

Minutes MSc PC – 27 June 2023

Hybrid meeting via Teams and in T3-42 10:00–12:00 hours

Present	Absent
MS: Maciej Szymanowski (Chair, MM, BAM)	RG: Rob Geurts (MScBA BAM)
AL: Annelie van der Leelie (Minutes)	JA: Jorrit Alkema (HRM)
GH: Gabi Helfert (PM)	AM: Alla Molibog (HRM)
GB: Guido Berens (GBS)	MLP: Michal Pilch (BIM)
SZ: Solomon Zori (MScBA AFM)	BES: Baris Eren Sezer (MM)
PBT: Pedro Barbosa Tinnemans (MBI)	NE: Nico Eymael (SM)
SO: Sam Oor (MI)	HPW: Han Pei Wu (SCM)
CS: Claus Schmitt (FI)	(MScBA P-MIM)
MIP: Malgorzata Iwanczuk – Prost (MI, MBI)	
JS: Jonas Schmidt (GBS)	
EV: Eric Vaupel (MScBA AFM)	
RSV: Romee Servant Volquin (SE)	
JU: Jule Ulrych (MScBA MIM)	
KK: Korcan Kavusan (MscBA MIM)	
PBC: Philipp Cornelius (BIM)	
YL: Yu Liu (SE)	
MP: Morteza Pourakbar (SCM)	
WV: Wim van Vliet (MScBA P-MIM)	
SV: Stefan Vuksa (FI)	
EB: Emanuel Ubert (SM)	
AS: Ad Scheepers (PM)	

1. Opening and announcements

1) The chair welcomes everybody present.

Announcement 1:

1) MS: Students who would like to receive a hardcopy MSc PC certificate should notify AL by 3 July.

Announcement 2:

MS: AS has analysed the grades for methods courses and for some programmes there is no dramatic drop in the grades after the introduction of Boost-the-Bachelor (BtB). However, before the implementation of BtB, grades for methods courses were higher than now. In addition, students who followed the bachelor programme elsewhere have lower grades for method courses than RSM bachelor students. In general, it doesn't look like there is a big change in grades so currently there is no need for adjustments.

Announcement 3:

GH would like to thank all the people who submitted the subcommittees reports. It was a very good year in terms of good and productive recommendations. Therefore, she suggests sending a letter to the Dean about the output of the subcommittees with all the reports attached, so that all information can be followed up on by the MSc PC next year.

Announcement 4:

MS: During the meeting of 18 April 2023, Academic Director of the MSc HRM programme Rebecca Hewett proposed replacing the Organisational Design course with the Managing the Organisational course. Due to the reason for the proposal was it unclear for the Committee whether to advise or consent to the proposal. On the advice of TAQT consultants, the PC is going to give advice on the proposal instead of consent, as the topic is related to course evaluations on which the MSc PC always gives advice.

Comment of the Committee:

- 1) GB: The email sent to Dr Rebecca Hewett on behalf of the PC regarding the approval of the proposal should be withdrawn.

2. Approval of minutes from MSc PC meeting 30 May 2023— see attachment.

The minutes were approved.

