

Education Matters

FHML 2016-2017

A buzzword?

Internationalisation:
preparing students for
their future career

Students keep track of
their development in a
portfolio

René Nijssen

is the new head of
the Education Office

ALUMNI:

‘PROBLEM-BASED
LEARNING
is very useful’



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Colophon

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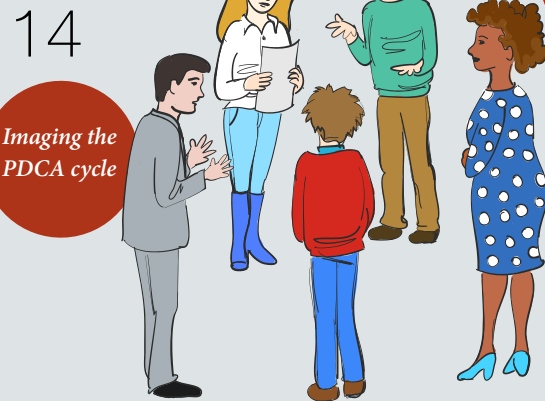
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Innovation and improvements

Welcome to the third edition of our annual magazine *Education Matters*. With this magazine we intend to present remarkable activities and events of the past year, as well as new plans for the future. But we also put the spotlight on some special people involved in education at FHML, because people -both students and staff- are central in everything we do. Students from all over the world come to Maastricht to study in one of our programmes. Their personal history and experiences, as for example presented by Selman Housain in this magazine, certainly contribute to the cultural enrichment and awareness of their peers. Plans are being developed to support our teaching and support staff to deal with this diversity in the best possible way.

In the academic year 2016-2017, a lot of energy was devoted to innovation and improvement of our education. Plans were made to revise several programmes, while revision plans were being implemented in others. Both staff and students are involved in

We want our students to become independent, lifelong learners

these processes and their contribution is highly valued. Revisions do not just concern updates of scientific content, but also imply educational innovations that adhere to our mission. Because we want our students to become independent, lifelong learners, it is, for example, important that they develop a reflective attitude enabling them to critically judge their knowledge and skills and make improvement plans whenever necessary. In this magazine you can read how the introduction of the portfolio in our medical and biomedical curricula contributes to this goal.

Improvement of education is also the result of quality assurance activities. The FHML taskforce Programme Evaluation advices and helps planning groups to continuously improve the quality of their

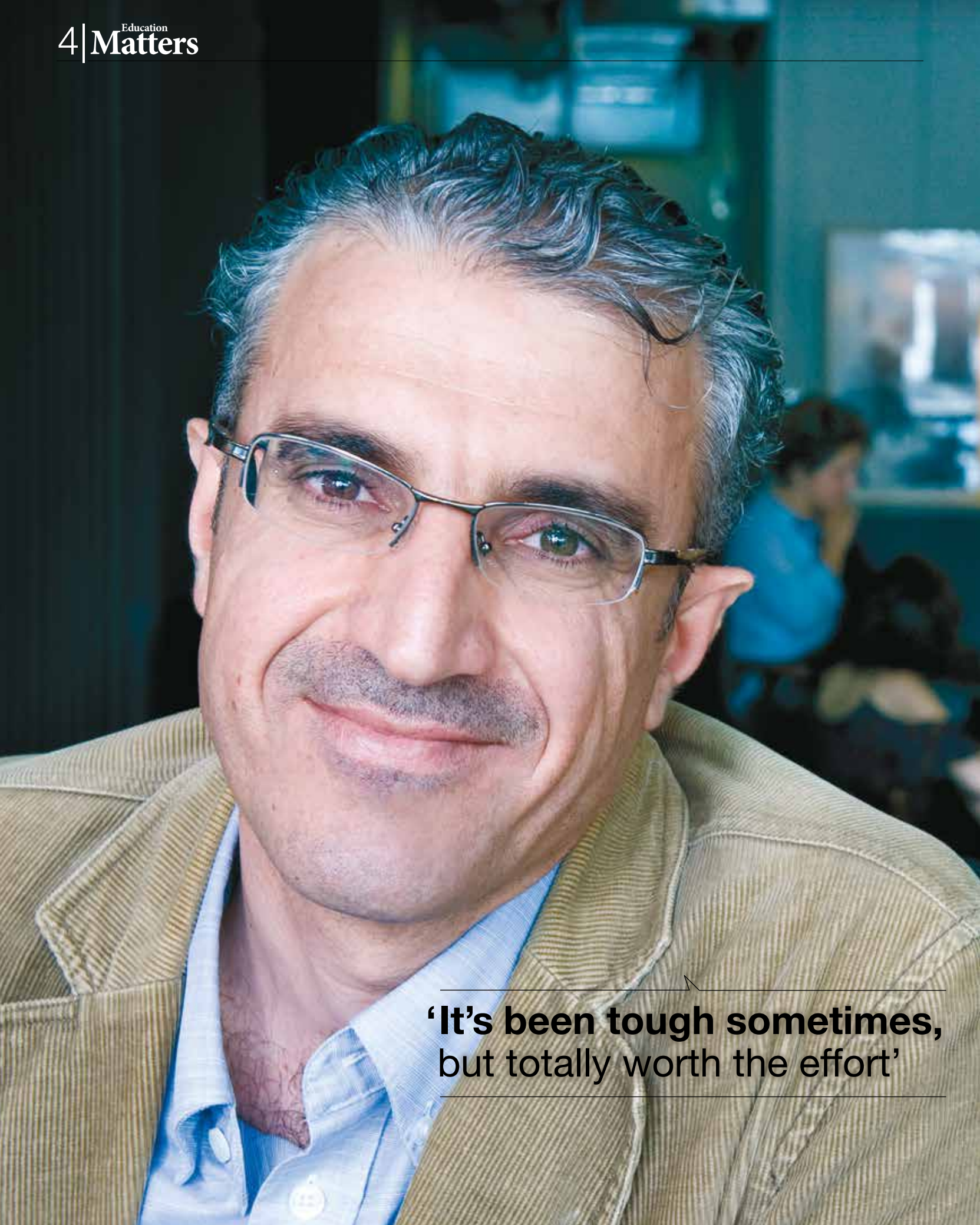


block, module or line with the help of the PDCA cycle (Plan-Do-Check-Act; see page 14). In addition to our own evaluations, data obtained from the annual NSE (Dutch Student Survey) and the UM Studentmonitor also provide information about the quality of our education. These data have helped us in recent years to analyse and improve the way in which we communicate with and provide information to our students. The energy invested in these measures appears to pay off; evaluations of these aspects are now more positive. Nevertheless, continuous attention is needed to further improve our education and its organisation.

