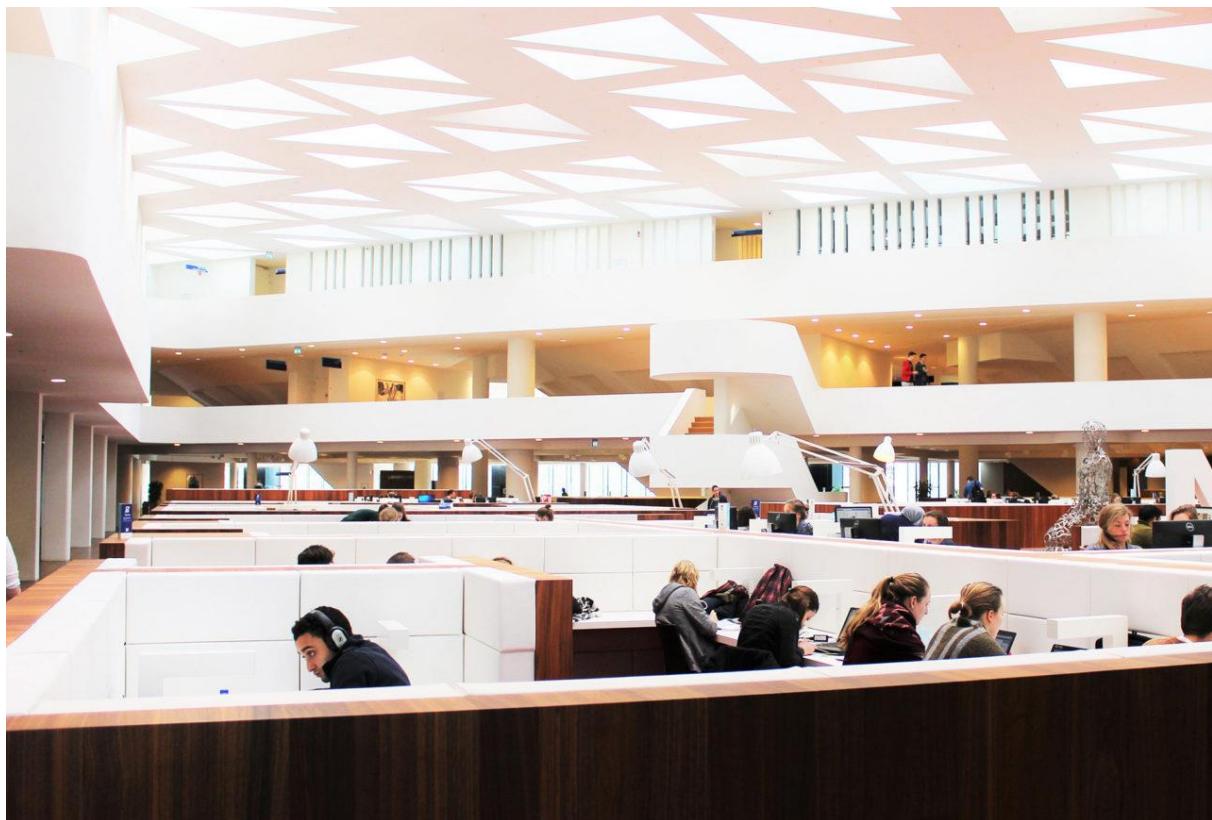


Education Committee Research Masters Erasmus MC
Annual Report 2024-2025



Education Committee Research Masters

Annual report 2024-2025



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Erasmus MC, Erasmus University Rotterdam
Rotterdam, December 2025