3. Discussing the progress of the PC subcommittees

- 1) There was no update from the HOKA Subcommittee.
- 2) The Thesis Subcommittee pre-identified a few key issues that were prevalent among master students: lack of (facilitated) access to a co-reader, the lack of coordination between supervisors of the same topic and the limitation of the final project's choice. To research the topic, the subcommittee interviewed MSc thesis coordinators and faculty members. The findings are that there is inconsistency across departments in a) The mode/ form of coaching sessions (coaching online/offline or by email; group or individual feedback), b) The number of contact points and the frequency of coaching sessions; the rule isn't followed by many coaches/ co-readers (six meetings with a coach and three meetings with a co-reader per student), c) The length of the trajectory varies in each department, d) The number of external coaches involved in the trajectory, e) The support in finding a co-reader, f) The lack of clarity about deadlines and g) Hard criteria – thesis committees composed of coaches and co-readers from inside or outside, tenured or not tenured, with PhD or without. In addition, the subcommittee conducted a questionnaire among all master students to identify the following topics: a) Communication issue: lack of communication, too little feedback, no explicit guidance, lack of clarity, b) Planning issue: Research Methods course being taught after the conceptual decision, the balance between elective coursework and thesis creation isn't adapted for those who have a side job, c) Practical issue: timing, collaboration with companies, finding the correct number of participants, lack of data availability and d) Psychological issue: lack of motivation due to it being too theoretical, subject being assigned. Therefore, the Thesis Subcommittee has the following recommendations: a) Providing the Research Methods course earlier could prove helpful as some discovered during that course that their thesis wasn't feasible, inappropriate for measurement, etc., b) The Research Clinic course could be made less general and more critical regarding the thesis., c) Facilitate search and communication with co-readers among all masters, d) Provide planning in advance and limit deviations as much as possible, e) In the long term, have supervisors within the same topic coordinate among themselves (arrange meetings, plan grading and requirements, level of support) to have more consistency and avoid luck being a too important factor in students' thesis trajectory.
- 3) The Diversity & Inclusion Subcommittee interviewed 14 ADs, four stakeholders, the head of RSM IDEA office, Dr Hoever and the course coordinator of Design Thinking, Dr Deichmann. The subcommittee focused on gender and cultural diversity on four main topics, a) Student body: in the student body usually consists of at least 50% of Dutch students and most programmes have a 50/50 ratio in terms of male to female students. However, there are efforts, for example in the MSc FI to attract more female students to male-dominated fields, b) Faculty: There is overall a good ratio of female to male employees. However, the diversity decreases in the hierarchy. This is because a) There are fewer female candidates during a recruitment process for higher positions and b) RSM doesn't want to decrease the quality of education by prioritizing a diverse candidate over a more qualified candidate, c) Cases: There is a funding and resource issue related to Harvard teaching cases,

as the number of cases teachers may use in education is limited due to cost considerations. In addition, there is resistance from teachers who have been teaching the same course for years to change the case from one course to another because according to these teachers the cases they use are the best which match the topic and/ or some professors are concerned to talk about cases which are unfamiliar to them. and d) Guest lectures: The limiting factor regarding diversity is a network bias, as it isn't easy to find guest lecturers, because a) if there is a good guest speaker, teachers keep that connection and b) international teachers have a limited local network, making it difficult to find somebody. Therefore, AD's have established a database where anyone who has found a good guest lecture can post the guest lecture contact details.

In addition, Dr Inga Hoever explained to the subcommittee that a) RSM is one of the best diverse faculty funding wise but also in terms of international students, b) There is sufficient funding but it's difficult to coordinate different needs. Therefore, they use a bottom-up structure approach regarding data gathering, as there is a lot of data available, but it's spread across different departments and not centralised. Moreover, solutions could be found in the collaboration of faculty and ADs on topic.

Furthermore, the course Design Thinking is an example of what inclusive education could look like. The course revolves around innovation of accessible solutions at RSM and teaches students how to innovate while focusing on the needs of the target group. According to Dr Deichmann, education can be made as inclusive as possible through faculty support and positive reinforcement.

The recommendations of the Diversity & Inclusion Subcommittee are a) For faculty: Create a pool of industry contacts and award efforts to increase inclusivity in RSM education and b) For the Diversity & Inclusion Subcommittee 2023-2024: Conduct a student survey to find out how students do think about this topic and create an inclusivity checklist for ADs and professors with short and simple questions that trigger course and programme designers to think about diversity and Inclusion.