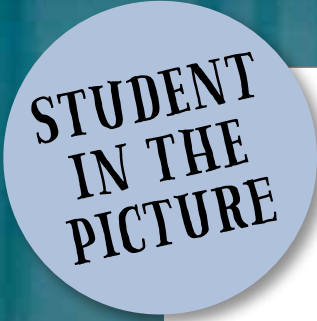
Just before the end of academic year 2016-2017, we were informed about the financial consequences of the discontinuation of the former Dutch system of student grants and loans in 2015. The Dutch government decided at that time that the money saved by this measure would be used to improve the quality of higher education in The Netherlands. Assuming that the new government will adhere to this decision, these additional means will certainly help us to further innovate and improve our programmes in such a way that both students and staff will benefit.

Mirjam oude Egbrink

Scientific director of the Institute for Education FHML



**‘It’s been tough sometimes,
but totally worth the effort’**


**STUDENT
IN THE
PICTURE**

Selman Housain

Although life has not been easy for Selman Housain (37) these past couple of years, he is getting back on track fast. In 2014 he fled the war in his home country of Syria, leaving his wife and three young children behind in Damascus. Luckily, he was able to hold them in his arms again less than nine months later. The family was living in Nijmegen but moved to Maastricht in 2016, following Selman's decision to study for a master's degree in Healthcare Policy, Innovation and Management at Maastricht University. He submitted his thesis at the end of July. He already has been informed that he will get a good grade.

In Damascus, Selman worked as a quality medical engineer. Although he could probably find a job in this profession within the Netherlands, he decided to go back to university first. He explains why. 'I was new to this country and didn't know a single soul.

By taking on this master's programme, I hoped to meet many new people and to enlarge both my personal and business network. Next to that, I found it crucial to obtain a thorough insight into the Dutch healthcare system, to enhance my chances in a new career.' After just one year in Maastricht, everything already seems to be falling into place. His thesis is ready and submitted, Selman has passed his citizenship exam, and potential employers, for instance Medtronic, are standing in line to meet with him and discuss job opportunities.

Preference for Maastricht

The decision to study at Maastricht University was not taken overnight; Rotterdam was also on Selman's list. 'Rotterdam's focus lies on economics, while Maastricht focuses more on innovation topics, which I prefer. I also liked the fact that the master is in English.' The first two months were not easy. 'To be honest, I wasn't at all prepared for Maastricht's Problem-Based Learning system. In Syria students just listen to their professors and take notes. Now suddenly I had to participate in discussions and even give presentations. In the beginning I felt really insecure. But I quickly learnt to deal with it and even started to appreciate it as well.'

I have a lot on my plate

Taking up new studies with three small children at home, while integrating into a new country and town has not been easy. But Selman takes life as it comes. 'There is certainly pressure,' he admits. 'I have a lot on my plate. I wanted to finish my master's as soon as possible, as I'm eager to find a good job to provide for my family. Of course I also had to learn Dutch, which is not an easy language, and study for my citizenship exam. So far everything has gone as planned, thanks to a lot of help from my wife, even though she also wants to go back to work as soon as possible. She is a pharmacist and needs to do an internship and several exams before she can do that.'

Starting a new career

Both Selman and his wife are happy in Maastricht. 'It is a beautiful city and region with lots of opportunities', he says. Having lived here for over a year now, their social life is also beginning to develop, although some hurdles had to be overcome there too. 'The Dutch culture is much more organised than we are used to. If you want to visit a friend, you have to make an appointment first. In Syria, this is totally different. But slowly we are getting used to our new life. In the past year we have made new friends – Claire and Pol – who are a great support and people we can fall back on in difficult times. Also, the student advisor of Maastricht University has been a great help. I look forward to starting a new career now and to improve our lives in the Netherlands.'

ENSURING THE BEST *quality of education*

At FHML, staff and students work together to maintain and further improve the high quality of education. They are organised into three Education Committees, whose powers have recently been expanded through the revised Higher Education and Research Act. Since September 2017, they have had the right of consent, along with the pre-existing right of consultation. Curious about their work? Below, the chairs and vice-chairs reflect on their experiences.

1 EDUCATION COMMITTEE HEALTH

'As Education Committees (ECs), we provide solicited and unsolicited advice about any matter relating to the quality of our education,' says **Aggie Paulus**. Being in her sixth year as the chair of the EC Health, she can rightly be called a veteran. 'Being well-informed is crucial, and to this end we use course reports and qualitative and quantitative student evaluations,' she explains. 'Once a year we talk to the programme coordinators to discuss the curricula; besides that we regularly invite guests to our meetings, such as representatives of the Internationalisation Platform, or the educational director. All this enables us - as well as the EC Biomedical Sciences and the EC Medicine, who function in a similar way - to have both a proactive and reactive role.'

One of the great things about the EC, according to Paulus, is the fact that half of its members are students, including the vice-chair. Student **Sanne Allers**, who was vice-chair last year, agrees. 'Being part of the EC has proved a unique opportunity to make a contribution in a professional and hierarchical organisation,' she says, 'and I found that our point of view, as students, is greatly appreciated.' Among the accomplishments of the EC Health are raising awareness of staff members' workload and advancing the career opportunities of junior teaching staff. Paulus: 'It shows that our advice is taken seriously.'



2 EDUCATION COMMITTEE BIOMEDICAL SCIENCES

'Be the change you wish to see in the world: that's my philosophy', says student *Michelle van Holten*. Becoming part of the EC Biomedical Sciences as a vice-chair, therefore, was nothing but a logical step for her. 'What really stands out for me is the open and pleasant atmosphere within the EC. There is an excellent cooperation between staff and students.' She also deems it important to thank her fellow students for their feedback in evaluations. 'Their opinions matter greatly to us; they enable the EC to do its work properly.'



According to chair *Juanita Vernooij*, student members like Van Holten are of great importance. 'They get feedback from the student council and regularly talk to their fellows,' she says. 'In this manner they contribute to our visibility, which is something that we are currently working on.' The fact that the ECs have recently been given right of consent on some points is a positive development, although it is too early to talk about results. Vernooij: 'The good thing is that the EC has always been listened to. An example is the evaluation of our programs, where we felt an improvement in quality was needed. By looking at best practices from Health and Medicine, we succeeded in making a change in collaboration with the Management Team Biomedical Sciences. Learning from each other, that's also what the EC is there for.'



3 EDUCATION COMMITTEE MEDICINE

'I don't want to boast, but looking back, it has been a really good year,' says *Jeroen Kooman* about his first year as chair of the EC Medicine. 'I am impressed by the professional participation of the students. Just like the staff members, they are critical but positive, and dedicated to enhancing education in all its forms.' One of those students is vice-chair *Saskia Witte*, who has had a similar positive experience. 'Within the EC, staff and students are equal,' she says. 'It's very nice to have a look behind the scenes, so to speak, and see how our education is organised.'