Contents

Foreword	5
Membership and Procedures	6
Duties of the committee	6
Selection of ECRM members.....	6
Organizational issues.....	7
Meetings of the ECRM	7
Advice and Letters.....	8
Teaching and Examination Regulations 2025-2026	8
Promotion guidelines education profile 2025	8
Faculty Education Agenda	9
Midterm evaluation of the ReMa's Health Sciences and Clinical Research	10
Midterm report and development plan Molecular Medicine	10
Midterm report and development plan Infection & Immunity.....	10
Critical Reflection for re-accreditation Neuroscience	10
Promotion criteria for faculty with an education profile	Error! Bookmark not defined.
Scholarships proces.....	11
Draft Graduate School policy on use of generative AI	11
Erasmus MC Graduate School Alumni Policy.....	12
Erasmus MC Beurs.....	12
Document Revisions.....	13
Working procedure ECRM	13
Internal Rules and Regulations.....	13
Annual Plan	13
Cooperation and Communication.....	13
Cooperation	13
Communication	14
Concrete Objectives ECRM 2025-2026	14

Foreword

This is the annual report of the Education Committee Research Masters (ECRM) of the Erasmus University Medical Center Rotterdam (Erasmus MC) for the 2024-2025 academic year. This annual report describes, and provides details, of the membership, working methods and activities of the ECRM in the 2024-2025 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.

December 10, 2025

Dr. E. (Elizabeth) Loehrer, Chair

L. (Laura) Admiraal, Student Chair

I. (Ira) Blommers, Secretary

This annual report is published in order to formally account for the ECRM's activities in the academic year 2024-2025, thereby complying with Article 9.18, paragraph 1 of the Higher Education and Scientific Research Act (WHW).

Membership and Procedures

Student members

Infection and Immunity

L. (Laura) Admiraal (Student Chair)

Neuroscience

T. (Teresa) Niederlander

Health Sciences & Clinical Research

M. (Meryem) Al Fatly

Molecular Medicine

F. (Fulya) Koç

Genomics in Society

J. (Jay) van Kleef

Secretary

I. (Ira) Blommers

Teacher members

B. (Bernadette) van den Hoogen

M. (Mario) Negrello

L. (Layal) Chaker

H. (Hegias) Mira Bontenbal

E. (Elizabeth) Loehrer (Chair)

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). HoKa will discontinue as of 2024, and the program is replaced with the "Bestuurs Akkoord Onderwijs Kwaliteit" from 2025 onwards. The ECRM assessed the last of the ReMa-related HoKa projects and assessed the first projects of the "Bestuurs Akkoord Onderwijs" (Faculty Education Agenda) during the academic year 2024-2025.

Selection of ECRM members

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 and ReMa program management. With respect to the composition of the ECRM in 2024-2025, four 2nd year student members and one 1st year student member were recruited from their respective ReMas. These five student members appointed Laura Admiraal (Infection & Immunity) as Student Chair.

In parallel to ECRM student members, one experienced teacher is chosen to represent each ReMa during the academic year, though the academic term of teacher members of the ECRM may be longer than that of the single academic term offered to ReMa student ECRM members. The maximum term of teacher members is described in the ECRM Internal Rules and Regulations document.

In this respect, new teacher member Layal Chaker joined the ECRM representing the ReMa Health Sciences and Clinical Research. Elizabeth Loehrer (Genomics in Society) served her second year as the chair of the ECMR during the academic year 2024-2025. Also, Ira Blommers served as the Secretary of the ECRM.

Organizational issues

The professionalization of the ECRM continued during the 2024-2025 academic year. The 2024-2025 status is summarized below.

Secretary

In 2024, Ira Blommers was appointed as the Secretary ('ambtelijk secretaris') of the ECRM. She served as secretary for the ECRM during the entire 2024-2025 academic year.

Emails

A dedicated email address (educationcommitteeRM@erasmusmc.nl) has been used for all correspondence of the ECRM.

Microsoft Teams

Microsoft Teams was used as the official archive of ECRM documents and 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 was reviewed and approved in the academic year 2024-2025.

