



**Erasmus MC**  
Universitair Medisch Centrum Rotterdam



Education Committee Research Masters Erasmus MC  
Annual report 2018-2019





# Education Committee Research Masters

*Annual report 2018-2019*



# Contents

Foreword.....	6
Membership and procedures.....	9
Duties of the committee.....	9
Selection of students.....	9
Organizational issues.....	10
Meetings of the ECRM.....	10
Advice.....	11
Teaching and Examination Regulations 2019-2020.....	11
Plagiarism.....	11
Mid-term reviews of the RMs.....	11
Evaluation of RM modules.....	11
TestVision.....	12
Qualifications of teachers.....	12
HoKa – higher education quality agreements.....	12
Cooperation and communication.....	13
Communication.....	13
Concrete objectives ECRM 2019-2020.....	15

## Foreword

This is the annual report of the Education Committee Research Masters (ECRM) of the Erasmus University Medical Center Rotterdam (Erasmus MC) for the 2018-2019 academic year.

The ECRM has further adapted to several major changes which were implemented in the 2017-2018 academic year.

The first change involved the new role that the ECRM has been given by law in the field of employee and student participation. Secondly, there was the introduction of the new role of the Secretary. Thirdly, changes have been made to the professionalization of the Education Committee (EC) with regard to its method of advising and archiving. Finally, there was a more intensive cooperation at the level of Chair and Secretary with the Medical Education Committee (EC Medicine), in particular in relation to the role of the ECs in the distribution of Higher Education Quality Agreements (HoKa )funds.

This annual report describes, and provides details, of the membership, working methods and activities of the ECRM in the 2018-2019 academic year.

By publishing this annual report, the ECRM provides information to the reader about the ECRM's role and activities, while promoting accountability for its role as an advisory body to the five Erasmus MC research master courses.

June, 2020

Prof. dr. J.N.J. (Sjaak) Philipsen, Chair

B.C. (Bernice) van Aken MSC, Student Chair (until June 2019)

S.B. (Schandra) Lachman, Secretary







## Membership and procedures

### **Student members**

#### *Molecular Medicine*

A. (Astrid) van Stigt

#### *Neuroscience*

M.M. (Martyna) Grochowska

#### *Health Sciences*

B.C. (Bernice) van Aken (Student Chair)

#### *Clinical Research*

E. (Edmundo) Erazo Tapia

#### *Infection and Immunity*

I. (Isaac) Gabel

### **Teacher members**

J.N.J. (Sjaak) Philipsen (Chair)

E.J. (Edwin) Mientjes

D. (Dimitris) Rizopoulos

M.K. (Kamran) Ikram

J.P. (John) Hays

### **Secretary**

*P.H. (Petra) Erkens-Pijper (until May 2019)*

*S. B. (Schandra) Lachman (from June 2019)*

## **Duties of the committee**

The duties of the ECRM are registered in Dutch law under the Higher Education and Scientific Research Act (WHW). The most important task of the committee is to provide solicited and unsolicited advice to the Dean, the Director of Education and the Course Directors on matters concerning the quality of education of the research master courses (RMs) taught at Erasmus MC.

As of 1 September 2017, the ECRM was given the right of approval for part of the teaching and examination regulations (TER). In the academic year 2018-2019, the ECRM took on a new role in the assessment of projects financed by the Higher Education Quality Agreements (HoKa).

## **Selection of students**

All Erasmus MC RMs recruit students from a mixture of backgrounds. Recruitment of medical students from the Erasmus MC medical curriculum is largely based on performance during the bachelor phase, and personal motivation. In addition, students are recruited from other studies and universities, including international students. These students have a wide variety of backgrounds providing a challenge for the Course Directors to select the most talented students.

With respect to the composition of the ECRM, in 2018-2019, student members were recruited from the 5 RMs at the end of the 2017-2018 course year, with each RM being represented by one second year student. These five student members then appointed Bernice van Aken as 'Student Chair'. This new position was created after consultation with the EC Medicine, where the selection of a Student Chair was already common

practice. In previous years, the number of student ECRM members included representatives of both RM years. To reduce the ECRM to a workable size, the student fraction was reduced to one second year student of each RM during the academic year 2018 -2019.

## ***Organizational issues***

The professionalization of the ECRM continued during the 2018-2019 academic year. The 2018-2019 status is summarized below.

### Secretary

Schandra Lachman was appointed as permanent Secretary ('ambtelijk secretaris') of the ECRM. She succeeded Petra Erkens-Pijper who is hereby gratefully acknowledged for her dedication and commitment to the ECRM during the 2018-2019 academic year.

### Emails

A dedicated email address ([educationcommitteeRM@erasmusmc.nl](mailto:educationcommitteeRM@erasmusmc.nl)) has been used for all correspondence of the ECRM. Emails are archived annually.