The EC Medicine has directed its efforts, among other things, towards supporting the accreditation process, evaluating the examination regulations, and making interns aware of their rights and responsibilities. The challenges ahead? 'We will need to work on our visibility, so as to familiarise both teachers and students with our activities,' Kooman says. 'The ECs will have to reposition themselves further in accordance with the revised Higher Education and Research Act. As chair, I keep on learning every day.'



Facts & figures

ACADEMIC YEAR 2016-2017

4947 STUDENTS
male: 1506 and female: 3441

students from **72** *different countries of origin*

978 bachelors new intake

NEW INTAKE MASTERS: **924**

910 *international internships*

EDUCATIONAL STAFF: **267** FTE (full time equivalent) and over 2000 staff members

DEGREES: **1553** *736 bachelors and 817 masters**

staff with University Teaching Qualification (BKO): **675**

about

3000

*bikes are parked
at the university
every day*

4 BACHELORS:

- B.Sc. Biomedical Sciences
- B.Sc. European Public Health
- B.Sc. Health Sciences
- B.Sc. Medicine (including the International Track in Medicine)

15 MASTERS:

- M.Sc. Affective Neuroscience
- M.Sc. Biomedical Sciences
- M.Sc. Epidemiology
- M.Sc. Governance and Leadership in European Public Health
- M.Sc. Global Health

- M.Sc. Health and Food Innovation Management
- M.Sc. Health Education and Promotion
- M.Sc. Health Professions Education
- M.Sc. Health Sciences Research (Research Master)
- M.Sc. Healthcare Policy, Innovation and Management
- M.Sc. Human Movement Sciences
- M.Sc. Medicine
- M.Sc. Mental Health
- M.Sc. Physician-Clinical Researcher (Research Master)
- M.Sc. Work, Health and Career

The POWER of the portfolio

Throughout their studies, Biomedical and Medical students keep track of their development in a portfolio. A buzzword? Perhaps. But a portfolio is much more than that. 'When used in the right way, it's a tool to educate proactive professionals who strive to get the best out of themselves and others,' says portfolio coordinator Marjan Govaerts.

BIOMEDICAL SCIENCES

In Biomedical Sciences, the portfolio is more or less a novelty; it was introduced last academic year as part of the new bachelor's programme. 'With the new curriculum, we aim to prepare our students in the best possible way to meet the demands of the labour market,' says the programme's portfolio coordinator Judith Cosemans, who works on this in close cooperation with the programme's mentor coordinator Veerle Melotte. Cosemans: 'As biomedical knowledge increases exponentially, we train them to become critical, lifelong learners. And that's not all; to be able to apply their knowledge, other competences are also needed, such as communicating effectively and cooperating with people from different backgrounds.' These competences are not developed overnight. Instead, it is a process that needs time



AUDREY KAHN REFLECTS ON HER FIRST YEAR AS A BIOMEDICAL SCIENCES STUDENT

'Looking back on the past year, I have to say that I learned a lot. I gained a lot of biomedical knowledge and, besides, developed competences and skills like presenting, giving and receiving feedback, and leading a tutorial group. The area in which I progressed most is scientific writing, as we had to write one scientific paper for each block and received a lot of feedback. Next to that, I developed a really nice relationship with my mentor. We talk about academic matters as well as personal life events.'

Study Lounge



Judith Cosemans, Marjan Govaerts and Mascha Verheggen.

- and that is where the portfolio comes in. Together with their mentor, students evaluate their development and performance during the course of their studies, based on their own experiences and on the feedback they receive from their tutors and peers. 'We ask them to identify their strengths and weaknesses and, consequently, to formulate personal learning goals,' Cosemans explains. 'In short, enabling them to further their own progress, that's what it's all about.'

MEDICINE

Marjan Govaerts, portfolio coordinator of the master's in Medicine, fully agrees. 'In a changing labour market, we want our graduates to be adaptive professionals who are aware of their own development and growth,' she states. From the onset of their studies, medical students are working towards this goal, with the help of a new portfolio that was introduced in the medical bachelor's programme last year. The portfolio, which also centres on competences, is based on experiences and is both a tool for guidance and assessment.

'Analysing and reflecting is not easy, especially when you are eighteen years old,' says Mascha Verheggen, portfolio coo-

'ANALYSING AND REFLECTING IS NOT EASY, ESPECIALLY WHEN YOU ARE EIGHTEEN YEARS OLD'

ordinator of the bachelor's in Medicine. 'Therefore, we start relatively easy in the first year. Students create a record of their learning experiences, which they back up with evidence such as tutor and expert feedback. Together with their mentor, they then analyse and reflect on it. The idea is that at the end of the bachelor's phase, the portfolio will give a clear insight into their competences. It thereby forms the starting point for their master's, which is completely competence-based.'

Verheggen, Govaerts and Cosemans agree that the success of the portfolio depends on its implementation. 'It's a lot of work for students and staff alike, so the benefits should be clear to them,' Cosemans says. 'Mentors, in general, are very enthusiastic about their new role. It's important to get everyone involved on board, from the teaching staff to the Board of Examiners. It's an ongoing dialogue, but we are confident that we are on the right track.'

It seems so obvious that practical lab sessions should be held in a clean, safe and well-equipped environment, where teachers and students can start working as soon as they arrive. But after a talk with Henk van Rie and Jacqueline Maes we know better. There is a lot of work involved in running a lab. Henk and Jacqueline are responsible for the five practical student labs at FHML.



WELCOME TO THE STUDENTS LAB, MEET *Jacqueline & Henk*

DOING THE ROUNDS

‘Every day starts and ends with doing the rounds at the laboratories,’ says Jacqueline. ‘We check that the equipment is in working order and that everything needed is in place. At the end of the day we check that everything has been cleaned and cleared away. During the day we supervise where necessary, and act as a point of contact for students and staff.’

SHEEP’S BRAINS

‘The laboratories are used by students of Medicine, Biomedical Sciences, Health Sciences and Psychology. Here, they learn the basic principles of how to set up a reaction or analysis, what equipment they need and how to carry it out. Each discipline has its own type of practical lab session. For example, Psychology /Neurosciences students dissect sheep’s brains here. Medical specialist trainees are given courses using laboratory animals, but lab training may also involve vitamin C, cell cultures and other determinations, so it is quite diverse!’





EQUIPMENT

The labs are chock-full of equipment: microscopes, flow cabinets, centrifuges, spirometers, bomb calorimeters, fume hoods and spectrophotometers, to name just a few. 'All this equipment must be in good working order and properly calibrated,' Henk explains. 'Calibration is done by specialist companies. During the year, we carry out small maintenance jobs, report any faults and make sure they are resolved. Sometimes equipment needs to be replaced. For example, some of the microscopes are nearly 40 years old. They have been used intensively and not always in the most professional way, so they really need to be replaced. A study is now underway, and we already have one new microscope to test out.'



