

Education Committee Research Masters Erasmus MC Annual report 2020-2021

Education Committee Research Masters

Annual report 2020-2021

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Foreword

This is the annual report of the Education Committee Research Masters (ECRM) of the Erasmus University Medical Center Rotterdam (Erasmus MC) for the 2020-2021 academic year. The COVID-19 pandemic continued to have an immense impact on ReMa teaching at Erasmus MC in this academic year and the activities of the ECRM remained online. We still believe that the ECRM has continued to surmount these pandemic-related challenges.

This annual report describes, and provides details, of the membership, working methods and activities of the ECRM in the 2020-2021 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, 2022

Dr. J. (John) Hays, Chair

T. (Tiago) Beck BSc, Student Chair

S.B. (Schandra) Lachman, Secretary



Membership and procedures

Student members Teacher members

Infection and Immunity

M. (Marija) Jokic J. (John) Hays (Chair)

Neuroscience

T. (Tiago) Beck P. (Patrick) Forbes

Health Sciences

C. (Ching) Khan M.K. (Kamran) Ikram

Clinical Research

V. (Victor) Zeijen D. (Dimitris) Rizopoulos

Molecular Medicine

F. (Faidra) Karkala R. (Robbert) Rottier

Secretary

S. B. (Schandra) Lachman

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 (ReMa) 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). In the academic year 2019-2020 a new call for HoKa projects was initiated and the ECRM assessed the pre-applications for submission of full applications.

Selection of students

All Erasmus MC ReMa recruit students from a mixture of backgrounds. Recruitment of students from the Erasmus MC ReMa is based on personal motivation and recommendations from current ECRM student members.

With respect to the composition of the ECRM in 2020-2021, student members were recruited from the 5 ReMa at the end of the 2019-2020 academic year, with each ReMa being represented by one second year student. These five student members then appointed Tiago Beck as Student Chair.

Organizational issues

The professionalization of the ECRM continued during the 2020-2021 academic year. The 2020-2021 status is summarized below.

<u>Secretary</u>

Schandra Lachman continued as permanent Secretary ('ambtelijk secretaris') of the ECRM.

Emails

A dedicated email address (<u>educationcommitteeRM@erasmusmc.nl</u>) 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.

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 'profileringsfonds') has been successfully implemented.

Internal Rules and Regulations

The Internal Rules and Regulations (IRR, Huishoudelijk Reglement) were written by Bernice van Aken, the 2018-2019 Student Chair, and critically evaluated by the other ECRM members. The IRR will be repeatedly renewed in the coming academic years.

Meetings of the ECRM

During the academic year 2020-2021, the ECRM held nine online (Teams) meetings. This gradual and continuous process includes fundamental changes to the interactions between the ECRM and the ReMa. For 2020-2021, the ECRM again gave its attention to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the ReMa courses and students. The main activities of the ECRM are summarized below. Organizational changes are reported separately under the heading 'Organizational issues'.

Advice

Teaching and Examination Regulations 2021-2022

The Teaching and Examination Regulations (TER) adopted for the 2021-2022 academic year were largely based on those already in place during the 2020-2021 academic year. In this respect, the ECRM advised positively on the revision of the TER for 2021-2022. The ECRM advised that a plan be made to announce the ReMa education timetable earlier than was currently customary. Also the ECRM advised that teaching of the course 'Causal Inference' (MCER.EP01) be planned for those who were unable to take this course in the previous year, as opposed to a full self-study course via Harvard University.

Finally, we noted that a professional English translation of the TER is still lacking and we therefore advised to opt for a professional translator.

Critical Reflections 2020-2021

Critical reflection Health Sciences

The ECRM advised the program director to continually evaluate the changes brought about by the implementation of the pass/fail grading system and the lack of a *cum laude* option for students.

Critical reflection Clinical Research

The ECRM advised the program director to continually evaluate the changes brought about by the implementation of the pass/fail grading system and the lack of a *cum laude* option for students.

Critical reflection Infection and Immunity

The ECRM advised the program director to be aware that students sometimes have to extend their laboratory projects during the holiday months, otherwise they will not be able to collect all the elective points.

Critical reflection Molecular Medicine

The ECRM advised the program director on midterm talks with the program director and the coordinator of year 2.

Cooperation and communication

Cooperation

- The 'check' and 'act' part of ReMa PCDA cycles requires further communication between the ECRM and ReMa program directors. In 2020-2021, implementation of this request was largely put on hold due to the COVID-19 pandemic and will be a point for attention in future years.
- E-learning, electronic exams, student evaluations.

 Attention was again paid to e-learning and electronic exams, including proctoring, due to the measures taken to ensure continuation of education during the COVID-19 pandemic, including a meeting with a representative of the Examination Committee.
- A presentation was given to the ECRM regarding the 'Accelerated Action Plan for Online Education and Assessment'.
- A joint workshop was organized for members of the Education Committees Medicine and ECRM. This workshop was given by Mrs. Titia Verdenius on 27 August 2020, and included new ECRM members for the 2020-2021 course year. The topics of this training event were proposed by the Chairs of the EC Medicine and ECRM, in consultation with Mrs. Verdenius. A broad range of topics was discussed, including annual planning, advisory versus participatory roles, how (EC) activities relate to those of the exam committee, should ECs advice at content or process level?
- Finally, the ECRM collaborated with the GV on the ReMa TER.

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, including details of the composition of the ECRM, its activities, annual reports and contact details.

The new ECRM website is under development and is expected to be ready before the start of academic year 2022-2023. This ECRM website can be found here.

The ECRM, in collaboration with OBA, developed and distributed dedicated questionnaires for ReMa students and teachers investigating the 'Effect of the COVID-19 pandemic on Research Master programs at the Erasmus University Medical Center'. Results will be available in 2021-2022.

Concrete objectives ECRM 2020-2021

Looking forward to the academic year 2021-2022, the ECRM will continue in its configuration of 5 teacher members and 5 second year student members. The ECRM will again further professionalize with regards to the topics and implementation of the ECRM annual agenda for the planning of its activities. The ECRM will continue with its proactive role in the evaluation of ongoing HoKa projects. The ECRM will continue to communicate the results of the COVID questionnaire 'Effect of the COVID-19 pandemic on Research Master programs at the Erasmus University Medical Center - a cross-sectional questionnaire study'.