute to the discussions around experiencing work pressure by better substantiating the content of teaching roles.

Page 5

Will teachers' travel time be reimbursed?

If substantial travel time is involved (e.g. teaching in Venlo or Amersfoort) then travel time is reimbursed in teaching hours. If teaching takes place within Maastricht (UCM, Global Studies, etc.) then no separate travel time is provided.

Page 5 - Achieving or maintaining a healthy student intake

Given the increasing influx of international students, in what ways do they want to promote the intake of Dutch students?

For the FHML programmes, the international student population is relatively stable and limited. Overall, the ratio of Dutch to international students is 80%-20%. It is not expected that student numbers will decrease, given the wide range of different programmes on offer.

Furthermore, a special information campaign was launched UM-wide, aimed at both prospective Dutch students and new employees, in the context of the labour market shortage.

Page 5 - Promoting student welfare

What activities are organised to support student welfare?

After the termination of NPO, several additional investments in student welfare were structurally embedded. For instance, extra formation for student counselling was added to prevent waiting times and support students in a low-threshold way. A budget of €12.50 per student has been introduced for social activities and community building for all programmes. FHML-wide, M&C has been allocated a budget for organising broader activities, such as language cafes and movie nights, that help students build their network. This turns out to be particularly important for international students. The study load is monitored through the programme evaluations and discussed if there is reason to do so. In the master's degree in medicine, the introduction of study days during internships is a measure to lighten the load.

Research

Strategy and Development Research

Page 6 - Higher Education and Science Administrative Agreement

The funds from the Sector Plan are meant to be divided 70% research and 30% education, whereas the division is usually 50/50. How is this implemented in practice?

The sector plan funds have, precisely because of the 70-30 distribution that was actually implemented within the FHML, led to more room for research labelling, making vacancies that were previously mainly needed to fill increasing teaching tasks more attractive (by means of a teaching-research mix). So the faculty balance that tended to tip towards more and more teaching labelling is somewhat corrected by this 70-30 split.

Regarding the (last) Starter and Incentive Grants in 2025: will all applications be honoured, resulting in a lower amount per UD/WP?

Yes, in principle, all admissible applications will be honoured and drawing lots can be avoided. The minimum amount is €150,000, which is expected to be met based on the number of applicants.

Interfaculty cooperation in relation to research

Page 9

There are many inter-faculty initiatives. Is there a clear vision and criteria for which collaborations are prioritised? How are financial resources and promotion incentives distributed?

Initiatives can be either bottom-up or top-down, assuming that the cooperation creates added value. A recent tour/acquaintance around faculties (as part of the exploration of further cooperation UM/MUMC⁺) revealed a number of interesting leads and possible initiatives. Optimisation and joint use of the infrastructure widely available within UM is also a point of attention.

Proceeds and promotion incentives will be mutually agreed on the basis of the contribution of parties.

Business

HRM

Page 12 - Recognition & Appreciation programme

The OBP programme does not really seem to be taking off yet

There have now been two meetings for the OBP with FHML staff/ambassadors, with a third session to follow soon. Three prioritised themes have been identified:

- increase mobility-promoting measures within the faculty/ UM;
- How can we better encourage team collaboration?
- (better) facilitating own development opportunities.

A faculty steering committee is translating the collected input into concrete actions. That steering committee is preparing an action plan that will be finalised in the short term.

Is feedback also collected, for example on the Development Boards? What are the experiences so far?

Feedback is collected in various ways: organisation Townhall, annual interviews with department chairs, feedback from HR advisers, interfaculty focus groups and, later, via the culture barometer. Development Boards prove less invasive than feared by some, usually much richer in discussion topics than the traditional annual interview, and sometimes yield interesting new mentorships. Stage of implementation varies greatly between departments, by the way.

Page 13

The last paragraph states that steps will be taken to reduce the number of square metres of office space. However, on page 99, it states that the square metres of office space will increase as a result of the Uns50 renovation. At the Budget Committee meeting, it was explained that the renovation will make relatively more office space available, while the FHML is looking to reduce office space overall.

The council recommends presenting this information more clearly in the budget text, so that the contradictions are better understood.

3.4 Accounting for resources under the Student Loan Assistance Act Hatch 2)

Page 28

Mentoring funds have been moved from Hatch 1 to Hatch 2, but this affects other projects in Hatch 2. Which projects are potentially affected?

The cost of mentors has already been included in Hatch 2 since 2021. This year, costs for learning team coaches in BaMed have been added to this, as they too have a mentoring role.

For 2025, there are no impacts. However, choices will have to be made for 2026. Making those choices will come up during 2025 when there is clarity on the impact of government policies on FHML finances.

3.6.1 Risks

Page 32

The labour market is tight for all units of the FHML. This creates temporary surpluses due to unfilled vacancies, but as these occur in different sizes at different units, it is not possible to deploy these surpluses in a targeted manner. This puts more work on the incumbent staff, which has a negative effect on work pressure. By anticipating vacancies in time and recruiting widely, this negative effect can be limited.