CHEMICALS

For safety reasons, Henk and Jacqueline will not disclose exactly what chemicals are kept here under lock and key. 'Not everyone has to know what is kept here in-house,' says Henk. 'Also, it has not been long since the chemicals were distributed between various cupboards for storage. Anyone could access them and we found that to be unsafe. Now, there is only one chemical cupboard and we are the only ones who have the key.'



SAFETY

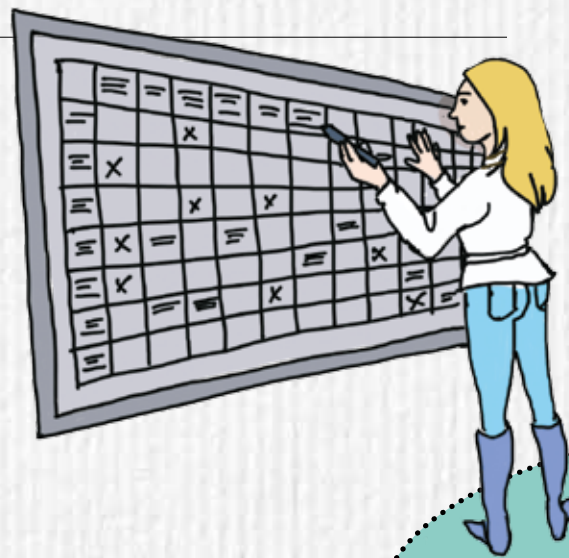
'Here, we work in accordance with GLP (Good Laboratory Practice) and we check that people are following the rules. This involves making sure that the students are using the equipment correctly, are wearing personal protective equipment when necessary, use the fume hood when working with hazardous chemicals, etc. Another important factor in terms of safety is keeping the work environment clean and tidy. Actually, the benches have to be cleaned after every practical lab session, but this is far from being the case.'



Evaluating education to achieve continuous improvement

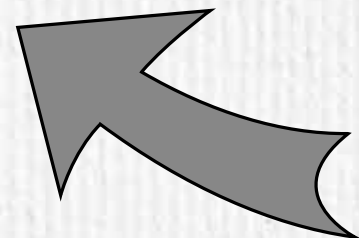
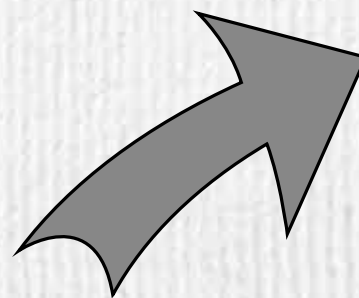
Process of quality assurance
of the programmes:

PDCA cycle



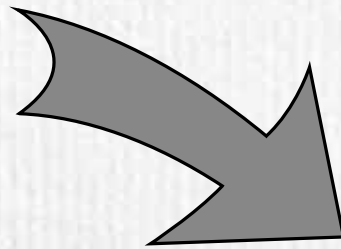
Act

- Interpret and discuss the evaluation results
- Formulate a SMART action plan for improvement
- Communicate with staff and students
- Execute the plan



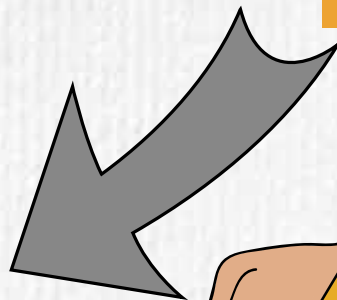
- Control execution of last year's plan
- Define important aspects of the programme to evaluate
- Decide on respondents
- Identify evaluation instruments

Plan



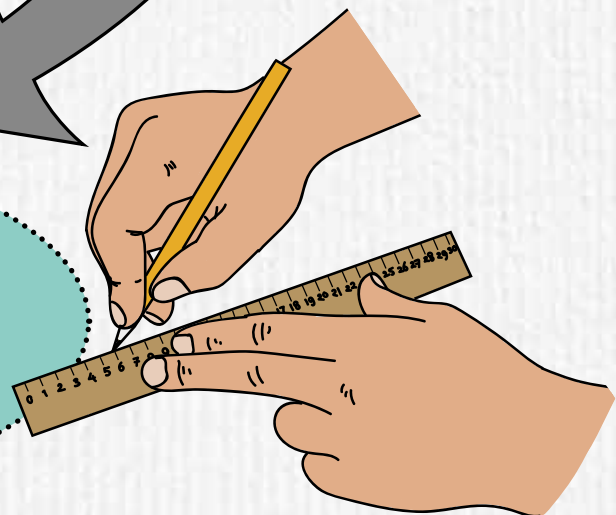
Do

- Measure educational quality of important aspects of the programme



- Define standards and criteria
- Compare results to criteria
- Analyse evaluation data
- Create evaluation report

Check



INTERNATIONALISATION HAS TO BECOME *part of our DNA*

'In the globalised world of today, a medical doctor should be capable of communicating with foreign patients, a biomedical scientist of cooperating with, let's say, a lab in Asia, and a healthcare manager needs to possess intercultural management skills,' says Anja Krumeich, chair of the Platform Internationalisation. After two years of scrutinising internationalisation in all FHML educational programmes, it is time to draw up the balance sheet.

Bottom-up approach

Internationalisation is one of the defining characteristics of Maastricht University; with more than half of its students coming from abroad, it is the most international university in the Netherlands. In 2015, the Platform Internationalisation was established at FHML to further develop the faculty's vision on internationalisation. It is made up of staff and students representing each of the three FHML domains.

'We decided to take a bottom-up approach,' says Anja Krumeich, 'and conducted interviews with representatives of all educational programmes as well as relevant supporting departments and committees. What we found is that most people were very positive about the idea of internationalisation, even though it wasn't always clear exactly what it entails, or why it's a good thing in itself.'



YASMIN HASHISH
student member

'Both international and Dutch students realise that we live in a globalised world and agree that this should be reflected in their educational programmes. The past years, the Platform has made great progress in putting internationalisation on the agenda. It's a hot topic now, and it's up to us to keep it that way.'

Prepared for the future

Therefore, the Platform came up with a clear mission statement: internationalisation stands for preparing students for their future career in a globalised world. 'That is not to say that we primarily educate students for a job abroad,' Platform member Jascha de Nooijer explains. 'It means that we equip them with the knowledge, skills, and competencies that are needed to be able to successfully function in an international labour market.'

Since there is no standard recipe for everyone - the international training of a doctor will be different than that of a biologist - it is up to the programme coordinators to adjust their programmes accordingly. In the coming years, the Platform will support them in formulating new learning goals and final attainment levels. De Nooijer: 'Internationalisation has to become ingrained in our curricula, which is a process that takes time.'

Krumeich agrees. 'And this holds true for every layer of our organisation,' she adds. 'Becoming truly international has an effect on virtually everything we do; from translating the Board of Examiners' documents into English, to recognizing foreign degrees, to becoming aware of the cultural assumptions underlying Problem Based Learning, to name but a few.'