Meetings of the ECRM

During the academic year 2024-2025, the ECRM held eight physical (preferred) monthly meetings, though there was a hybrid option for members to join via Teams if they could not be physically present. For two months when a large proportion of members could not be physically present, we held our monthly meetings digitally via Teams. The main activities of the ECRM are summarized below.

Advice and Letters

The main points relating to advice and letters provided by the ECRM are shown below.

Advice and letters 2024-2025

ECRM 014 Reply midterm review Health Sciences and Clinical Research
ECRM 015 Scholarship process
ECRM 017 HOKA annual plan
ECRM 016 notes on discussion with examination board
ECRM 017 HOKA annual plan
ECRM 018 Midterm review Molmed - I & I
ECRM 019 Comments ECRM on plan of alumni policy
ECRM 020 Scholarship process Graduate School research Masters
ECRM 021 Comments on proposal training
ECRM 022 Advice ReMa TER 2025-2026
ECRM 023 Advice - promotion guidelines education profile 2025
ECRM 024 Consent on the ReMa TER 2025-2026
ECRM 025 Consent to the process description Faculty Agenda
ECRM 026 Information for recruiting new students
ECRM 027 Advice FOA2025 - part 1
ECRM 028 Critical Reflection - reaccreditation Research Master Neuroscience
ECRM 029 Project proposal for the Erasmus MC Scholarship
ECRM 030 Advice GenAI in ReMa & PhD
ECRM 031 Promotion criteria

Teaching and Examination Regulations 2025-2026

In April 2025, the ECRM reviewed the updated Teaching and Examination Regulations (TER) for the Research Master's programs for the academic year 2025–2026. The committee assessed the revised documents and responses to previously raised comments. The ECRM granted consent to the TER, conditional upon correcting inconsistencies between course descriptions and documented program changes. In addition, the committee emphasized the importance of transparent procedures for reasonable accommodations for students with functional impairments and requested clarity on related decision-making processes. Finally, the ECRM reiterated the value of making the alignment between program learning objectives and individual courses more accessible to students and faculty to support constructive alignment within the programs.

Promotion guidelines education profile 2025

In March 2025, the Education Committee Research Masters (ECRM) reviewed the draft promotion guidelines for the education profile at Erasmus MC, following a request for consultation from the Talent & Innovation Council. The committee expressed appreciation for the initiative, noting that the development of education-focused promotion criteria represents an important step toward recognizing the contributions of researcher-educators within the Graduate School faculty.

The ECRM raised several points requiring clarification and further consideration. With regard to the criterion of “vision,” the committee questioned how this would be assessed, particularly whether applicants are expected to submit a separate vision statement in addition to a curriculum vitae and motivation letter. The committee also suggested that, especially for senior academic ranks, the evaluation of ambitions to improve educational quality should take into account not only future plans but also evidence of prior initiatives and follow-through.

Concerning the research-related criteria, the ECRM recommended revising the terminology around PhD supervision to reflect current regulations, noting that assistant and associate professors cannot act as full promotores. In addition, the committee highlighted ambiguities in the interpretation of supervision requirements and questioned whether supervision of PhD candidates is mandatory or can be substituted by supervision of bachelor’s and master’s theses. The committee further argued that promotion criteria for full professor should be more stringent than those for associate professor and suggested that serving as co-promotor of a completed PhD trajectory should be a required indicator of educational expertise at this level.

Finally, the ECRM requested clarification on how academic integrity will be assessed and how ancillary activities should be registered, evaluated, and transparently communicated within the Graduate School. The committee emphasized the importance of clear guidance and consistent application of these criteria.

Faculty Education Agenda

In September 2024, the ECRM reviewed the Faculty Education Agenda 2025, expressed no objections, and requested to be informed about project progress and financial developments during implementation.

In July 2025, the Education Committee provided consolidated feedback on a series of project proposals submitted for inclusion in the Faculty Education Agenda. The proposals addressed a range of educational innovation themes, including the development of reflective learning spaces, the establishment of international educational networks, the design of new teaching and assessment formats for minors, and broader initiatives aimed at strengthening educational quality and coherence within the faculty.

