

Programme Committee (M-GEO & M-SE) - Faculty ITC

Terms of reference

October 2019

1. Introduction

According to the Dutch Law for Higher Education (WHW)¹, for each educational programme or group of programmes, a Programme Committee (PC) has to be established. The Faculty ITC decided to establish one PC for its accredited Master's programmes², including derived courses like distance courses, joint education and certificate courses³.

2. Tasks and responsibilities

The committee is in charge of providing advice to the Faculty Board and Programme Management regarding the promotion and safeguarding of the quality of the education programmes. Further, the committee:

- a) Has the right of approval and advice regarding specific parts of the Education and Examination Regulations (EER)⁴;
- b) Assesses annually the implementation of the EER;
- c) Assesses the design and effectiveness of the internal quality assurance aimed at the improvement of the education programmes;
- d) Reviews and provides feedback about the outcomes and required follow-up of internal and external quality assurance activities of the educational programmes;
- e) Has the right to issue solicited or unsolicited advice or proposals to the management of the programme and to the dean, regarding all matters relating to the education of the programme(s) in question.

3. Composition and appointment

1. The PC of M-GEO and M-SE has eight members, four student and four staff members. Student members have to be student in one of the programmes for which the PC is established. Staff members have to be academic staff involved in the implementation of at least one of the degree programmes for which the PC is established. A PC member cannot be a member of the Faculty Board, programme management or the Faculty Council at the same time.
2. The term of office of the student members of the PC is 1 year (1 January - 31 December).
3. Annually, the Education Portfolio Holder Education shall invite the current PC to submit a nomination for the student members (for details nomination procedure students see Appendix 1).
4. The term of office of the staff members of the PC, who can be reappointed, is 2 years.
5. At the end of the term of a staff member, the Education Portfolio Holder Education shall invite the current PC to submit a nomination for a staff member.
6. The Dean, on behalf of the Faculty Board, appoints the members of the PC after consulting the Faculty Council.
7. The PC elects its own chair from its members.
8. Every year the process of nomination and appointment of the PC is put on the agenda of the Faculty Council. The Faculty Board and the Faculty Council determine annually whether it is desirable to maintain this process of nomination and appointment.
9. The PC is provided by the Faculty with:
 - o Support from an educational advisor for advice and consultation

¹ The most relevant articles in the WHW (*Wet op het hoger onderwijs en wetenschappelijk onderzoek/Dutch law on higher education and research*) for the PC are articles 9.17 and 9.18.

² Master's programme Geo-information Science and Earth Observation (Croho: 75014) and Master's programme Spatial Engineering (Croho: 60962)

³ A separate PC is established for the Bachelor's programme ATLAS, part of the Faculty ITC since January 2019.

⁴ The parts of the EER on which the PC has the specific right of approval are outlined below

- Secretarial support
 - Professional training (at least once year together with and/or for the new members)
 - Documentation system and support
10. Student members are entitled to remuneration according to the remuneration scheme of the UT [FOBOS \(Financial Support for Special Circumstances of Students\)- chapter 5](#)

4. Lines of communication

1. The members of the PC are appointed by the Dean on behalf of the Faculty Board.
2. At Faculty level, the formal point of contact for the PC is the Portfolio holder education on behalf of the Faculty Board.
3. At Programme level, the formal point of contact for the PC is the Programme Director of the programme concerned.
4. The PC will send copies of all formal advice given, to the Faculty Council for information.
5. The PC is given the opportunity to consult with the Programme Director and/or the Portfolio holder education before issuing an advice.
6. The Programme Director and the PC meet if this is requested, by the Programme Director or the PC, stating reasons. The meeting takes place within three weeks after a written request has been submitted to the chairman of the PC.
7. The PC will be informed in writing by the Programme Director or by the Portfolio holder education as soon as possible (but within two months) about the follow-up given to the advice of the PC.
8. When the board decides to deviate from the advice, this decision needs to be supported by 'reasoned justifications for underlying considerations', explaining why this is the case.
9. The PC is authorized to invite the Programme Director or the Faculty Board at least twice a year to discuss the intended policy. At least once a year the Faculty Board takes the initiative for such a meeting.
10. The PC issues a public annual report which is discussed with the Dean and the Portfolio Education. The annual report also proposes changes in the terms of reference if these are deemed necessary.
11. The PC could formulate further rules of procedure for their operation.