Albertine Zanting, Anja Krumeich and Jascha de Nooijer.

INTERNATIONALISATION STANDS FOR PREPARING STUDENTS FOR THEIR FUTURE CAREER IN A GLOBALISED WORLD

'I really appreciate it that Maastricht University works together with students in every layer of its organisation; for me, it was a great experience to be part of the Platform. Our most important finding, I think, is that a lot of staff members are willing to internationalise, but don't always know how this can be achieved. The Platform is there to help.'

KIRSTEN HENDRIKS
student member



Essential

According to Platform member Albertine Zanting, the future role of the Platform will be that of a consultancy. 'By means of interviews we have been informed about good practices, and now it's up to us to share this knowledge and experience.' A shining example is the master's programme in Global Health, where students learn what it is like to function in intercultural, interdisciplinary teams. Zanting: 'We acknowledge that some programmes are easier internationalised than others. But that shouldn't be a barrier. Internationalisation has to become part of our DNA.'

Internationalisation broadens students' horizon and enriches their education - Krumeich, de Nooijer, and Zanting all agree about that. Yet it is not the whole story, finds Krumeich. 'A medical doctor, scientist, or manager who doesn't know how to deal with different cultures is not a good professional. Preparing our students for an international labour market is not only fun and interesting, it's absolutely essential.'

'We organised interviews with student and study associations in order to find out how they handle internationalisation. Student associations are traditionally very Dutch-oriented, but lately they have been trying to be more open to international students. Study associations like Helix managed to get a diverse board, which is a great development.'

JAN PABLO DE MEY
student member



News in brief

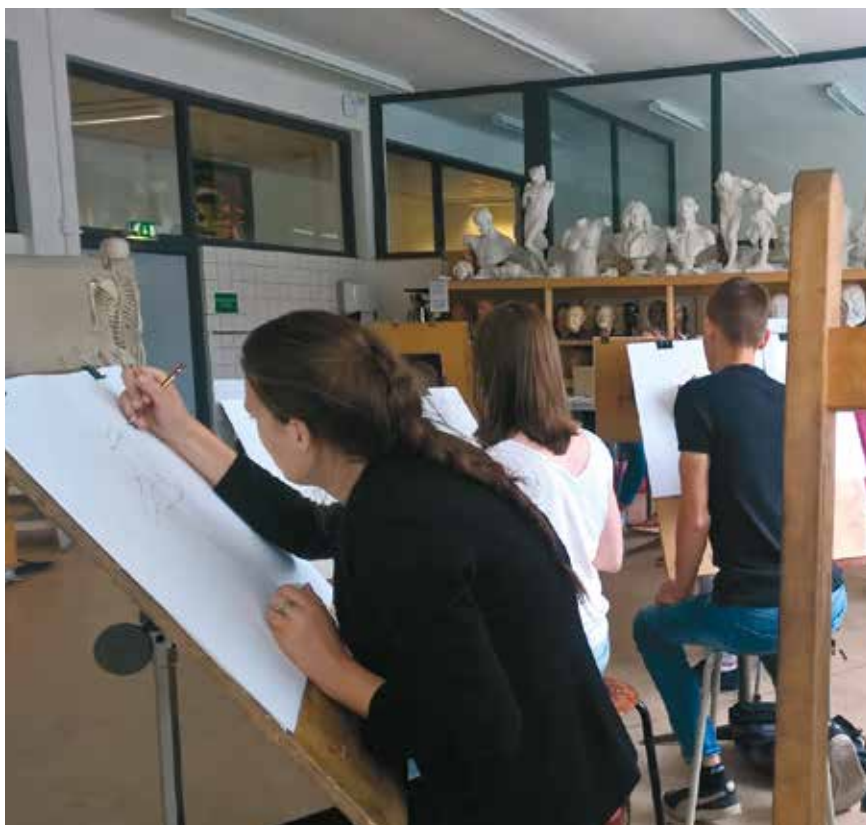
‘Hack your Future – Innovate your Education’

On 12 April 2017 the annual education symposium took place, jointly organised by the three Education Committees of FHML. The participants (staff and students) enjoyed a stimulating, participant-directed afternoon. The central theme of the symposium was: ‘How can we enhance self-directed learning in the context of competence-based education?’



RE-ACCREDITATION MASTER HEALTH PROFESSIONS EDUCATION

In 2016-2017 the Master Health Professions Education has been successfully re-accredited by the Dutch Flemish Accreditation Organisation. The master also obtained the ‘Certificate for Quality in Internationalisation’ issued by the European Consortium for Accreditation.



Medicine and Arts?

In the last four weeks of the academic year 2016-2017, ten medical students followed an elective course with the title ‘Does the experience of art make you a better doctor?’

Mieke Derickx, art curator of Maastricht University, led this special course and took the students to museums such as Marres and the Bonnefantenmuseum to observe and experience art.

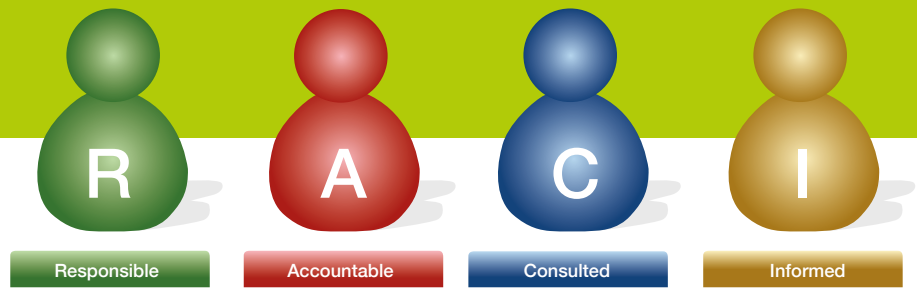
Students also interviewed a number of clinicians to gather knowledge about their subjective and objective experiences with patients, and went to a special class on Scientific Anatomical Illustration at Zuyd Hogeschool. By taking part in this course students learned to use their senses in a different way: look at, smell, feel and listen to art and bring it into (clinical) practice.