Overall, the committee expressed appreciation for the ambition and relevance of the proposed projects, noting their alignment with institutional priorities such as innovation in education, student development, and internationalization. The proposals were recognized for their potential to enhance the learning environment, foster collaboration across programs, and contribute to future-oriented education. At the same time, the committee identified several recurring points requiring clarification or further elaboration. These included the need for clearer articulation of project objectives, target groups, and expected educational outcomes, as well as a stronger connection between proposed activities and measurable impact on students and curricula. The committee also emphasized the importance of specifying governance structures, responsibilities, and sustainability beyond the project period. In some cases, additional detail was requested regarding feasibility, resource allocation, and integration with existing educational initiatives.

Furthermore, the committee highlighted the value of aligning innovative formats and international collaborations with established educational frameworks and assessment standards, to ensure consistency and quality assurance. Across all proposals, the committee encouraged proponents to further refine their plans by clarifying scope, strengthening evaluation strategies, and explicitly demonstrating added value at the faculty level.

The feedback was intended to support project leads in strengthening their proposals and to contribute constructively to the further development and prioritization of the Faculty Education Agenda.

Midterm evaluation of the ReMa's Health Sciences and Clinical Research

In August 2024, the Education Committee Research Masters (ECRM) reviewed the starting note and Critical Reflection for the midterm evaluation of the ReMas Health Sciences and Clinical Research programs. While acknowledging substantial progress following earlier recommendations, the committee advised further clarification on supervision criteria, workload management, feedback capacity, elective coherence, and the implementation of feedback literacy initiatives.

Midterm evaluation of the ReMa Molecular Medicine

In September 2024, the ECRM reviewed the starting note and critical reflection for the midterm evaluation. The committee commended adjustments made following earlier feedback, including improved supervision guidelines, while recommending clearer approaches to workload management, formative assessment, teacher professionalization, and clearer articulation of learning outcomes and program documentation.

Midterm evaluation of the ReMa Infection & Immunity

In September 2024, the ECRM reviewed the starting note and critical reflection for the midterm evaluation. While commending initiatives such as revised selection procedures and the Professional Identity Formation line, the committee recommended clearer strategies to reduce student workload, strengthen supervision policies, and further develop and support teacher professionalization.

Re-accreditation Neuroscience

In June 2025, the ECRM reviewed the memo and accompanying documentation submitted for the Critical Reflection of the Research Master (ReMa) Neuroscience program. The committee acknowledged the focus areas identified in the reflection and commended the program for the actions taken in response to recommendations from the previous evaluation, as well as for its own stated ambitions. The ECRM noted positively that the draft Critical Reflection clearly describes measures already implemented in relation to earlier feedback, particularly concerning educational quality assurance and program design (Standards 1 and 3). The committee also welcomed the program's proactive approach to addressing emerging challenges related to generative AI in education (Standard 2) and considered the proposed approach to alumni follow-up to be clear and well-structured (Standard 4).

At the same time, the ECRM identified several areas requiring further reflection. With regard to Standard 2, while improvements in course structure, admission criteria, and workload standardization were recognized, the committee noted ongoing student concerns regarding supervision and clarity of oversight.

The ECRM suggested evaluating whether supervisor–student guidelines are consistently implemented and effective, and recommended clarifying how students are monitored during thesis internships to ensure timely identification of potential issues.

The committee further observed that the integration of ethics into the curriculum had received limited attention. Although ethics elements were introduced in a recently developed course, broader and more systematic integration of bioethics and research ethics was not evident. In addition, earlier feedback on statistics education was not explicitly addressed, and the ECRM advised clarifying where and how statistical competencies are taught within the curriculum.

Finally, the committee noted insufficient reflection on the ambition and feasibility of research projects and recommended further clarification, including guidance for students on selecting thesis projects.