The council endorses timely anticipation of vacancies and broad recruitment. This is to avoid unnecessary increases in the workload of existing staff and to avoid temporary financial surpluses. At odds with this is the intention of the CARIM Research Institute, as part of the cutbacks, not to fill vacant positions for the time being.

Not only is this increasing workload for incumbent staff, it also has a negative effect on recruitment and number of promotions. The board recommends that the board discuss these undesirable intentions with the research institute CARIM (and possibly other Research Institutes).

The FHML director explained that this issue is discussed during the Planning & Control meetings with the Research Institutes and that the situation varies from institute to institute, depending on the recruitment capacity.

Chapter 6: Budget faculty units

6.1 Educational Institute (OI)

Page 41

How will the Hatch 2 reserve be utilised and is this agreed with the Small Commission?

The reserve is now being deployed to avoid having to cut back on regular education as a result of FHML's reduced funds in 2025 on title of education. Reserves of FHML Central and of the OI are used for this purpose, as well as the reserve of Liege 2. The way is explained in the bullets on pages 41 and 42.

Because the Small Committee meets only once a year (in January) and the confrontation with the lower resources and the making of the budget could not wait, the KC is not formally informed.

However, the OCs were informed in detail and agreed to the chosen approach on 11 September 2024. Moreover, it is transparently reported in this budget.

Page 42 - Table development of number of students

What explains the falling student numbers at Campus Venlo and what cost-effectiveness?

Although the students in Venlo officially study at the FHML, the FSE faculty is responsible for the organisation and management of this programme. FSE receives from the FHML all funds attributable to the HFIM students (tuition fees and State contribution) and finances the education (including the hiring of staff at the FHML) from them. As a result, this question can hardly be answered by the FHML Board.

Page 42/43 Staff costs

There is an overrealisation of teaching to 15 FTE; is there systematic underestimation here?

Historically, the payout of 15 FTEs seems to take place every year in that order of magnitude and seems to be hardly affected by student numbers. That is why this is included as a best estimate in the budget. The OI and the FHML Board promote the full completion of the educational frameworks by the departments, which means that overutilisation should be as good as zero.

The ideal situation is that there is no overrealisation; this is also the aim of the FHML Board and the OI. However, there are 2 reasons to proceed with payment to departments anyway. Firstly, if there are not enough persons labelled within the department's educational framework (in which situation the OI pays extra in money). As indicated: it is actively promoted to label the cadre 'full' so that teaching does not have to be taken over by others. However, sometimes it proves difficult to appoint new staff, resulting in delays in filling vacancies. Of the 15 FTEs, this involves an average of 9 FTEs (so this is not actually over-realisation). Secondly, a department may have taught more than 0.3 fte more than agreed (=framework). This full excess is then also paid out; this does constitute overachievement (on average this concerns about 6 out of 15 FTEs). If this is of an incidental nature (such as a one-off allocation of many hours due to extra teaching hours for building a new curriculum), the framework is not increased. Otherwise, it is so that new people can be appointed. Some departments deliberately choose not to do this because they prefer to be paid money.

The council recommends including this explanation succinctly in the budget text for clarification.

Chapter 7: FHML Central Duties

7.2 FHML Board

Page 91

Why is the contingency item falling?

Less money is being set aside for this as part of the cutback in Central Duties, partly due to the nature of the costs and history. If more funds are still needed, the central reserve will be drawn on.

How high is the fee for student members?

In accordance with the new regulations, the remuneration for student members of the Faculty Council FHML was increased to €1,000 per year. Last June, the FHML Board agreed to the proposal by E. Bastiaansen (studentassessor) and M. Heckmann (OI), which was explained by E. Bastiaansen in the FHML Council of 2 July 2024.

7.3 HRM

Page 93 - Trainees

Who is eligible for internship allowance?

All MBO and HBO students receive compensation, as is common in the business world where they can also do internships.

There is a separate scheme for coassistants. ~€100 per month (part hospital/UMC CLAs)

It is not expected to change the policy to entitle university students to compensation as well.

Additional questions Council FHML

What is the rationale for offering English-language courses?

One important reason is that the professional field in which many students later end up is often international and uses English as a working language. In addition, there is a growing group of Dutch students who consciously choose an English-language programme, for instance to increase their international opportunities or to better prepare for a career in an English-speaking environment.

With regard to the Bachelor BioMedical Sciences, the distribution is as follows: of the seven tracks offered, five are in Dutch and two in English. This offers Dutch students a valuable choice. It appears that Dutch students often consciously come to Maastricht because of these options.

It is explained that as part of austerity measures, the current cabinet has decided to lower the *numerus fixus* for the Medicine course nationwide. This decision was taken to create more space for the Dentistry programme. For the FHML, this means that seven fewer places will be available for the Medicine programme from the academic year 2025. However, this decision was only taken and communicated just before the start of the 2024 academic year. For this reason, it was decided to continue with the normal *numerus fixus* this year and to self-fund seven places.

On the basis of the discussions held and the explanations given, the council, subject to the above comments, agrees with the outline of the draft FHML 2025 budget.

6 Subsequent agenda items

There are no follow-up agenda items.

7 Any other business

No use was made of the public roundtable.

Kim Luijten
(Translated bij DeepL)