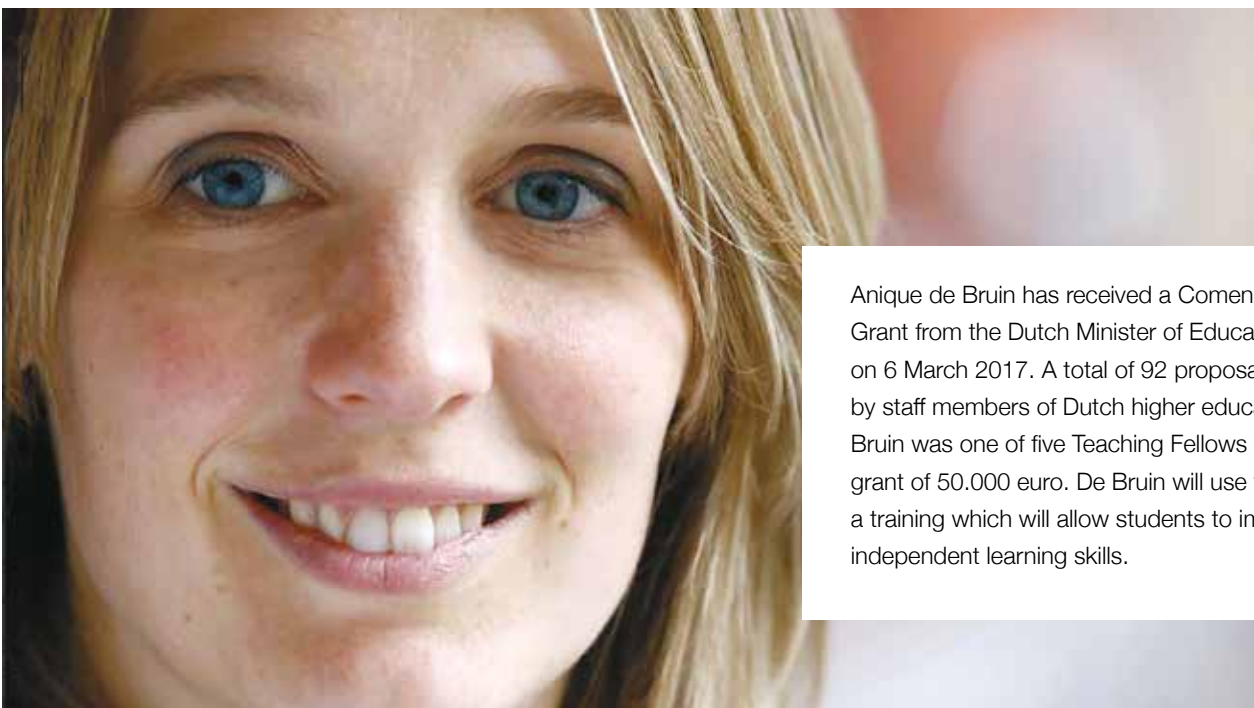
At the beginning of 2017 Mirjam oude Egbrink, scientific director Institute for Education FHML, officially opened the new office of the Student Representatives of our faculty. Student Council (Health and Biomedical Sciences) and Pulse Onderwijs (Medicine) meet here every week to represent more than 5000 FHML-students in several gremia e.g. the Education Committees and the Faculty Council. By means of a competition among students the room was named 'The Hub'. You can find The Hub diagonally across the reception desk at UNS40, near the elevators. See you there!

Professionalisation trajectory Boards of Examiners and Educational Management

To enhance clarity and transparency in assessment processes, UM organised a professionalisation trajectory for the Boards of Examiners and the Educational Management Teams. One of the elements was (re)defining who is Responsible and Accountable, and who should be Consulted and Informed (RACI) in assessment related processes. All FHML Boards of Examiners and Management Teams participate in this trajectory, which will be completed before the end of 2017.



Teaching fellow receives grant of 50.000 euro



Anique de Bruin has received a Comenius Teaching Fellow Grant from the Dutch Minister of Education Jet Bussemaker on 6 March 2017. A total of 92 proposals were submitted by staff members of Dutch higher education institutes. De Bruin was one of five Teaching Fellows to be awarded with a grant of 50.000 euro. De Bruin will use this grant to develop a training which will allow students to improve their independent learning skills.



ALUMNI RECOUNT: “Problem-Based Learning makes the difference”

On 9 September 2017, FHML held its first Alumni event, combined with the PAS event (Pleasure, Art and Science). Although attendance was lower than expected, it proved to be a very lively event. The alumni were treated to a fascinating programme and had plenty of opportunity to catch up and chat with each other afterwards.

Mirjam oude Egbrink, Scientific Director of the Institute for Education, took the audience on a trip down memory lane; from the early days of the 40 years of history of Maastricht University to the creation of the FHML faculty and the present situation. Professor Bela Kubat, Endowed Chair Forensic Pathology, gave an interesting insight into the history and current practice of forensic medical research. And Professor Hans Savelberg answered the question ‘Do we really need to exercise?’ (The answer is no; simply moving every half hour appears to significantly reduce the risk of cardiovascular disorders and diabetes!).

Leaving the classroom all starry-eyed

Marjon de Jong–Meesters was one of the alumni present. In 1981, she was part of the second batch of Health Sciences. ‘It’s always nice to meet up with former classmates. That’s why I’m a member of the region’s alumni committee. We meet up regularly and take part in fun, educational activities together. My two sons also studied in Maastricht, so that has further strengthened my ties with the university. What has helped me in my career? Problem-Based Learning (PBL). The 7 step method still comes in handy quite often. After finishing my studies, I started working in the Patient Education department at Zuyderland in Sittard-Geleen. Looking back, I wasn’t very well prepared for my job at the time.

I left the classroom all starry-eyed, thinking I was ready to face anything. Students should come into contact with the practical side of things as early as possible.'

Students have broad training and a proactive approach

Annemieke Brugman studied Medicine from 1987 to 1993. 'I'm currently working as a paediatrician at the GGD in Southeast Brabant. I'm starting a forensic science course soon, so this afternoon's programme really appealed to me.' Annemieke still has close ties with Maastricht University, as she supervises rotation students every year. 'Recently, we even hired a rotation student from Maastricht.' Annemieke also says that Problem-Based Learning has helped her a great deal. 'It makes you flexible and improves your communication skills. You learn how to effectively pick up verbal and non verbal signs. Do I have any more advice? No, not really. I get the impression that the students are well prepared, had a broad training and are very proactive.'

'Problem-Based Learning makes you flexible and improves your communication skills'

Streams of energy and knowledge

Anke Weenink and Ivonne Plagge came to the event together. They were housemates for a few years from 1983 on. Anke studied Mental Health and works as a forensic psychologist, while Ivonne studied Health Education and Promotion and works in the communications department at APG. 'I'm actually here by accident,' laughs Anke. 'I was visiting Ivonne this weekend and she suggested coming along. It's great to be able to combine it with this evening's PAS event. I don't have many links with Maastricht anymore, apart from my friendship with Ivonne and another one of our housemates. We had a wonderful time here. Problem-Based Learning was perfect for me at the time. I was already trained as a psychiatric nurse and the independence greatly appealed to me. The study was new at the time; I was even on the curriculum committee that designed new learning modules.' Ivonne also mentions the PBL system which she still enjoys. 'The 7-step method [a structured approach to problems] is an integral part of my system. Just like the Fishbein and Ajzen model, which allows you to predict healthy behaviour, I still use this in my work all the time. Now that I'm here, I get the old feeling back straight away. I feel very at home here; I had a fantastic time and can look back on it with a great deal of fondness. I can also feel a bit of the flow of energy and knowledge here again this afternoon. It's wonderful!'