5. Duties regarding the EER

1. The PC has right of approval with regard to the Education and Examination Regulations (EER), as outlined in Article 7.13 WHW with the exception of the subjects specified in the second paragraph under a, f, h to u and x, and with the exception of the requirements referred to in Articles 7.28(4) and (5) and 7.30b WHW.
2. The complementary parts of the EER are subject to right of approval of the Faculty Council.
3. The PC has the right to advice on these complementary parts.
4. Preferably the PC formulates their advice on the EER in coordination with the Faculty Council.

Appendix 1. Details nomination procedure students PC (M-GEO and M-SE), Faculty ITC

Nomination procedure for PC student members

Every 1st of January four new student members will replace the previous student members in the Programme Committee (PC). The following procedure will apply each year before the appointment of the new student members as per 1 January:

- Late August: the process of nomination and appointment of the PC is put on the agenda of the Faculty Council. The Faculty Board and the Faculty Council determine annually whether it is desirable to maintain this process of nomination and appointment.
- September: Education Portfolio Holder requests the PC to nominate its new student members.
- Early November: the PC prepares an email “Call for student candidates for the Programme Committee”, including details of what is expected from student members and what their tasks are, and sends it to the SAB, study association for M-GEO and M-SE.
- Mid-November: the SAB forwards the PC’s call for candidates by e-mail to the students from the most recent cohort.
- November 30: deadline for students submitting an application.
- Early December:
 - The four existing student members sit together in a nomination committee with a maximum of four SAB members, including the Education commissioner, to jointly review the applications. Next, the nomination committee takes the decision which four students will be nominated for the PC.
 - The list of nominated student members is provided to the PC Chair.
 - The PC verifies the followed procedure of nomination.
 - The nomination committee informs the students who are nominated and who are not nominated.
 - The PC chair nominates the student nominees to the Dean and Educational Portfolio Holder.
 - The Dean consults with the Faculty Council on the nominations.
- Mid-December: the nominated students will be appointed by the Dean.
- A meeting between the new and current student members will take place to make sure there is a smooth transition.

Appendix 2. Details nomination procedure staff PC (M-GEO and M-SE), Faculty ITC

Nomination procedure for PC staff members

The Programme Committee (PC) consists of four staff members and four student members. Staff are appointed for a term of two years, which is extendable for a second consecutive term. Thereafter, a new staff member should be appointed. The following procedure applies for their (re)appointment:

- If a new staff PC member is required, the PC chair will inform the PHE and call for nominations from all qualified staff via a general announcement. PC members will also activate staff directly to express interest to join.
- Interested staff should provide a short, written motivation for becoming a PC member.
- The motivation letters will be reviewed by the PC staff members, who will select and nominate the required number of staff for the positions to be filled. The nominated staff will be ratified by the full PC either at its next meeting or via email exchange, should that be more practical.
- The names of the nominated staff member(s) will be communicated to the PHE.
- The Dean consults with the Faculty Council on the nominations and appoints the new staff member(s) to the PC for a term of 2 years, with an option for one extension of 2 years.
- At least two months prior to the end of their first appointment, the staff member should inform the chair of the PC of her/his willingness to continue as a PC member or not. A maximum of two consecutive terms is possible.
- In unforeseen circumstances, if a staff member is unavailable to fulfil her/his tasks as PC member for an extended period of time, a similar procedure will be followed to find a suitable replacement.
- Ideally, a meeting between the new and current PC members will take place to ensure a smooth transition.