Scholarships process

Education Committee Research Masters (ECRM) reviewed the draft scholarship selection rubric and recommended clearer criteria for assessing research experience, personal presentation, and societal impact, emphasizing transparency and the prevention of potential bias in the evaluation process.

Draft Graduate School policy on use of generative AI

In April 2025, the Education Committee Research Masters (ECRM) reviewed the draft policy proposal on the use of generative artificial intelligence (AI) in research and education within the Erasmus MC Graduate School, following a request for consultation. The committee welcomed the initiative and expressed appreciation for the development of a written policy addressing this rapidly evolving technology. Overall, the policy was considered clear and useful for both students and faculty.

The ECRM provided several recommendations to improve clarity, feasibility, and implementation. First, the committee advised further specification of the intended target group of the policy, suggesting consistent terminology throughout the document or a clear definition of “student” at the outset. Under data security, the committee recommended explicitly referencing relevant articles of the GDPR/AVG to strengthen guidance on confidentiality and data protection.

The committee noted that the recommended self-evaluation of learning objectives and assessment methods may require substantial time and expertise. The ECRM therefore suggested considering faculty support measures, such as workshops or advisory materials, as well as clarification on whether staff would be compensated for the additional workload. The committee also questioned how voluntary guidelines would be effectively implemented and incentivized by program leadership.

With respect to students and PhD candidates, the ECRM requested clarification on how and where the use of generative AI should be disclosed and proposed a clearer disclosure structure to avoid ambiguity. Finally, the committee highlighted limitations of existing AI detection tools and recommended monitoring the practical consequences of the policy, including its impact on assessment practices and workload. The inclusion of a structured monitoring plan was strongly advised to support ongoing evaluation and policy refinement.

Erasmus MC Graduate School Alumni Policy

Following recommendations from the 2022 accreditation round, Erasmus MC developed a plan of action to strengthen alumni policy for the Graduate School and Research Master's programs. In November 2024, the plan of action was presented to the ECRM. The plan aims to improve structural alumni engagement to gather feedback on program quality, enhance connections with the professional field, and support student career orientation both within and outside academia. The approach emphasizes sustainability, alignment with existing institutional structures, benchmarking with comparable programs, and phased implementation culminating in a comprehensive alumni policy framework.

The ECRM commended this effort and recognized that a strong alumni network is highly valuable both for current students to identify possible career paths after their study and for ReMa programs to evaluate and future-proof the program curriculum. Alumni can inform programs about which competencies or skills from their ReMa were relevant for their next role and identify important competencies that were missing or could be better addressed in the program curriculum. The committee also offered advice about the communication, composition, and timing of alumni events to facilitate interaction between alumni and current students.

Erasmus MC Beurs

In July 2025, the Education Committee Research Masters (ECRM) reviewed the FAO 2026 proposal for the Erasmus MC Beurs, following a request for consultation. Overall, the committee expressed a positive assessment of both the proposal and its underlying objective. The ECRM emphasized that, without targeted financial support, opportunities for international internships are primarily accessible to students with sufficient personal financial resources. In this context, the proposed scholarship program was viewed as an important instrument to promote equal opportunities for students. Despite this overall support, the ECRM identified several aspects of the proposal that would benefit from further clarification. First, the committee noted that the selection criteria for awarding scholarships were insufficiently specified. In particular, it remained unclear how decisions would be made regarding which applicants would receive a scholarship and how the distinction between maximum and minimum scholarship amounts would be determined.

Second, the ECRM raised questions about the application process and timeline. The committee asked whether applications would be accepted on a rolling basis or through fixed deadlines during the year. This issue was considered especially relevant in relation to concerns that the available budget might be depleted before the end of the year, potentially disadvantaging students who apply later.

