

..... Memo .....

## Advice Education Committee Research Masters Plan online platform NIHES

.....

### Topic

Plan online platform NIHES

### Submitted by ECRM members

A. van Stigt  
E. Mientjes

### Date final advice

08-05-2019

### Date ECRM meeting

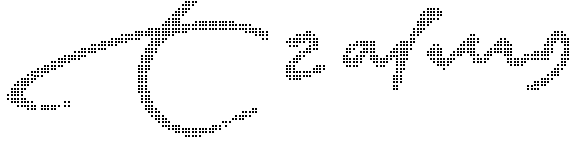
21 March 2019

### Topic area

- New policy or new educational component
- Revision of policy or educational component
- Topic of annual planning ECRM from PDCA cycle
- Topic of annual planning ECRM put on the agenda by ECRM member
- Other: [Click here to enter text.](#)

### Contact (study coordinator or advisor)

Dimitris Rizopoulos (d.rizopoulos@erasmusmc.nl)



## Advice Education Committee Research Masters Plan online platform NIHES

### Contents of advice

#### 1. Question/issue leading up to the advice

On behalf of the board of directors of NIHES research school, Dimitris Rizopoulos requested whether the board would consider writing an advice concerning the plan of online learning and blended learning lessons that will be initiated by NIHES. The plan is based on the document 'Driejarenplan onderwijsvernieuwing NIHES' composed by the NIHES office and NIHES board of directors.

#### 2. Reason for advice

This plan was also submitted as a HOKa-project. Committee of NIHES program directors would like to receive feedback from the ECRM. They would like to create online learning and blended learning lessons. This plan has been submitted as a business case and was approved by the board of directors. It is thus going to be initiated. There is still discussion about which parts of the program should be face to face sessions with teachers, and which parts can be followed exclusively online. Students have to pay to get access to these courses. Part of the online lessons will be for free so the students can get a taste of the course. Students can also follow one particular course rather than the entire program. The courses will be made available in Canvas.

#### 3. Advice

In general, the ECRM regards the 'Driejarenplan onderwijsvernieuwing NIHES' / the development of an online learning platform with blended learning, as proposed by NIHES, as a very favourable development. The board is glad with the initiative.

Especially the partial availability of the courses for all those that are interested, thus also students from RM other than NIHES, is a strong point of this plan. This generates a potential beneficial addition to the education of all research master students from the Erasmus medical center. This online platform covers all courses and could provide for the demand of students from other research masters to follow courses of thorough quality. The board agrees that only parts of the courses will be made publicly available for free. The board would advise to consider a method/arrangement that the full courses would be accessible and brought to the attention of the directors of the other research masters, to encourage participants from other Masters programs.

A major advantage is that students will be able to plan the time spent on the course as they see fit, within a certain timeframe (as in as long as the online course is active). Students will be able to study when it is suitable for them, possibly interfering less with their regular work as opposed to a course where a physical presence is needed.

A point of consideration is the student-teacher interaction which will change using this online learning format. Directly posing a question during lessons by a student to a teacher will of course not be possible. However, this is considered by the board of NIHEs by developing an online platform at specific times during which the course is open when questions can be asked and teachers shall reply.

What should also be taken into consideration is that this form of learning may be not for everyone.

Some students rather find the student-teacher interaction motivating while others may lack the discipline to put in the time necessary to fully benefit from online courses. However, the type of information involved may also play an important role. Courses that involve conveying large collections of facts but are not conceptually difficult, such as anatomy, may actually benefit from the online learning format. With this in mind, we may find that some courses, such as biostatistics I & II may not be as suitable for online learning as students may find the material challenging and online chat sessions may be quite complicated but that will have to be examined in the interim reports. It must be stressed that students at the Erasmus MC will have the opportunity to meet with the teacher's multiple times within the period the course is open and must be completed and get to choose between the classical or online forms of the courses. Those who follow the courses off-site make the choice of not benefiting from direct student-teacher interaction. Feedback obtained from students and teachers included in the interim reports will be of great value in determining the future direction. The enrolment in certain periods is accepted by the ECRM.

The ECRM advises to evaluate the progress of the program during its transition to online content frequently amongst students and teachers. This will remedy potential errors and problems in a timely fashion. The ECRM would like to receive a progress report six months after initiation.

The ECRM hopes that this form of blended learning is the start of a new era in which all Masters students at the Erasmus MC are given the opportunity to follow any of the courses being given across all Research Masters programs as electives without financial burden and that this ultimately leads to the emergence of the Erasmus MC Graduate school encompassing all Research Masters programs.

#### **4. Conclusion – core of advice.**

- The ECRM looks strongly positive to the proposed online learning platform of NIHES and looks forward to the potential this will have over the current platform in addition to the beneficial effects the blended platform has for other research masters.
- The student-teacher interactions will change drastically and will have to be monitored closely. However, if an online platform is created where a substitute is created for the direct interaction between student and teacher, the ECRM sees this as a suitable solution.
- The ECRM agrees in partial free access to the courses. We would recommend easy access for research Master students from other EMC RMs.