

Code of Conduct for Language at Maastricht University

Taking into account that

- Article 7.2 of the Higher Education and Scientific Research Act (WHW) stipulates that the language of higher education instruction and examinations is Dutch;
- The above provision notwithstanding, exceptions can be made for guest lectures by non-Dutch speaking lecturers and if the specific nature, setup or quality of the education or the origin of the students requires otherwise;
- Maastricht University (UM) has an international character, which is reflected in the composition of its staff and student community, the number of Dutch- and English-language bachelor's, master's and PhD programmes, its participation in international strategic research networks (YERUN, WUN), its joint- and double-degree programmes with partner institutions abroad, its support for (EU) regional integration and collaboration, and the "Distinctive Quality Feature for Internationalisation" it has received from the NVAO;
- UM is a signatory to the Code of Conduct for International Students;

the following provisions apply to the use of languages at Maastricht University:

Article 1. Definition

The official language is the language in which programmes are taught, course materials provided, exams and assessments administered and in which other work activities are performed at UM. This language may be either Dutch or English.

Article 2. Scope

This code of conduct applies to all bachelor's and master's programmes that are delivered at UM and registered in the CROHO. It also applies to UM staff and to the objection and appeal procedures.

Article 3. Language of instruction

- a. UM offers study programmes in Dutch and in English. Any decision made to offer a programme in English must be based on Article 7.2. WHW.
- b. The choice of language of instruction is based on, among other things, the content of the programme, the backgrounds of the participating students, the learning objectives and the students' career prospects.
- c. If English is chosen as the language of instruction, the quality and study load of the programme must be equal to that of Dutch-language programmes.
- d. Course materials and parts of programmes may be in Dutch or English, and for elective subjects in German or French.

- e. The official languages of the Executive Board and the representative bodies are Dutch and English. Students and staff are, when participating in the Executive Board or one of the representative bodies, free to express themselves in either of these languages.
- f. Objection and appeal procedures are in principle conducted in Dutch.

Article 4. Programme information

- a. The programme information, the Education and Examination Regulations and the programme-specific Rules and Guidelines of the Examination Board are available in the language of the programme.
- b. Communication with students about a programme should be in the language of instruction of that programme.
- c. UM strives to have a fully bilingual Dutch/English website as far as possible.

Article 5. Education and Examination Regulations

The Education and Examination Regulations (OER) stipulate the following with regard to language:

- a. The language of instruction of the programme and, if applicable, individual programme components;
- b. Requirements with respect to language proficiency and potential exemptions;
- c. The means by which language proficiency is assessed;
- d. The transitional arrangements for current students if a programme's language of instruction is changed.

Article 6. Language proficiency of students

- a. The Faculty Board ensures that students enrolled in the programme have the required language proficiency.
- b. At the start of the programme, the student's proficiency in the relevant language is assumed to be such that he or she can successfully follow the programme. The required level at the start of the bachelor programme shall not be higher than that of the VWO final exam requirements for the relevant language.
- c. Faculties may, before the start of the programme, ask future students to demonstrate their language proficiency by taking an exam at the level of language proficiency required for the programme.
- d. Faculties must adequately inform students about this regulation.
- e. If students plan to follow part of their studies or an internship abroad, they must demonstrate adequate proficiency in the language in which the education or internship is offered. This may be used as a condition for granting permission, with a view to ensuring the effectiveness of the stay abroad. Where applicable, details can be found in the Education and Examination Regulations.
- f. UM supports the Dutch and English language proficiency of its students. To this end, the UM Language Centre offers courses in both languages.

Article 7. Language proficiency of academic and support staff

UM is a bilingual institution.

- a. Academic staff with teaching duties shall have an appropriate level of proficiency in the language of instruction.
- b. Support staff shall have an appropriate level of language proficiency for the tasks for which they are responsible.
- c. Language proficiency is demonstrated by means of a language proficiency assessment or an official certificate.
- d. An employee who, upon being appointed, does not yet have the required language proficiency, shall be given time to develop it. The minimum language requirement must be stated in all vacancies.
- e. UM supports the Dutch and English language proficiency of its employees. To this end, the UM Language Centre offers courses in both languages.
- f. The language proficiency or development thereof is included in the recruitment and selection of staff.

Article 8. Decision making and authority

The authority to decide to change the language of instruction of a programme and introduce transitional arrangements lies with the Executive Board. Such decisions are made on the request of the Faculty Board and at the recommendation of the University Council.

Article 9. Change of language of instruction

A change in the language of instruction of a programme can only take effect at the start of a new academic year.

Approved by the Executive Board on 06.03.2018

Reference

Article 7.2. WHW – Language:

The language of higher education instruction and examination is Dutch. The previous sentence notwithstanding, an alternative language may be used if:

- a. the teaching concerns the language in question,
- b. the teaching concerns a guest lecture by a non-Dutch speaking lecturer, or
- c. the specific nature, setup or quality of the education or the origin of the students requires otherwise, in accordance with a code of conduct established by the board of the institution.