- 4) The goal of the Onboarding Faculty subcommittee was to examine possibilities to improve the onboarding of new RSM teaching staff, with particular attention to cultural aspects of teaching. The subcommittee attended Programme Management's (PM) faculty onboarding meeting in January '23, in which new faculty learned about the school's teaching and examination regulations, the systems and the online platforms involved. As expected, the meeting didn't address the cultural aspects of teaching. Afterwards the programme manager explained that the ESHCC faculty has a faculty onboarding course on Canvas which also addresses the teaching philosophy at school and department level. Together with the HR department, the programme manager is investigating whether it can offer such a onboarding online course. The subcommittee is positive about this research because an onboarding online course could be useful to provide much information in one place. In addition, the Onboarding subcommittee has the following suggestions for PM and HR: a) Expanding the PM onboarding meeting to include information from RISBO and LIT, thereby also providing information about teaching culture, b) Establishing a mentoring system within each department where junior faculty are assisted by senior faculty to learn about the education culture of the school, c) Inviting new faculty members to the student master kick-off day and the campus tour, d) Creating a (one-page) document for both department chairs and new faculty members, containing details (including, links and contact information) regarding teaching philosophy.
- 5) The Course Evaluation Subcommittee identified the following main issues in the course evaluations a) The current feedback form focuses on negative aspects of the course experience (things to be improved), b) Suffers from a low participation rate, c) Is conducted after the exam, leading to (potential) biases, d) Personal student interactions between instructors and students aren't part of the standard feedback procedure e) Students often aren't aware of the importance of the course evaluation and aren't incentivized or educated in providing high-quality feedback, f) Mainly target 'student happiness', whereas RSM's (education) strategy focuses on a much broader set of criteria and g) Current and past initiatives have been working on the course evaluation and feedback system, but there is a lack of coordination and communication among different initiatives and within RSM. To solve the issues, the subcommittee suggests a) Creating a permanent working group consisting of different representatives (academic and non-academic faculty, learning innovation team, students) that

coordinates internal initiatives related to the course evaluation and feedback system, collects feedback from all stakeholders, and continuously reviews the course evaluation and feedback system, b) Mandate student course representatives in each course that meet with the instructor after a mid-term course evaluation and after the final course evaluation to discuss feedback. The goals of this measure are to motivate students to provide feedback by showing that their feedback has a direct impact on the course and that their feedback is taken seriously and to establish a personal work relationship that allows students and the instructors to take each other's viewpoint to improve the course experience, c) Asking alumni about the impact of their education on their job.

- 6) There was no update from the Programmatic Practice-Relevant Assessment Subcommittee.
- 7) There was no update from the Open Education Subcommittee.

Comments of the Committees:

Thesis Subcommittee:

- 1) EB: The coaching rule isn't always feasible if, for example, a coach should coach 20 students, he/she has insufficient time to meet the standard of the coaching rule.
- 2) GH: That departments don't follow the minimum number of thesis coaching sessions is not a fault of the system. Departments receive remuneration per thesis student to make up for the time the coaches and co-readers are supposed to invest in the thesis process.
- 3) MS: It would be useful to create an overview with all thesis rules across departments thus unity can be brought about.
- 4) MS: Teachers experience tension between giving fast feedback in the TOP programme and assessing a thesis slowly and thoroughly because it requires time to read and provide feedback to the entire document. Therefore, it would be better to consider of informing students as soon as possible whether they have passed or not.
- 5) CS: Other master programmes could benefit from the following two HOKA projects: a) The blending learning student trajectory and b) The MSc FI works with a Canvas-based learning environment which has been well received by students because it has improved their experience.
- 6) According to CS, the thesis doesn't make any sense because a) It misses resources and b) It's a structurally flawed system.
- 7) MS: Summary: In the thesis process, RSM should look at the clarity of rules, use platforms established by HOKA funding and discuss the purpose and value of the thesis.
- 8) MS: Studies have shown that students experience more negative emotions about the thesis process in June than in January. Therefore, RSM should find a way a) To make students more self-directed and b) To make them use the resources from early on.
- 9) GH: RSM should encourage students to prepare the thesis from early on. However, the thesis trajectory is a learning process for students. It's in human nature that people become uncertain and negative just before a deadline.
- 10) EV, JS: From the student perspective the master is well organised. However, students are disappointed in the thesis project because of the inconsistency between coaches, co-readers and the alignment with the thesis manual.
- 11) JS: It would be better to standardised feedback because it often depends on the feedback students receive, whether they like the thesis process or not.
- 12) KK wonders whether student feedback should be taken as face value. For example, there are different scenarios for having insufficient meetings. A student might ask for help, but the supervisor doesn't react or a student doesn't actively contact the coach. In the latter case it isn't the task of teachers to chase a student. If RSM would like this to happen, other parties such as student services should contact students about the meeting and not the coach. During the thesis process, students can ask for academic input from their coach/co-reader but other kind of support for instance a role as a life coach, is too much to ask from thesis

supervisors.