Making students fit for the LABOUR MARKET

FHML's mission statement is unequivocal: graduates should be professionals with a life-long learning attitude, who are able to operate in an ever-changing and international society. Employability, therefore, is on the top of the educational agenda. A recently established think tank works on maximizing students' chances of future success.

THINK TANK

'Do you have the competencies, skills, and knowledge which enable you to function on an academic level throughout your career? That is, in short, what we mean by employability,' says associate professor Arno van Raak, who has been working as FHML's employability coordinator since last year. 'In general, our graduates perform quite well when it comes to career and employment opportunities. But it's our ambition to prepare them even better for their professional lives.'

One of the first things Van Raak did in his new role as coordinator was setting up a think tank, consisting of staff members and students coming from each of the three FHML domains: Biomedical Sciences, Medicine, and Health. The think tank started with identifying what is already happening in the field of employability. 'And it's a lot,' says Joost van der Heijden, who is one of the think tank's student members and is currently finishing his bachelor's degree in Biomedical Sciences. Van Raak: 'That's the good news. There's no need to start from scratch.'

SPEED DATING

On the contrary, FHML's study associations organise all sorts of activities for students who actively seek to prepare themselves for life after university; ranging from career events, where it is possible to speed date with alumni and professionals, to workshops and workplace visits.

'This also happens within bachelor's and master's programmes,' says Van Raak. 'Students nonetheless often have the idea that they're not sufficiently being prepared for the labour market, and that's partly because a lot happens implicitly. Problem-based learning, our best kept secret, is an excellent tool for making students employable, as is the focus on

developing competencies, for instance during placements. It's up to us now to make them aware of what they learn and how this will help them when they enter the labour market - make the implicit explicit, so to say.'

Van der Heijden agrees. He recalls one time when he was attending a lecture. Towards the end of it, the professor started talking about her own research. 'Back then, I couldn't relate it to what had previously been discussed,' he says. 'Now I do. It was nothing but career information, though implicitly so.'

FUTURE

The next step is to build on what we already have and to improve communication and coordination, according to Van Raak. 'We should better inform students about the activities that are taking place in the field of employability, as we discovered that this is not always clear to them. Next to that, we have to make sure that study associations and teaching staff update each other on the things they are doing, and see whether they can cooperate more. Also, better alignment of supply and demand for employability services is needed'. The bottom line is clear: employability deserves a prominent place in all of FHML's programs, post-academic programmes included. Van Raak: 'Employability always goes hand in hand with lifelong learning. Therefore it's also an ambition to work on the employability of alumni. That's another challenge ahead.'

Does Van der Heijden, who will graduate soon, feel he is equipped to enter the labour market? 'I guess so. The past years I developed competencies such as communication and self-directed learning, which will come in very handy later on. Yes, I think I'm ready.'



‘EMPLOYABILITY ALWAYS
GOES HAND IN HAND WITH
LIFELONG LEARNING’

Looking back and forward

WITH THE FORMER AND THE NEW HEAD OF THE EDUCATION OFFICE



The former head of the Education Office **Pauline Vluggen** IS SUPPORTING A PRIMARY SCHOOL IN UGANDA.

Ensuring a smooth education process at FHML: that, in a nutshell, is what the Education Office is all about. Pauline Vluggen, the recently retired head of the Education Office, reflects on her time at Maastricht University. Her successor René Nijssen talks about his plans and ambitions for the future.

'I enjoyed my work'

Pauline Vluggen's career at Maastricht University started in 1976, the year in which the then Rijksuniversiteit Limburg officially opened its doors. After having worked as the dean's secretary, she left for another job, only to return a few years later. 'I became the head of the office of international relations at the medical faculty,' she says. 'There, I was responsible for setting up a student exchange programme and for running the secretariat for an international network of community-oriented educational institutions for health sciences. I worked with a small group of people who were all very enthusiastic about internationalisation. It was a time of pioneering, which was fantastic.'

As the faculty developed into its current structure, Vluggen's job changed accordingly. As head of the Education Office, she led a team of fifty-five people working on the organisation, planning, and logistics of education at FHML. Vluggen: 'The integration of the three domains -

Biomedical Sciences, Medicine and Health - was challenging at times, but all in all I can say that throughout my whole career, I had a lot of freedom and opportunities and enjoyed my work. Otherwise I wouldn't have stuck around for such a long time!

Does she have any advice for her successor René Nijssen? 'I hope he will continue to work on the integration of the three domains. Since he is new to the university he will be able to see things from a fresh point of view, which is always a good thing. I'm convinced that it will work out perfectly fine.' Vluggen herself, in the meantime, has plenty of things to do. She plans to travel and devote more time to Kiwanuka, a foundation supporting a primary school in Uganda. It was set up by Vluggen and her husband, whom she met at the university thirty-six years ago. 'That's actually the best thing the university gave me', she says. 'The love of my life.'

René Nijssen: 'A lot of people who work here are specialists in their area of expertise. It's my task to help them flourish.'

'I want us to be the best'

René Nijssen worked for more than twenty-five years at the Saxion University of Applied Sciences in Deventer, first as a chemistry lecturer and later as a manager. His native soil Limburg, however, kept drawing him back. Nijssen: 'When I saw the vacancy for the position of head of the Education Office, I thought: this perfectly matches my knowledge and experience.' Having worked at Maastricht University for a couple of months now, he is convinced he has made the right choice.

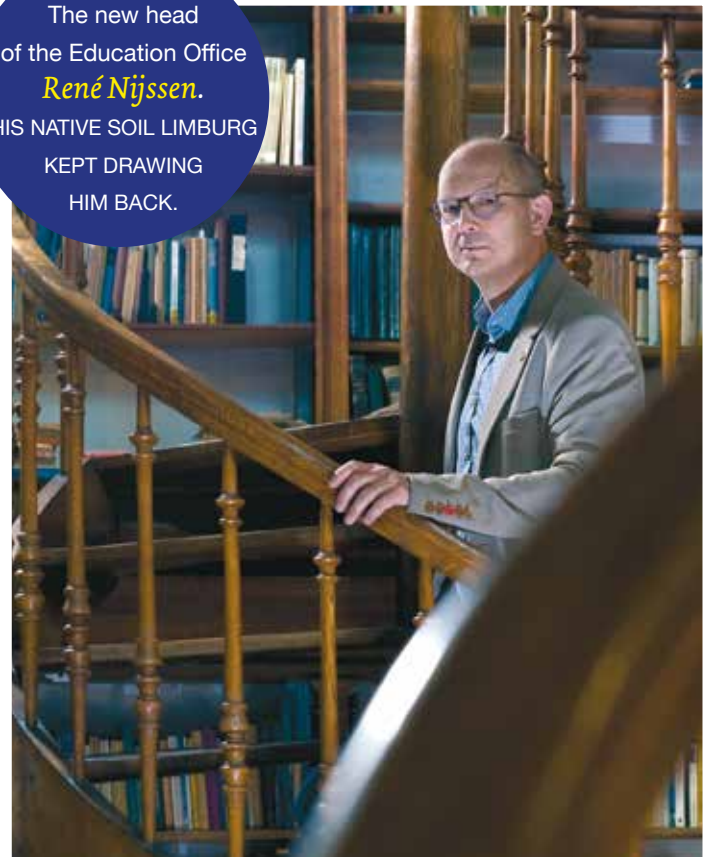
'Everything is still quite new to me, so I'm busy getting to know my colleagues and discovering how the organisation works,' he says. 'It's a very nice experience. Every