Finally, the committee observed that the proposed budget only accounted for the scholarship amounts themselves and did not explicitly include resources for administrative tasks such as application review and program management. The ECRM therefore requested clarification regarding responsibility for these activities and how the associated administrative workload would be funded or compensated. The committee recommended that these points be explicitly addressed to strengthen the proposal and support its effective implementation.

Document Revisions

Working procedure ECRM

A new 'ECRM Working procedure' document and instructions was adapted from that currently used by the Erasmus MC Gezamenlijke Vergadering (GV). The ECRM reviewed and revised the Working Procedure and approved these for implementation in the academic year 2024-2025.

Internal Rules and Regulations

The ECRM reviewed and revised its Internal Rules and Regulations and implemented these in the academic year 2024-2025.

Annual Plan

The ECRM generated a 2024-2025 Annual Plan and discussed the following topics during ECRM meetings in the academic year 2024-2025. If considered necessary, the results of the discussions were formulated into unsolicited advice and distributed to ReMa Program Directors for information and/or comment.

- Student progress meetings/check-ins
- Broadening practical/applied skills in ReMa programs
- Course efficiency and effectiveness
- Educational convergence with TU Delft (Pt II) /elective cross-registration

Cooperation and Communication

Cooperation

The ECRM was pleased to start receiving the 6-weekly meeting notes of ReMa Program Directors, which provide up-to-date information relating to potential developments in ReMA courses. The notes also provide potential discussion points for the ECRM. The notes will continue to be received in 2025-2026.

Maarten Frens; Vice Dean of Erasmus MC, joined the meeting two times. He gave an update on the rules of international students. The chair of the ReMa Program Directors (G. Jansen) attends the ECRM meetings in the last year to discuss the impact of the restructuring of the ReMa's. We maintained ongoing communication with Student Council and the student organization SURE throughout the academic year 2024-2025 and invited members of both committees to the ECRM meeting. Leen Blok senior education advisor came to the ECRM meeting, and we had separate meetings regarding the FOA procedure and approval. A student and teacher member joined the ReMa board meeting.

Additionally, Oskar Knotschke, Policy Advisor Education and Quality Assurance at Erasmus University, organized three Program Committees (PC) chairs meetings in the academic year 2024-2025, and these meetings invited the chairs of all program committees in all faculties within the Erasmus University Rotterdam to facilitate further collaboration and conversation in the broader university. The ECRM chair and student chair were present at these PC chair meetings. We had also several separate meetings with the chairs about the proposal on strengthening participation. EUR has made an amount of 34,000 euros available, and a proposal had to be written for this before the summer holidays. Two members from the ECRM participate in a work conference on the Digital Strategy for Education and Training on 22 may.

The initiative is planned to continue in the academic year 2024-2025. The ECRM additionally maintained contact with the Examination Committee and had one meeting last year.

An online introductory module was organized for members of the ECRM in October 2024, and an additional training workshop about the Teaching and Exam Regulations (TER) was provided in February 2025 for members of the ECRM, OC and GV.

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 on 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.

Concrete Objectives ECRM 2025-2026

Looking forward to the academic year 2025-2026, the ECRM will include 5 teacher members and 5 student members. Three new teacher members and 4 new student members

The ECRM further professionalized with the funding for strengthening the participation bodies. The ECRM will continue with its proactive role in the evaluation of the new Faculty Education Agenda and will continue to monitor reduction impact to the ReMa's of international students. The ECRM will keep monitoring the effect of Artificial Intelligence (e.g., ChatGPT) on ReMa education, educational convergence, and the assessment of professional behavior within the ReMas. Additionally, the ECRM provides advice on the midterm quality assurance evaluations for four ReMa programs in the Graduate School. We acknowledge the financial constraints resulting from recent government budget cuts and will take these into account in our planning. The committee remains attentive to the potential impact of these constraints on the scope and continuity of the Research Master's programs and is mindful of the risk of program contraction. We will continue to monitor developments closely to ensure that financial sustainability does not compromise the provision of high-quality education within the Graduate School.