

## Tasks and responsibilities of the Programme Committee at FASoS 2017-2018

*This document aims to explain the core tasks of FASoS's Programme Committees (PCs) for academic year 2017-2018. Please note that, as of September 2017, the law 'Wet Versterking Bestuurskracht' has become effective. As a consequence, the PC has a fortified role in the quality assurance of programmes.*

### Composition and appointment procedure

The Programme Committee consists of the following members and their role:

1. Chair
2. Student members of each participating BA and MA programme
3. Teaching staff of each participating BA and MA programme

A Programme Committee will be established for each programme or group of programmes. Half of the Programme Committee members must consist of students enrolled in the corresponding programmes<sup>1</sup>.

The nomination of student members should proceed as follows: the student representatives<sup>2</sup> propose candidates for the student members of the Bachelor's Programme Committees. The Faculty Board appoints these student members. The student members of the Master's Programme Committees are proposed by the Programme Directors and appointed by the Faculty Board. Academic staff members are to be chosen through elections. At UM the choice was made not to go for full flung elections, but to organise a process in the spirit of elections instead: based on an open call and several advisory steps/consultations, the Faculty Board is provided with advices on which candidates to appoint. Based on these advices and the Faculty Board's own considerations (e.g. a balanced distribution of various disciplines), the Faculty Board decides on the appointments. Staff members are appointed for a period of three years, with the possibility to renew their appointment.

A PC can invite the Programme Director, although for the sake of an open discussion and independence it is advised not to invite the programme director to every meeting. Ideally, the programme director attends a limited number of PC meetings, thereby having the explicit status of a guest. Further, the PC can also decide to invite a course coordinator, educational advisor, study advisor or other expert to join a meeting.

The PC meets at least 4 times a year. Minutes of the meetings are produced by a supportive staff member of the policy cluster, who also maintains an archive on the J-drive.

### Tasks, status and governance

As of September 2017 the PC is formally a representative body ('medezeggenschapsorgaan'), along with the University Council, the Faculty Council and the Employees' Councils. The PC's proceedings are governed by regulations for internal procedures (huishoudelijk reglement – a template will be provided by UM's Central Offices). The Faculty Regulations supersede the PC's internal regulations.

The core task of a PC is to monitor, advise on and evaluate the programme's quality. The PC is advised to define demarcations between its own work and that of the BoE when it comes to quality assurance.

A quality assurance system is based on the principle of the 'Plan – Do – Check – Act' cycle. With regard to the tasks of the PC, this means the following:

- PLAN: the PC has the right of consent and the right to give advice on a number of subjects in the EER.

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<sup>1</sup> If a programme consists of several language tracks or specialisations, it is likely that the representing PC members are not involved in all tracks or specialisations. Therefore, they are expected to gather the feedback from peers of the other specialisations/tracks.

<sup>2</sup> The student representatives' body is composed of the student members of the faculty board, faculty council, OMT BA and educational programme committees.

- DO: implementation of plan and related procedures – *no prominent role for the PC*
- CHECK: evaluation of programmes and policy
- ACT: issue an advice, either on request or unsolicited, to the Programme Director or Faculty Board. They then formally decide whether an improvement measure will be taken. This is the main task of the PC.

#### PLAN - Education and Examination Regulations

One of the duties of the PC, as set out by law, is issuing an advice about the Education and Examination Regulations (EER). In addition to its advisory role, the PC has the right of consent on certain EER articles as of 2017-2018. The same goes for the Faculty Council. Where the PC has advisory rights, the Faculty Council has the right of consent, and vice versa. For an overview of the rights in relation to the EERs, see Appendix 1.

The intended EER changes are presented in the Education Plan by the programme director. The PC is invited to discuss these changes, to pro-actively suggest new changes and to finally formulate its advice.

#### CHECK - Evaluation of the programme

An important task of the PC is to monitor the quality of the programme. The PC can make use of the following sources:

- IWIO student evaluations, including the evaluation of the full curriculum.
- Additional feedback by the student members who actively inquire with their fellow students (for instance through a Facebook page).
- Evaluation by the course coordinator. A PC can ask the programme director for the coordinator's feedback. Also, a PC can decide to invite a course coordinator to a PC meeting.
- Course book. A PC can examine a selection of course books, to evaluate the quality of course elements like assignments and literature.
- Data-analyses. In 2017-2018 the following indicators will become available:
  - Intake numbers and cohort composition (end of October, presented in education plan)
  - Study success (data of year t -1 available in spring of year t)

These data will be published on intranet and can be consulted by the PC.