### Sharepoint

SharePoint has been used to make documents relevant to the ECRM available to ECRM members. It also continues to serve as the official archive for ECRM business. All ECRM members were given access to the ECRM Sharepoint site at the start of 2018-2019 academic year.

### Financial compensation

Financial compensation for the ECRM activities of the Secretary 'ambtelijk secretaris', participating ECRM teachers (according to the business case 'opleidingscommissies voor de docentleden' developed by Dr. L. Blok) and student members (via the EUR 'profleringsfonds') has in principle been implemented.

### Internal Rules and Regulations

The Internal Rules and Regulations (IRR, Huishoudelijk Reglement) were written by the Student Chair, and critically evaluated by the other ECRM members. The IRR will be adapted where necessary and formally approved at the first meeting of each study year, starting with the 2019-2020 study year.

## ***Meetings of the ECRM***

During the academic year 2018-2019, the ECRM organized six face-to-face meetings. We note that the ECRM is still undergoing a transition to perform its tasks in line with current legislation. This transition includes further professionalization of the organization and operational procedures, including development of a systematic cross-year review of developments relevant to all RM education activities. Since this includes fundamental changes to the interactions between the ECRM and the RMs, this will be a gradual and continuous process. The main activities of the ECRM are summarized below. Organizational changes are reported separately under the heading 'Organizational issues'.

# Advice

## ***Teaching and Examination Regulations 2019-2020***

The Teaching and Examination Regulations (TER) adopted for the 2019-2020 academic year were largely based on those already in place during the 2018-2019 academic year. In this respect, the ECRM advised positively on the revision of the 2018-2019 TER for 2019-2020. We note that an official English translation of the Dutch text is still lacking; this will remain a point of attention for the next academic year.

## ***Plagiarism***

The ECRM noted that plagiarism scans are used at various points in the Medical curriculum, and for PhD theses of the Erasmus MC Graduate School. However, there appeared to be an inconsistency in the plagiarism policies of different RM MSc courses. Three out of five RM (NS, HS and CR) were using the program Turn-it-in to scan MSc theses for plagiarism (Turn-it-in is available via the Medical Library). As the ECRM strongly advocates the use of a plagiarism scan by all five RMs, the ECRM advised the Course Directors of RMs MolMed and I&I to start using Turn-it-in to scan their MSc theses. This practice would then be consistent with the past and current practice of the Erasmus MC medical curriculum and of Erasmus MC PhD programs. The ECRM investigated caveats of Turn-it-in as part of the advice. The current contract with the company (Turnitin Europe) was deemed satisfactory with regards to privacy and data protection. It was recognized that training of the teachers may be required to interpret the outcome of Turn-it-in scans. The ECRM will check whether this advice has been put into practice in the 2019-2020 academic year.

## ***Mid-term reviews of the RMs***

In the 2018-2019 academic year, three RMs (CS, HS and I&I) were subjected to an internal mid-term visitation procedure (tussentijdse opleidingsevaluatie (TOE)). The goal of the visitations was to evaluate and improve the quality of the relevant master programs, in order to prepare them for re-accreditation by the Dutch-Flemish accreditation organization (NVAO) – a procedure that occurs every six years. In this respect, the ECRM provided feedback on the critical self-assessment documents provided by the RM Course Directors and wrote an advice on the procedure of the internal mid-term visitations of the RMs. The ECRM advised that the organizational structure of the TOE visitations should be consistently implemented. Self-assessment can only be efficiently performed when the process used to assess the RM programs is of high quality. The ECRM felt that due to inconsistencies in the TOE visitation process, shortcomings in the standards required for re-accreditation might not be flagged. The ECRM therefore recommended to adhere consistently to the existing script (draaiboek) for the TOE visitation process.

## ***Evaluation of RM modules***

Student evaluations of RM modules and teachers are an essential tool for the ECRM to monitor and develop new points for improvement in the RM curricula. Based on the information provided, the ECRM asked the Course Directors to continually improve/update the content of courses and the level of the teachers.

1) The ECRM noted that the RMs used a variety of evaluation mechanisms and that current practice prevents the ECRM from performing its evaluation task adequately. The ECRM advised that all RMs adopt the implementation of the EvaSys electronic evaluation system used by NS.

2) The ECRM advised to include three standard questions in every evaluation. These three standard questions were developed in collaboration with one of the Quality Assurance Advisors of the RMs. The ECRM will check

whether this advice has been put in practice in the 2019-2020 academic year and, when necessary, the ECRM will take further action on the implementation of this advice.

