

Faculty of Health, Medicine and Life Sciences
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Executive Board

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Maastricht
15-07-2025

Subject: Approval research assessment report SHE 2018-2023

Dear Prof. Schols, dear Annemie,

The Executive Board (EB) has taken note of the Research Review for the Pedagogical and Educational Sciences, the national research assessment in which School of Health Professions Education (SHE) has participated. The review provides a comprehensive assessment of the research conducted within the Pedagogical and Educational Sciences, a unique research discipline that aligns strongly with the core strength of our institution. The review reaffirms that the quality of research within this discipline is well regarded internationally. The committee found the research to be diverse, encompassing both fundamental, curiosity-driven inquiries on the one hand and applied research in collaboration with societal partners on the other. Some of the recommendations on a national level included more coordinated collaboration among the research institutes to enhance their collective position, a more targeted approach in terms of grant applications instead of having multiple researchers competing for the same grant, and development of clear markers for recognition of excellence in teaching in line with the implementation of Recognition and Rewards.

The participation of SHE in this national review is clear based on its research focus. SHE as a research institute is dedicated to advancing research education, and innovation in health-professions education. Its mission is to improve healthcare by generating and translating evidence-based educational models for training future and current healthcare professionals, including doctors, nurses, allied health professionals, and more. For UM, SHE is an important institute that reflects our focus and commitment to educational excellence and pedagogical research. The EB is therefore pleased to see that the committee recognizes SHE's strategic focus and commends it for its strong scientific output, successful funding acquisition and strong societal impact. The PhD program was found to be robust with a sizable PhD community that has improved in terms of involvement via activities by SHE academy. The committee also views SHE as a viable institute with sufficient capacity and network of collaborative partners to effectively address future challenges.

The benefit of a national level assessment is that it allows the research field to identify gaps and challenges that can be tackled in collaboration, while also helping individual research units to strengthen their own research. However, because of the size of the assessment, it is more difficult for the committee to conduct an in depth assessment of each of the research institutes separately.

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Despite these limitations, the effort required to conduct such an assessment is commendable and the report does include several concrete and actionable recommendations that SHE can build upon, such as expanding innovative research areas and alignment with innovations in healthcare (e.g., AR, VR and AI), enhancing mentorship, and reflecting on the choice and impact of having a considerable number of PhD candidates.

The EB therefore formally approves the report and requests that, as a follow up, the institute starts formulating a strategic action plan based on the SHE specific recommendations. The EB would also advice to include in this action plan a reflection on the general field-specific recommendations provided by the committee in the general assessment (chapter 2). This action plan should be submitted to the EB before the end of January 2026.

We want to thank you and SHE for your dedication to continuously improve the high quality of research at the institute and look forward to the submission of your action plan. Additionally, we want to thank the committee for their comprehensive assessment.

Yours sincerely,
on behalf of the Executive Board
of Maastricht University,



Prof.dr. P. Habibović
Rector Magnificus