

26.0946/lo
18 August 2026
Approved version

**Minutes of the public part of the 215th meeting of the FHML Council
dated Tuesday 7 July 2026
Present: see attendance list**

1. Opening, announcements and adoption of the agenda

The Chair opened the meeting.

**2. a Adoption of the text of the public part of the report of the^{214th} meeting
dated 9 June 2026**

-26.0913o – dated 29 June 26 – report with appendices

See the approved version with reference 26.0913/lo.

2.b Comments on the public part of the report

There are no comments.

3. Announcements by the Dean

This is the final meeting of the academic year and, as such, also the final meeting of the student section. The Dean wishes the student members every success with the remainder of their studies. When asked, the student members stated that they had learnt a great deal from their participation in the Council. One point raised was that it is sometimes challenging to respond to meeting documents on staff-related topics.

4. FHML accommodation update

D. Vertommen gave a presentation on the FHML accommodation strategy and the progress of the various projects, including the renovation of Uns50, CPV (Uns50), EPD150 and Deb1. The slides have been added to the public section of the minutes under reference HSBu26.168/l.

Following the presentation, questions were raised about how the new accommodation strategy will be further developed, particularly with regard to the reallocation of workspaces and office space amongst the various institutes and departments. D. Vertommen explains that discussions on this matter will begin with the institutes in the autumn. These discussions will involve a fresh review of the available space and how it can be utilised as efficiently as possible. He goes on to explain that allocating office space solely on the basis of the number of FTEs is no longer in line with current practice, in which hybrid working plays a significant role. At the same time, he acknowledges that the reallocation of space is complex, as existing buildings and ongoing refurbishments must be taken into account. However, occupancy measurements show that the average occupancy rate of office spaces is around 40 per cent, which means there are opportunities to utilise the available space more efficiently.

The discussion then turns to the temporary 'computer setup', which is based on a 'bring your own device' concept. When asked, D. Vertommen explains that this arrangement was chosen because the teaching room in question can also be used as an examination venue and, moreover, this approach is in keeping with current practices. The Vice-Dean for Education clarifies that examinations are not currently conducted on students' own devices. However, the possibility of gradually introducing this in the future through pilot schemes is being explored. With regard to a 'bring your own device' concept, the Council recommends that communication on this matter should be directed not only at students but also at lecturers, in addition to the module coordinators.

It was also asked whether the accommodation strategy envisages further shared use of teaching spaces with the FPN and FSE faculties. D. Vertommen stated that, apart from the collaboration already in place, further shared use is not currently on the agenda. Moreover, the occupancy rate of the teaching spaces is already high, at over 80 per cent.

In response to a question about the first phase of the power cut in Uns50, D. It was noted that this generally went well. However, it has become apparent that it is important to check whether all electrical appliances are functioning properly again following a power cut.

Lab managers can check the equipment within their own laboratories, but technical checks and the resolution of any problems are the responsibility of the technicians at Facility Services. This point will be taken into account during the second phase of the power cut in Uns50.

Finally, a question was raised regarding developments concerning the green spaces on the Randwyck campus, in particular the Maastricht City Council's plans to extend the 'Groene Loper'. The Director of FHML stated that discussions on this matter are still ongoing between Maastricht City Council, UM and the MUMC⁺.

5. FHML Position Paper

- 26.0123/VI - dated 18 May 2026 – position paper

The Dean provides an explanation of the FHML Position Paper. She explains that it is a dynamic document which describes the faculty's current position and sets out the direction for its ambitions in the coming years. The position paper forms the basis for the FHML's further strategic planning and forms part of the joint strategic planning process between the FHML and the MUMC⁺.

In addition, Maastricht University will begin developing a new university strategy this autumn. As part of this process, the Executive Board has asked the faculties to provide input. The FHML Position Paper serves as input for the UM strategy, and each research institute has also submitted three strategic themes for the university's research strategy.

The Dean emphasises that the review of the UM strategy is a separate process, distinct from the position paper. Whilst the university strategy focuses on the positioning of the university as a whole, the position paper outlines the overarching ambitions and strategic direction of the FHML in close alignment with the strategy of the MUMC⁺.

The Dean notes that drafting the position paper has been a valuable exercise, in which the research institutes have been actively involved. The Council's views on the document are appreciated.

The Council notes that AI is a key driver of various societal and scientific developments and that this theme deserves particular attention. The Dean endorses this importance but points out that the broader strategic framework must first be clarified before specific themes are developed further.

The Council further notes that the introduction is difficult to read due to the use of numerous abbreviations and references, particularly when the document is shared with different target audiences.

In response to the question of who the document's intended audience is, the Dean replied that the position paper is primarily intended for the FHML community, but should also be suitable for external stakeholders. The Council therefore suggests that two different introductions might be included, tailored to the internal and external audiences respectively.

With regard to societal impact, the Dean explains, when asked, that societal impact is an objective achieved through a variety of activities. The nature of the impact may vary from one discipline to another. The Vice-Dean adds that this must also be clearly stated in the document: impact is an objective, but it requires targeted efforts. The Dean gives a few examples of this and notes that some researchers naturally achieve impact, whilst others require support in this regard. For this reason, work is underway – partly within the framework of 'Recognition and Appreciation' – to establish an appropriate support structure as part of the further development of research support.

The Vice-Dean also asked the Council how it viewed the fact that Europe occupies a prominent place within the MUMC⁺ strategy, whilst this topic is only briefly mentioned in the position paper. The Council indicated that the faculty's international positioning will remain of great importance in the coming years. Although the theme need not be the dominant focus, the Council considers it desirable that the international context and its significance for both international students and staff continue to be explicitly acknowledged.

Finally, attention is drawn to the communication surrounding the position paper. The Dean indicates that consideration is still being given to how the document will be positioned and shared.

The Council expresses its appreciation for the initiative to draw up a position paper.

The Council regards this as a valuable document for guiding the ambitions and strategic development of the FHML.

The Council would appreciate being kept informed of further developments.

6. Additional agenda items

There are no additional agenda items.

7. Any other business

The Council enquired about the current status of the mobility plan, which is due to come into force in January 2027. The Director of FHML stated that he had not received any recent updates on this matter at present. He noted that the subject may still be discussed within the Local Consultation (LO) and that delays in implementation should be taken into account.

K. Luijten