### ***TestVision***

The ECRM investigated if and how TestVision (a digital examination tool) would be appropriate to use within the RM courses. The ECRM noted a number of limitations (e.g. use of mathematical equations) that precluded the use of TestVision as a standard examination tool for the RMs. However, there were also many positive aspects, such as: i) absence of illegible handwriting, ii) better evaluation of individual students, iii) the possibility to create large databases of examination questions, iv) automated evaluation of the performance of questions and v) the use of multimedia e.g., adding videos. The ECRM therefore advised the RMs to consider the use of TestVision carefully within each RM module, and adopt TestVision only when it improves the exams and/or provides benefits to the teachers and/or students..

### ***Qualifications of teachers***

A previous survey (2017-2018) revealed that ~50% of RM teachers had obtained the basic teaching qualification (BKO) and the ECRM monitors progress in this area. Ultimately, nearly all RM teachers should have a BKO (or higher) qualification at the start of the 2020-2021 academic year. The ECRM recognizes that teachers without BKO status will always be active in the RM courses, such as very young, very experienced or external teachers. The BKO program remained on track during the course year 2018-2019 with close to 60% of RM teachers having the BKO qualification at the end of the course year.

### ***HoKa – higher education quality agreements***

The role of the ECRM in the assessment of HoKa project applications was new and unanticipated. The 2018-2019 HoKa procedure suffered from severe timing issues, which should be avoided in future rounds. Additionally, there were lively debates between the Course Directors and relevant participatory bodies, including the ECRM, with the ECRM chairs taking part in twelve meetings dedicated to HoKa applications between September 2018 and May 2019. All ECRM members scored all thirty-five HoKa applications. These scores were combined in an overall score for the ECRM, which in turn was aligned with the scores of the other participatory bodies. In this way, a consensus ranking of the HoKa project proposals was obtained for the participatory bodies without major disagreements. Although the debates between participatory bodies and the Course Directors were lively, agreement was reached on the final ranking of the HoKa applications. To preempt a repeat of this course of events, which was generally perceived as unsatisfactory, the 'BG (begeleidingsgroep) beraad' meetings were started in May 2019.

# Cooperation and communication

## **Collaboration with the Education Committee Medicine (EC Medicine) and Gemeenschappelijke Vergadering (GV)**

On instigation of the Dean, the EC Medicine and ECRM agreed to cooperate more closely. A plan for collaboration was presented to the Dean on 29-03-2018.

We expected that the ECs would benefit from closer collaboration, for example:

- Development and implementation of IRRs for ECs.
- Introduction/use of the PDCA (plan-do-check-act) cycle as part of quality assurance.
- E-learning, electronic exams, student evaluations.
- Bi-annual meetings with the Dean.
- Standard format for EC advice to Course Directors.
- Annual reports.

During course year 2018-2019, the ECRM began to work closely with the EC Medicine and the Gemeenschappelijke Vergadering (GV) on the selection of projects funded by the HOKa programme. Furthermore, due to the unsatisfactory procedure for the selection of HoKa applications, the 'BG (begeleidingsgroep) beraad' was set up by the Department of Education Policy and Advise (OBA) in which both ECs participate together with the GV, Course Directors and OBA. The first BG beraad meeting was held on 28 May 2019. Finally, a joint workshop on the role and 'do's and don'ts' of ECs was organized for the members of the EC Medicine and ECRM. This workshop was given by mrs. Titia Verdenius on 25 June 2019, and included new ECRM members for the 2019-2020 course year.

## **Communication**

Efficient communication between the ECRM and its stakeholders is very important if the ECRM is to function effectively in its role as an advisory body. Therefore, information of the activities of the ECRM is provided via this annual report and via the ECRM website. Details of the composition of the ECRM, its activities, annual reports and contact details could be found on the (now defunct) website:

Website: <https://www6.erasmusmc.nl/graduateschool/organization/committees/>

The new ECRM website is under development (June 2020) and will be ready before the start of course year 2020-2021.



Figure 1 defunct Webpage for Erasmus MC ECs





## Concrete objectives ECRM 2019-2020

Looking forward to the academic year 2019-2020, the ECRM will continue in its configuration of 5 teacher members and 5 second year student members. A new Student Chair will be selected, and at the first meeting, an annual calendar and the IRR for 2019-2020 will be established. The ECRM will further professionalize with regards to the implementation of the annual agenda for the planning of its activities. Additionally, progress will be made in the implementation of the PDCA cycle and in the use of standard formats for presenting advice to the RM Course Directors. The ECRM will continue with its proactive role in the evaluation of ongoing HoKa projects. This will be done as part of the cooperative activities of the ECRM with the EC Medicine. To ensure a consistent workflow and allow sufficient in-depth discussion on specific topics, the number of face-to-face ECRM meetings will increase to eight.