Furthermore, the PC is authorised to invite the management (Dean and/or Faculty Board) at least twice per year to discuss proposed policy. The agenda of such meetings with the management is drawn up by the PC.

#### ACT - Issue an advice to the Programme Director or Faculty Board

The evaluations as described above may give reason to formulate a solicited or unsolicited advice. The PC has the legal right to give both solicited and unsolicited advice to the Programme Directors and the Faculty Board. The Programme Director or Faculty Board may follow the advice. If the FB decides to handle otherwise, the PC is to be provided with well-grounded reasons.

It also happens that a Programme Director or Faculty Board take the initiative and request the PC to advise them on an issue at hand.

An important advisory instrument is the annual report. In this report, the PC addresses the following items:

- Composition of the PC
- General reflections
- Solicited advices
- Unsolicited advices
- Agenda setting for the next academic year
- Appendices (e.g. agendas of meetings, relevant discussion papers)

The annual reports are sent to the Faculty Board in September, and are discussed in the annual meetings between the Programme Director, Associate Dean Education and Managing Director. In addition to the annual report it is advised to have an annual plan which outlines the priorities for the upcoming year.

## Appendix 1

The table below presents an overview of the rights of both the Faculty Council and the Programme Committee regarding educational programmes according to the Dutch Higher Education and Scientific Research Act (the Act; Wet op het hoger onderwijs en wetenschappelijk onderzoek, WHW).

Indicated are the elements with regard to which the FC/PC have either the right to consent (instemmingsrecht) or the right of consultation (adviesrecht) as well as how the relevant articles in the Act relate to the FASoS Bachelor's programmes EERs and Master's programmes EERs.

### As of 1 September 2017 regarding the Education and Examination Regulations for 2018-2019

Subjects Education and Examination Regulations (EER) 7.13 paragraph 2 WHW	FC		EPC	
	C	A	C	A
a. the content of the degree programme and related examinations,				
a1. the manner in which the education/teaching in the degree programme in question is evaluated,				
b. the content of the specialisations within a degree programme,				
c. the competencies with regard to knowledge, understanding and skills which students must have attained upon completion of a degree programme,				
d. where required, the design of the practical exercises,				
e. the study load of the degree programme and the programme units thereof,				
f. the further rules as set out in Sections 7.8b, paragraph 6 (criteria binding study advice) and 7.9, paragraph 5 (criteria for tracks after year one),				
g. to which master's programmes Section 7.4a, paragraph 8 (higher study load) has been applied to,				
h. the number and sequence of examinations and when these can be taken,				
i. whether the degree programme is full-time, part-time or a dual degree programme,				
j. wherever required, the sequence and periods in which, and the number of times that students have the opportunity to sit the examinations each academic year,				
k. the further rules as set out in Section 7.10, paragraph 4 (Duration of validity of course examinations),				
l. whether examinations are oral, written or of some other nature, subject to the right of the Board of Examiners to decide otherwise in exceptional cases,				
m. the manner in which students with physical or mental impairments or a chronic disease are given reasonable opportunity to sit examinations,				
n. the public nature of oral examinations, subject to the right of the Board of Examiners to decide otherwise in exceptional cases,				
o. the period within which the examination results must be announced, as well as if and in what manner this period may be derogated from,				
p. the manner in which and period that students who have sat a written examination may peruse the marked examination, (test inspection)				
q. the manner in which and period that the questions and assignments as well as the related assessment criteria of a written examination can be perused, (test inspection)				
r. the grounds, with regard to examinations sat earlier in higher education or knowledge and skills acquired outside higher education, based upon which the Board of Examiners can grant exemption for sitting one or more examinations,				
s. wherever necessary, that having passed examinations is a requirement for being granted permission to sit other examinations,				
t. wherever necessary, the requirement to participate in practical assignments to receive permission to sit the examination in question, subject to the right of the Board of Examiners to grant exemption to this requirement, with or without setting alternative requirements,				
u. safeguarding study progress and the individual study advice and guidance,				
v. if applicable: the manner in which students are selected for a special track within a degree programme, as set out in Section 7.9b, (Honour programmes within the degree programme) and				
x. the actual design of the education.				

*The lettering corresponds to the lettering of article 7.13 paragraph 2 WHW*

#### Abbreviations:

FC:	Faculty Council
EPC:	Educational Programme Committee
C:	Right of consent
A:	Right of advice