Friday, I take a moment to evaluate what I have learnt the past week.' He laughs. 'Yes, I'm making progress.'

A coach and a facilitator: that's how Nijssen would describe himself as a manager. 'A lot of people who work here are specialists in their area of expertise. It's my task to help them flourish.' As a result, his door is always open - literally.

'I value transparency and I think it's important to be involved. This doesn't mean that I need to know every single detail of what's going on, but we should keep each other up to date.' Nijssen is also outspoken about his ambitions. 'We perform well in student rankings, but when it comes to the provision of information and planning, for instance, there is always room for improvement. I want us to be the best.'

The new head
of the Education Office
René Nijssen.
HIS NATIVE SOIL LIMBURG
KEPT DRAWING
HIM BACK.



Prizes

NOUSJKA VRANKEN WINS AWARD AT THE STUDENT RESEARCH CONFERENCE IN NIJMEGEN

Nousjka Vranken (Health) has won an award granted by the audience for the presentation she gave about her bachelor's research in Health during the Student Research Conference 2016 in Nijmegen. In her thesis Nousjka evaluated a new method for measuring blood circulation after breast reconstructions where the patient's own tissue is used. 'After I gave my presentation, a jury decided that I belonged to the top 3 of the category. That meant that I was allowed to give a 2-minute pitch at the end of the conference, in which I explained why my project was relevant to society. The audience could vote in real-time via an app. Among them were people who were not necessarily interested in medicine or technical topics. What I really liked was the fact that my research also resonated with these people.'



THE ELEVATE LECTURER AWARD

On June 14, 2017, Francine Schneider (Department of Health Promotion) won the Elevate Lecturer Award. The award was granted by students of the online 'Health Education and Promotion' programme. Students were very positive about the programme as well as the development of the online learning environment.



SWUM PRIZES

On 7 February 2017 at the Dies Natalis of Maastricht University, the Foundation Wetenschapsbeoefening UM awarded student prizes for an academic achievement (a research report, internship report, bachelor's or master's thesis).

The FHML prize winners were:

- Esther Schwich (MSc in Biomedical Sciences)
- Sophie Joosten (MSc in Medicine)
- Karin Koymans (BSc in Biomedical Sciences)
- Vasileios Nittas (BSc in European Public Health)
- Floor Pinckaers (BSc in Medicine)
- Janine Ziemons (BSc in Health Sciences).

CATHARINA PIJLS INCENTIVE PRIZE

The Catharina Pijls Incentive Prize 2016 went to Michelle Vellinga (MSc in Health Education and Promotion) for her study on vegetable consumption amongst toddlers. Her prizewinning master's thesis examines how teachers can encourage kindergarten pupils to eat more vegetables.

The Catharina Pijls Incentive Prize is awarded to a recent FHML graduate as a token of appreciation for an excellent master's thesis. The prize winner's thesis is selected based on its excellence, innovativeness and the distinctive character of the performed research.

UM STUDENT AWARD FOR FHML STUDENT INITIATIVE

Matthijs Bosveld (Medicine) and Sjim Romme (Health Sciences) were selected from 19 nominees for the UM Student Award 2016.

Matthijs and Sjim were both touched by the issue of lack of empathy shown by some healthcare providers. To address this, they set up the project 'The person behind the patient' (Mens achter de Patiënt). The project brings patients with disabilities or chronic illnesses and Medical and Health Sciences students together in small groups. These groups meet several times. The get-togethers revolve around the person behind the patient instead of the illness. The prize consists of an artwork, a cash prize of €1000 and a photo of the winners in the UM Student Hall of Fame.



FHML EDUCATION PRIZES 2016

On 9 November 2016, the annual FHML Education Prizes were awarded. With these prizes the Institute for Education seeks to recognise staff members who excel in educational roles and who make a relevant contribution to the development of education within FHML.

Prizes for best tutors and blocks were awarded to:

- Gert Jan den Hartog and Joris Hoeks (Biomedical Sciences)
- Johan Evers and Andreas Herrler (Medicine)
- Agnes Boots, Angelique de Rijk and Geja Hageman (Health).

The Honours Award for Education was handed out for the first time. This award honours staff members who have shown special dedication to education, not specifically coupled to one role or block. The winners were Marjan Govaerts (Biomedical Sciences), Christine Willekes (Medicine) and Aggie Paulus (Health).

They will pass on the (original) award to a staff member of their own choice during the ceremony in the following year and receive a replica of the original.

Also, a prize for the best medical internship is awarded annually. The nominees and winner are chosen by Medicine students. In 2016, this award went to the internship Surgery in the Laurentius Hospital in Roermond.



Foto: Harry Heuts



Dr. Marielle Vlooswijk
department of Neurology

'The UTQ course at Maastricht University provides a good starting point for young academics towards a greater appreciation in the intricate ways of teaching in academia and PBL in particular. It provided me with a solid construct on which I can build towards the future.'



Dr. Tim Snijders
department of Human biology and movement sciences

'Clinicians in a university hospital teach every day, our 'students' being residents, interns, PhD students or medical students. The UTQ program provides the tools to reflect on all aspects of teaching and understand the 'bigger picture' of an educational program. It helps identifying points for (personal) improvement, and reinforces the skills already developed.'

Why UTQ?

The University Teaching Qualification (UTQ or BKO) course helps academic staff to get the best out of themselves, and hence their students.

'To me, the benefit of the UTQ course is that it has provided me with the necessary knowledge and tools to adapt and improve my teaching based on scientific evidence, rather than just my own ideas of what might work well for students.'



Prof. Christian Hoebe
department of Medical Microbiology

'Although I have already done my share in the field of education, I chose the regular UTQ course instead of a RAC (Recognition of Achieved Competencies) trajectory. I've learned a lot of new things: an interactive lecture with more effective learning for 200 people is feasible, and assessment works best with a lot of substantive feedback on the subject.'



Dr. Daan Westra
department of Health Services Research