- 13) KK: With feedback for students, it would be better to make a difference between bad feedback and good feedback that is only perceived bad by a student.
- 14) KK: To do something about the feedback problems, it would be better to evaluate what is really happening, because then the school could help in the right direction.
- 15) JY: In the thesis project there is a misalignment of what RSM wants to be and what RSM really is. In the master RSM focusses on students preparing for jobs. However, faculty should also publish because it's a research university. Therefore, there is less time for prerequisites in the thesis process such as going in depth of articles and greater reflection which is important for the thesis process. To improve the thesis process, it would be better to acknowledge the issues in the thesis process and consider the questions: a) Could RSM allocate more time for the thesis and b) Is the thesis the best way of ending programmes?
- 16) MS: It would be better to work on the thesis topic in a next academic year subcommittee as there are still many unresolved issues.

Diversity & Inclusion Subcommittee:

- 17) GH: A lack of financing for Harvard teaching cases is a misunderstanding, RSM has had an unlimited use agreement with Harvard Business School for two years already, which means RSM teachers can simply add any teaching case via a Canvas plugin to their course material, without any additional costs for their department. This has been communicated actively several times to teaching faculty and is also described in detail in the teaching manual. Harvard representatives even visited the school this spring for an info session to which all MSc teaching staff was invited, but only two PhD students showed up.
- 18) MS: It would be better if the next academic year's MSc PC will establish a Communication Subcommittee because there is a lot of miscommunication between departments within RSM.
- 19) GB is concerned that RSM doesn't prioritize a diverse candidate over a more qualified candidate, as RSM will be seen as a male faculty. In addition, many female professors feel uncomfortable due to inappropriate comments from students during lectures and something should be addressed.
- 20) GH: When international female assistant professors become associate professors, we find that they often go to other (often their home) countries because of either higher salary and/ or family obligations.
- 21) MS: To prevent students' misconduct, it would be better to offer a module on ethical behaviour in academia.
- 22) GH: To improve inclusivity in the class, student advisors can contact teachers about the adaptations needed in a course for disabled students (e.g., video subtitles) without mentioning the students' names. In addition, during the first lecture of the year, teachers could indicate that students who need adaptations in a course due to their disabilities can talk to a study advisor or the teacher to arrange this.
- 23) PBT: Some adaptations for disabled students are also useful for all students. For example, subtitles during a lecture helps all students better understand the content.
- 24) PBT: In RSM departments where most teachers are male, female professors score lower on the student course evaluations and vice versa.

Course Evaluation Subcommittee

- 25) AS: Some of the main issues such as student teacher contact are already being addressed in other projects or initiatives.
- 26) According to CS because of the importance of the course evaluations, the course evaluation survey should be under permanent review to improve it.
- 27) GH agrees with CS. However, the course evaluations shouldn't be changed every year because then no comparison can be made between course evaluations from different academic years. This comparison is necessary to see how courses develop.
- 28) SZ: A few years ago, in the department there were problems with the survey tool. Some surveys showed flaws and changes couldn't be implemented. Therefore, it would be better to redesign or improve the tool. In addition, students should be positively encouraged to participate in the questionnaire to increase the response rate.

- 29) MS: It would be good if the Course Evaluation Subcommittee gives written recommendations on how to improve the course evaluation survey.
- 30) MS: Alumni questionnaire results show that alumni see the value of courses which scored low during the student course evaluations. This is because students don't see the value of courses during their studies but find out later that the content is important in practice.

4. Closing remarks

- 1) MS thanked the MSc PC members for their efforts over the past academic year.
- 2) JU thanked AL for her efforts over the academic past year.

5. Action points

What	When	Who
MS will write a letter about the subcommittee outputs	By July	Maciej Szymanowski
MS will change the change of the learning objects and the name of the course in the HRM programme letter	By July	Maciej Szymanowski
MS will send a correction email to Dr Rebecca Hewett regarding the change of the learning objects and the name of the course proposal	By July	Maciej Szymanowski

Next meetings: