

**Research Review**  
**University of Humanistic Studies**

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# Report on the evaluation of the research of the University of Humanistic Studies

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## Preface

This report discusses the results of the peer review assessment of the research of the University of Humanistic Studies. The University of Humanistic Studies is a unique institute that has no strictly comparable national or international peers. It is the only university in the world that has dedicated itself to Humanism, both as a world view or a set of values and as a concept in academic teachings and research. As such, the university is firmly anchored in the Dutch law. Its unique position presents the university with major challenges and opportunities, both in the academic field and in society, as the self-evaluation and conversations with university board and research leaders have made clear to the committee.

The committee was impressed by the many research achievements of the recent past. The remarks of the committee mean to help the university develop its unique task further and to even further improve its research achievements.

The Committee was richly informed about the research by means of a self-evaluation report as well as interviews with key informants. It met at its site visit to the university an open atmosphere with ample space for interaction and critical reflection.

We hope that the University of Humanistic Studies will be able to fulfil its task with joy within the framework of the Dutch academic system in the coming years.

Professor Marcel Barnard  
Chairman of the Committee



# 1. The review committee and the review procedures

## Scope of the assessment

The Review Committee was asked to perform an assessment of the research in the University of Humanistic Studies. The assessment covers the period 2008-2013. This has been a period of transition and reorganization of research at the university. Between 2005 and 2012 research in the University of Humanistic Studies was organised in one research programme titled 'Humanism and Humanity in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century'. The research in this programme concentrated on four projects:

1. Citizenship in an Intercultural Society;
2. Ageing Well: Well-being, Meaning and Human Dignity;
3. Resilience and Humanism;
4. Normative Professionalisation.

As from September 2012 research, valorisation and education have been organised into three departments:

1. Care and Welfare;
2. Cultural Dynamics;
3. Foundations and Methods.

The University of Humanistic Studies instructed the Committee to assess its research in consonance with the Standard Evaluation Protocol 2009-2015 for Research Assessment in the Netherlands (SEP). In accordance with this protocol, the Committee's tasks were to assess the quality of the institute and the research groups on the basis of the information provided by the institute and through interviews with the management and the research leaders, and to advise how this quality might be improved.

## Composition of the Committee

The composition of the Committee was as follows:

- Prof. Marcel Barnard, Professor of Practical Theology, Protestant Theological University, the Netherlands, Chair;
- Prof. Chris Gastmans, Professor of Medical Ethics, Catholic University of Leuven, Belgium;
- Prof. Helen Haste, Professor Emeritus of Psychology, University of Bath, United Kingdom;
- Prof. Stephen Linstead, Professor of Critical Management, University of York, United Kingdom;
- Prof. Guido (Guy) Vanheeswijck, Professor of Metaphysics, Philosophy of Culture and Philosophy of Religion, University of Antwerp, Belgium.

Profiles of the Committee members are included in Appendix 1.

Adrienne Wieldraaijer-Huijzer MA was appointed secretary to the Committee by QANU (Quality Assurance Netherlands Universities).

## **Independence**

All members of the Committee signed a statement of independence to safeguard that they would assess the quality of the University of Humanistic Studies and its research in an unbiased and independent way. Any existing personal or professional relationships between Committee members and the programme under review were reported and discussed in the Committee meeting. The Committee concluded that there were no unacceptable relations or dependencies and that there was no specific risk in terms of bias or undue influence.

## **Data provided to the Committee**

The Committee has received detailed documentation consisting of the following parts:

- Self-evaluation report of the University of Humanistic Studies, including all the information required by the Standard Evaluation Protocol (SEP), with appendices;
- Copies of key publications of both the research projects and the research departments.

## **Procedures followed by the Committee**

The Committee proceeded according to the Standard Evaluation Protocol 2009-2015 (SEP).

Prior to the first Committee meeting, each project and department were assigned to two reviewers, who independently formulated a preliminary assessment. The final assessments are based on the documentation provided by the University of Humanistic Studies, the key publications and the interviews with the management and with the leaders and researchers of the programmes. The interviews took place on 25-27 June 2014 (see the schedule in Appendix 3) in Utrecht.

Preceding the interviews, the Committee was briefed by QANU about research assessment according to SEP, and the Committee discussed the preliminary assessments. Subsequently the Committee decided upon a number of comments and questions for the institute and each project and department. The Committee also agreed upon procedural matters and aspects of the assessment.

Because of the recent reorganisation of research in the University of Humanistic Studies the Committee extensively discussed the best method of assessment. Since the output of the departments is still relatively small, the Committee decided to give scores on quality, productivity and relevance for the four projects running between 2008 and 2012. In addition, a written assessment of the departments is included (2012-2013). Vitality and feasibility take a prospective view. Therefore the Committee decided to include scores for this category in the chapter on the departments.

After the interviews the Committee extensively discussed scores and comments for the institute as a whole, the projects and the departments. The Committee used the rating system of the Standard Evaluation Protocol 2009-2015 (SEP). The Committee would like to state that it slightly adapted the rating scale to allow for more differentiation. The Committee felt that it needed a more discriminating scale, which it achieved by also giving 0.5 marks.

The texts for the Committee report were finalized through email exchanges. The final version was presented to University of Humanistic Studies, for factual corrections and comments. The comments were discussed in the Committee. The final report was printed after formal acceptance.

## 2. Research review University of Humanistic Studies

### 2A. Institute level

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#### **The institute**

The University of Humanistic Studies was founded in 1989 to provide for the professional education ('ambtsopleiding') of humanist counsellors for the Humanist League (Humanistisch Verbond). It places this task within the broader context of developing Humanistic Studies as an academic discipline, and focuses on research as well as education in the fields of Humanistic Studies and Ethics of Care.

The University of Humanistic Studies is a Foundation with a General Board that acts as a Supervisory Board. The Board has an important role in safeguarding the Humanistic identity of the university. Changes in the university's strategic course and important tactical decisions must be approved by them. The members of the Board are formally appointed by the General Board of the Dutch Humanist League (Humanistisch Verbond).

The daily control of the university is placed with the Executive Board, consisting of the Rector and the Director of Operations. As from September 2012, all staff members belong to one of the following departments: Care and Welfare, Cultural Dynamics, Foundations and Methods. Each department is headed by a professor with full responsibility for education, research and valorisation in this department. The academic staff is facilitated by two support departments: one for management and facilities and one for support of education, research and valorisation. The department heads, the Executive Board, the Dean of Education and the head of the support department education, research and valorisation meet on a regular basis in the management team.

The systematic involvement of academic and societal partners is secured by an Academic and Societal Board consisting of directors of institutions on the intersection of science and society that meets twice a year. Furthermore, there are separate meetings with representatives of three relevant professional domains ('werkveldeoverleggen'): 1. Humanist counselling; 2. Education and; 3. Critical Organisation and Intervention Studies. Each meeting ('werkveldeoverleg') is chaired by the head of the department. Further an alumnus of the university who is working in the corresponding domain, a representative of the Dutch Humanist League, and representatives in the relevant domain participate. Each group provides the Executive Board with solicited and unsolicited advice.

#### *Assessment/remarks*

The University of Humanistic Studies is a unique institute that has no strictly comparable national or international peers. This is an opportunity as well as a threat to the research. On the one hand, the university has the potential and the conditions to uniquely voice and represent 'humanism' as a research topic and set of values in the academic world. On the other hand, it easily threatens to become more or less isolated when it focuses on too narrow a concept of humanism. The University of Humanistic Studies has shown the potential and the determination to advance an open view on different views of humanism, to take intellectual risks in crossing borders between disciplinary methods, and it succeeds in attracting young PhD-students and staff members who enthusiastically represent humanistic worldviews and values. It has some research leaders who show the intellectual power to advance the research in the coming years. The university is aware of the high demands of

academic research nowadays and has a high level of ambition that it wants to achieve with a rather small research staff. The focus of research should not be at the expense of education.

The university has gone through major re-organizations of its research programmes. It moved the research from four research projects to three departments, which were constituted in 2012. This reorganization by any means is a relocating of people in newly shaped departments and transferring former research in new structures. In other words, there is personnel continuity. The new composition of the research groups has not satisfied the Committee in all cases, as will be elaborated below.

### **Quality and academic reputation**

The University of Humanistic Studies aims to ‘deliver high-quality scientific research and education, inspired by the humanist tradition and contributing to a more humane society in which everyone can lead a meaningful life.’ The main objectives of the university’s research policy are:

- to create a clearer research profile by concentrating research on a limited number of themes that are socially relevant;
- to maintain recognition for the university’s research in national academic circles and gain recognition in international academic circles;
- to maintain recognition in Dutch society as a Centre of Knowledge on Humanisation and Meanings of Life and to contribute as such to the realisation of meaningful life in a humane society;
- to enlarge the research volume, especially by attracting external funding.

From the conversations of the Committee with the research leaders the aim of the university to be more visible in the international academic world as well as in (Dutch) society, as well as the aim to focus its research especially at fundamental research in humanism and the foundations of humanistic studies came to the fore.

The objectives are achieved through focussing the university’s research on a limited number of programmes; by establishing a graduate school and a centre to facilitate the development of practice-oriented activities (Practice Centre for Meanings of Life & Profession); and by providing a stimulating research culture. Furthermore the objectives are met by revising the publication strategy that aims at the publication of articles in international academic refereed journals and journals with a high impact factor; by generating more research volume and granting the staff with more research time; by appointing extraordinary professors; and by submitting a growing number of research proposals for external funding.

Additional data the Committee received are an overview of high impact and refereed publications and results of staff, extraordinary professors and PhD students. The Committee studied a number of key publications. Awards and grants have been won by a number of researchers.

#### *Assessment/ remarks*

The Committee understands the quest for ‘some tranquillity’ in the university after a period of reorganisation and restructuring of the research organisation. However, the Committee very much wants to stimulate the university to consider an overview of the research of the institute and of the links amongst groups which takes account of the following:

- There are two ‘orientations’ or ‘perspectives’ which the Committee feels inform all the topics/domains of research, so provide a framework for thinking about and researching them; these are ‘humanism’, and ‘social imaginaries’ (Taylor). Next to these two orientations or perspectives there are three or four ‘domains’ or ‘topics’ which constitute areas of targeted research, and also intervention practice and policy. These are care and welfare, ageing, normative professionalization and citizenship/civic engagement;
- As well as providing an overarching framework, the committee considers that the ‘orientations’ or ‘perspectives’ ‘humanism’ and ‘social imaginaries’ require substantial research and theory development in their own right. In both areas, the University could make a contribution to the field itself, as well as informing other areas of research and practice. ‘Humanism’ should be pushed forward in the Dutch tradition of Erasmus, Spinoza and others, but should particularly be developed in conversation with humanist thinkers like for example Nussbaum, Sen and Taylor. The impression is that the notion of humanism can be developed much more strongly in the research than is the case so far, so that innovative views on the concept are generated. The panel feels it should give some explanation of this assessment. It struck the panel, first, that several people were stuck in the (Dutch) past in their thinking. Second, the application of/integration with applied and professional work was uneven in the extent to which it was taking on board modern ideas in the field - or just perpetuating the past. At very least there needs to be a lot of reflective and hard intellectual work to make explicit just what definition of 'humanism' is being "applied". Third, there really is huge potential for forward-looking sophisticated conceptual work on just what humanism is, and what it should be, drawing on much exciting work around the world. Also, conceptual work isn't very funding-intensive given that it can be heavily philosophical. The ‘Social imaginaries’ orientation comes with a critical epistemology (see below);
- As for the ‘domains’ or ‘topics’, the Committee does not see all the rationale behind splitting care and ageing. These domains or topics are currently divided amongst the three departments;
- The committee considers that methodology and epistemology are areas that need greater focus and attention. Again, also these contribute to all research topics/domains, but a contribution could be made in its own right, not just in its application. A strength has been the emphasis on qualitative methods, not only on specific skills but on epistemological questions about the nature and purpose of research. The University’s work goes beyond just using interviews and simple thematic analysis; several studies include discursive, narrative, phenomenological, rhetorical, hermeneutic and other methods, and show sophistication in discussing how these are developing in social science. On quantitative methods, the University is relatively thin, and decision needs to be made as to how much new investment should be made in this area which is rapidly growing in sophistication. The current rector of the university is an authority in quantitative methods (h-index 14), but due to her leadership she is at the moment not available for research. Given this state of affairs, another high level appointment in quantitative methods will need to be considered if grant proposals and quantitative papers using such methods are to be submitted, or effective and extended connections need to be made to benefit from other universities’ expertise;

- It is necessary to take into account more the international perspectives and writings, and scholarship in general. The Committee got the sense that at least some of the researchers are focusing too much on the dominant Dutch work, but are not taking account of - and therefore not contributing to - the larger debates published especially in English but also in German and French, on the issues. Researchers need to be encouraged to physically link internationally - by extended collaborations (they already have some) and by participating in international conferences, networks etc. which will both enrich their thinking and contacts, and make UHS more visible to the world.

At the moment, the orientations and domains or topics in the different research departments are very scattered. The Committee was informed that the rector of the university has recently been commissioned with research leadership. Considering the tasks that have to be carried out, the Committee is concerned whether the rector has the required time and attention for this task, in addition to the administrative tasks of leading a university. The Committee strongly advises the university to establish more control over the research programs in a different manner. The Committee recommends appointing a research director, probably but not necessarily from outside, who can lead the research into the desired directions and overview the coherence in research orientations and domains in the different departments in close collaboration with the rector (and a small research committee). The point is to align UvH with most other universities and recognize that both the rectorship and the research directorship are, and should be, full time jobs if done well: there is a lot of work required especially to move fully to the international stage. Such an appointment would also ensure coherence of cross-group activities and collaborations to maintain throughput from interesting ideas to high quality outputs. The relation between the rector, a research leader and the head of departments should be well thought out. A research director will also be able to support researchers in developing research proposals for funding. The problem of funding could in part be solved when and if the university is more successful in getting large grants.

### **Resources**

The self-evaluation report provides quantitative data on staff numbers and funding sources (see Appendix 4). Overall, the total number of FTE grew between 2008 and 2010 from 8.78 to 11.95, then decreased slightly in 2010 and recovered to 12.65 FTE in 2013. This development reflects the growth in FTE for tenured and non-tenured staff, extraordinary professors and PhD students in this period. The number of extraordinary professors increased most (200%). According to the self-evaluation report the university has deliberately chosen to appoint more extraordinary professors, because they provide valuable connection to important societal fields. The university plans to expand their number to 18 from 2016 onwards. The number of employed PhD students increased the least; between 2008 and 2009 the number increased from 6 to 9 employed PhD's, but then it slowly decreased to 6 again in 2013.

Until September 2013 tenured staff members spend 55% of their time in teaching, 40% in research and 5% in administration and management. In September 2013 university policy for the division of duties for tenured staff members was altered. These staff members now spend 45% on education, 45% on research and 10% on societal relevance.

The development of staff numbers is a reflection of the budget. At the institutional level the budget showed an increase until 2010, followed by a slight decrease in 2011 and an increase in 2012 and 2013.

Ambition is shown in the university's aim to acquire more external funding. However, the university has built a rather disappointing track record of fundraising. By collaborating with other institutions funding by the European Union is aimed at through focussing on the Horizon 2020 themes Health, Demographic Change and Wellbeing, as well as Inclusive, innovative and Reflective Societies. Focusing on the Horizon 2020 themes also functions as a guarantee that ensures societal relevance of the research of UHS.

*Assessment/remarks*

The Committee admires the perseverance of the university in applying for funding, but questions the feasibility of obtaining a grant in Horizon 2020. The Committee advises the university to divide the roads to achieving these aims into doable steps. For every ambition the question should be asked: how to get there? Every step should be tested by a down to earth reality check. The development of a clear strategy with verifiable steps on funding, not only from Horizon 2020 but also from smaller 'second' (governmental) and 'third' (private) funding streams, is strongly advised. To be successful in funding and in co-publication strategies the cooperation strategy with other groups should also be subjected to a road map and limited to a number of long term partners with whom intensive cooperation will be developed. Attracting scholars who have a track record in acquiring funding is worth considering. There is certain urgency to this advice, as comparable recommendations of the Review Committees of 2009 and 2012 were not achieved.

**Productivity**

For quantitative data please refer to Appendix 4. The publication strategy of the university aims at stimulating the discussion of research results in the international forum and on contributing to the improvement of important societal issues and problems by sharing results with professionals and organisations and a wider audience. Until 2011, all individual staff members were expected to publish three academic articles plus one article for professionals or a wider audience per 0.4 FTE research time. Half of the academic publications of the group should be international and one third should be refereed. In 2011 new productivity standards were introduced that are meant to improve the visibility of research results. Following the advice of the Committee for the midterm review of the university's research in 2012, this strategy was strengthened in 2013. Now 10 points are awarded for articles in high-impact journals, and 6 points for articles in international peer reviewed journals with no or a low impact factor. All tenured and non-tenured staff and extraordinary professors are expected to earn 10 points per 0.35 FTE research time. Senior staff members and extraordinary professors are expected to publish one article in an international refereed journal with each of their PhD students.

The self-evaluation report provides information on the number and type of output of the researchers. These data show that the number of articles in international peer-reviewed journals has increased slightly. The average number of articles between 2008 and 2013 was 18.3 and the number of articles in 2013 was 20. An update in June 2014 showed that in 2014 a total of 57 articles had already been published, accepted or submitted.

*Assessment/remarks*

The university produces rather high output with limited human and financial sources. It has developed a strategy to increase the number of academic publications in high impact journals, and this strategy seems to come into effect in 2014, as the provisional numbers for this year show. To maintain this trend, the process will need to be monitored permanently. It is noted that the number of citations of published articles is not taken into account (Web of Science: h-index; Google Scholar Citations h-index). On the other hand, the question was raised how

the university deals with respected international journals in the field of the Humanities with no impact factor.

With regard to the publication strategy, the university needs an impact-strategy: not only for publications, but also for visibility. The focus should not exclusively be on peer reviewed high impact publications and international academic visibility, but also on societal visibility. There is also a question of whether the current strategy is really identifying high-impact journals, and particularly high quality journals, as its approach does not take into account the many attempts by a variety of evaluating bodies to develop more complex and responsive ranking methods (see for example, the comparisons made by Harzing's *Publish or Perish* programme). The balance between quality and quantity needs to be continuously monitored, with external input.

### **Societal relevance**

Among the strengths of the university is the strong connection between professional training and research, as well as its clearly defined societal stakeholders, among which the Humanistic League is the most important. The research and education of the university has high societal potential, but this is not sufficiently effected. Indicators of societal relevance of the research of the University of Humanistic Studies are lacking.

#### *Assessment/ remarks*

The emphasis on publications in high impact journals could oppress the necessity to publish books for a broader public and to be visible in the (multi-)media. One has to find a balance. Becoming more visible in society asks for a clear strategy with, again, doable and obtainable steps. The Committee advises drawing a road map to more societal visibility of the research and some of the researchers of the university. The report *Waardevol. Indicatoren voor valorisatie* of the Rathenau Instituut may be helpful. Very practical steps such as offering media training to some researchers belong on such a road map. Also, in its publication strategy books and articles for a broader public should be high on the agenda. The Committee takes note that not all researchers need to be equally qualified in all aspects of research, but both types of publications can be realized by transforming academic publications into professional publications and vice versa.

### **Strategy for the future**

The University of Humanistic Studies has developed a strategy for the 2014-2017 period. This strategy builds on the reorganisation of 2012 and the performance agreement with the Secretary of State for Education (2012). Because the University of Humanistic Studies is a values-motivated organisation, the university is looking for ways to better connect to the market by directing its fundamental research more towards the grand societal challenges. The self-evaluation report lists its current strengths and weaknesses and the opportunities and threats for the future. It also indicates four grand challenges of the university: 1. to strengthen the academic profile of the university 2. the further internationalisation of education and research 3. to strengthen the labour market position of the graduates of the university, and 4. by pursuing the above, to ensure the continuity of the organisation as an independent university.

#### *Assessment/ remarks*

The Committee supports these strategical aims. In addition, and summarizing what we have said thus far, the Committee recommends the following strategic steps:

- The Committee underlines the importance of the independency of the University of Humanistic Studies and recommends the university to guard its independence;
- The Committee recommends the appointment of a research director who, in collaboration with the rector, can lead the research into the desired directions and overview the orientations or perspectives and domains or topics in the different departments;
- In the areas of ‘humanism’ and ‘social imaginaries’, the University should make a contribution to the field itself, as well as informing other areas of research and practice. ‘Humanism’ should be pushed forward in the Dutch tradition of Erasmus, Spinoza and others, but should particularly be developed in conversation with humanist thinkers like for example Nussbaum, Sen and Taylor;
- Methodology and epistemology are areas that need focus and attention. Again, these contribute also to all research topics/domains, but a contribution could be made in its own right, not just in its application;
- A decision needs to be made as to how much new investments should be made in quantitative research methodology;
- International perspectives and writings, and scholarship in general should be taken more into account. This goes along with the need to physically link internationally (conferences, networks);
- The ambitions of the university with regard to research (funding, visibility, focussing) are rather high. The Committee appreciates these ambitions, and advises the university to divide the roads to achieving these aims into doable steps. For every ambition the question should be asked: how to get there? Every step should be tested by a down to earth reality check;
- Given the disappointing and somewhat depressing history of fundraising by the university, as presented in its self-evaluation report, the development of a clear strategy with verifiable steps on funding, not only from Horizon 2020 but also from smaller ‘second’ (governmental) and ‘third’ (private) funding streams, is strongly advised. Also, attracting scholars who have a track record in acquiring funding should be considered. There is a certain urgency in this advice, as recommendations of the Review Committees of 2009 and 2012 are not yet achieved;
- To be successful in funding and in co-publication strategies also the cooperation strategy with other groups should be subjected to a road map and the number of co-operation partners should be more limited to a number of long term partners;
- The same holds for societal impact and visibility. Becoming more visible in society asks for a clear strategy with, again, doable and obtainable steps. We would advise to offer some of the staff members of the university a media training;
- It struck the Committee that soft benchmarking is lacking in the self-evaluation report. It should become clear how the university is evaluated internally and externally, nationally and internationally by peers and partners. Processes and performances of the university should be expressed more precisely in comparison with other universities and institutes rather than by just claiming its uniqueness (which according to the Committee clearly is a valid claim!). A more clear and pro-active image of what makes you unique, helps in focussing on niches.

### **PhD-training and supervision**

From 2002 until 2009, the University of Humanistic Studies has attracted 12 full-time PhD students. No PhD students were employed between 2010 and 2013. From 2014 onwards, one high-potential master’s student will be selected for employment each year. These students have employee status and conduct their research under the authority of the university with a

view to graduating there. The total number of PhD students registered at the university numbered 116 by the end of 2013; most of these are external PhD students.

Between 2002 and 2010 there was a training programme 'Meaning in Organisation' (MiO) for professionals who wanted to write a PhD-thesis based on their professional experience. The programme generated efficiency numbers that raised concern, and in 2010 the University discontinued recruitment to the programme and moved to establish a Graduate School. The supervision of those students who remain registered is taken care of by professors that were participating in the programme. Some of these students have transferred to the Graduate School.

All new PhD students of the University of Humanistic Studies are now part of the graduate school. The university's graduate school also includes talented Masters students and academically trained professionals who are now supposed to conduct research within the scope of the university research. The graduate school offers PhD students a four year coursework programme and personal support. It includes a yearly PhD conference where students present their work. Some courses may be followed outside the university, for example in national research schools. Also second supervisors are sometimes externals.

*Assessment/remarks*

The university has discontinued the MiO programme and established a Graduate School (GS). Students are better monitored now and the expectation is that efficiency numbers will improve. Some of the remaining MiO students have moved into the Graduate School. One of these students noted that the GS is satisfactory, but that MiO had been inspirational. Coupled with the fact that several of the PhDs produced from this initiative were and continue to be of very high quality, there seems to be a lack of continuity in the narrative presented. We would urge the University to address possible learning from the MiO programme with special respect to these quality issues, and the appropriate recognition of success.

The Committee highly values the establishment of a Graduate School. PhD-students appear to feel at home at the university and appreciate the commitment of its staff members, the small size of the university, the possibility for value-based research, as well as the opportunity to connect to the professional field. This appreciation of the students is worth cherishing.

Talented young students are identified during their MA-study, although the number of students that aspires a PhD-training is limited; most of them have professional ambitions. Four international young and talented students were recruited in 2010 and funded via HIVOS.

PhD-research does not always fit with the research programmes of the university. The Committee supports the ambition to match these: PhD-research should be part of the research programmes of the university. As a consequence, the Committee also strongly supports the ambition to show coherence in the research by providing PhD-theses by means of (co-) authorized academic articles.

Additionally, the monitoring and supporting of external students especially should be improved, they easily get out of sight when personal or working circumstances prevents them from working on their thesis. There seems to be no supervising 'system', with red flags. The education is time scheduled, but there is not really a learning cycle. This should be developed and should include 'technical' research skills and research attitudes but also monitor the

personal engagement of students in the research. External students require special attention in this regard. This makes specific demands on staff members of the GS and supervisors. Supervising staff members are professionally trained: they have the required University Teacher Qualification (BKO). However, the supervision of PhD-students asks for advanced trainings (e.g. in empirical research methodologies) that go beyond basic qualifications (and that are not applicable to all academic staff members). The Committee strongly recommends qualifying supervisors at a more advanced level for supervising. A protocol for students and supervisors would be helpful.

Students especially appreciate the first year of the training in the GS, because most of the work is done in well-supported peer groups and methodology training is provided for. After the first year, they split up in the specific research clusters with the senior researchers, where the students' role and the relevancy for their projects are not always clear. The Committee suggests to focus on the group as a whole also after the first year. The Committee sees a role in the GS for the intended research director.

Research groups on normative professionalization and education fill in quickly with PhD-students. In the light of our recommendations on the two main perspectives (humanism and social imaginaries) of the research of UHS, the Committee strongly supports the ambition to find a balance.

The PhD-students as a body are not represented in the organisational structure of the university. This needs improvement.

Students that are employed by the university have a € 5.000, - budget for congresses and trainings outside the university and are encouraged to orientate internationally. External PhD-students in the graduate school have a maximum budget of €1.000, - to participate in conferences and to connect to international research groups.

The University may look to seek membership of a body such as EDAMBA (European Doctoral Association for Management, Business and Administration) which represents the main professional and business schools and offers a great deal of advice and support, and sharing of common experience, on all aspects of doctoral programmes, including innovations, and provides staff development conferences annually, along with a general assembly addressing strategic issues. It is possible to hold informal discussion before an application is made, and useful advice could be given on the suitability of the School for membership and any improvements necessary before formal assessment.



## **2B. Programme level: Humanism and Humanity in the 21st Century**

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### **Introduction**

Until September 2012 research of the University of Humanistic Studies was organised in one research programme titled 'Humanism and Humanity in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century'. Research in this programme centred on the two concepts 'Meanings of Life' and 'Humanisation' and focussed on questions about meaning that concern the entire human existence.

Until its discontinuation in 2012 the programme Humanism and Humanity in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century included four research projects: 1. Citizenship in an Intercultural Society; 2. Ageing Well: Well-being, Meaning and Human Dignity; 3. Resilience and Humanism; 4. Normative professionalisation.

From 2013 three new departments have developed their own research programmes: 1. Care and Welfare; 2. Cultural Dynamics; 3. Foundations and Methods. This reorganisation of research was dictated by internal needs to add more focus to the research in the university and to direct the research more towards the grand societal challenges, as well as by financial necessities. The Review Committee 2008 recommended the reorganisation of the research in the form of a limited number of projects headed by research leaders.

The Committee assessments of the four projects and the three new research departments have been included in the following sections. For an explanation of the assessment method, please refer to Chapter 1.



## **2B.1 Project: Citizenship in an Intercultural Society**

Programme leaders: Dr. L. ten Kate and Dr. C. Suransky  
Research staff: 1.52 FTE in 2012

Assessments:           Quality:           4  
                          Productivity:       3  
                          Relevance:         4

### **Introduction**

The research project Citizenship in an Intercultural Society (CIS) was established in 2008 to contribute new innovative research to the polarised debate on citizenship and intercultural identity in a changing, globalising and intercultural society. The project's main challenge was to rethink the legacy of Van Praag's humanism as a concept and as a practice. Against that backdrop, this research focuses on the evolving relationship between religion and secularity in the process of globalisation, and on the question what humanism can offer to the debate. Its main presupposition was that a fundamental study of transformations in the relation between religion and secularity was indispensable for successful research on intercultural citizenship.

By bringing together diverse disciplinary approaches and by focussing on dilemmas and perspectives on citizenship, CIS aims to offer a nuanced approach to both the scientific and the social debate. The CIS research group combines insights and research methods from history, education studies, socio-political theory, philosophy, theology, religious studies and literary theory. CIS researchers cooperate with the Kosmopolis Institute and its principal partner Hivos. This institute offers CIS primarily a dynamic connection with societal partners and also contributes to CIS on an academic level. For instance it provided four PhD projects in the newly established graduate school. In 2012 CIS has been merged within the department of Cultural Dynamics and is directed by one full professor, Prof. Dr. Hans Alma (till mid 2014); from second half 2014: Prof. Dr. Evelien Tonkens.

### **Quality**

Both in their contact with international scholars (Nancy, Sloterdijk, and others) and on an institutional level, different forms of collaboration were explored and developed. The upshot of this joint research was the organisation of national and international seminars and publications from an interdisciplinary point of view. Active co-operation with Kosmopolis Institute and its principal partner Hivos provided for a dynamic connection with societal partners at a professional level and to a lesser extent on academic level. Since 2012, the Project Citizenship in an Intercultural Society has been merged with Globalization Studies in the new department of Cultural Dynamics. The perspective from which the legacy of humanism is rethought and the problem of pluralism is situated, is that of the guiding concept of 'social imaginaries' that will enable the researchers to focus much more than before and to have more international contacts on academic level.

### **Productivity**

So far, there are tensions and strains between academic output and output for a broader audience, between international (English) and national (Dutch) output. Since Hivos is not an academic partner, the researchers of CIS (merged within the new department Cultural Dynamics) should look beyond it, aiming to be more academic in the future. Therefore, there is a need for a Consortium with other universities (see SIMAGINE) and co-operation with the Department of French Literature and Theory (University of Cambridge) so as to get more

funding. At the same time, it remains a challenge to merge academic research with practical and professional impact. Applied as to output: researchers have to do their share of peer reviewed journals, but must remain publishing in journals that are not academic. (cf. Appendix 4).

PhD-students became gradually embedded in CIS. This positive tendency has to be reinforced within the new department of Cultural Dynamics. The focus on Horizon 2020 is interesting, but remains vulnerable. Therefore, extensive attendance at high profile international conferences, for both faculty and students, is recommended.

Further to this, the questions of multiculturalism and of citizenship have been addressed by funded research in other countries (the UK and Australia in particular) and this research is available in research repositories for consultation, which may facilitate future connections and conceptual turns.

### **Societal Relevance**

The concept of humanism definitely has to remain a key concept within the University of Humanistic Studies. However, situated in a different context than in the founding period, i.e. no longer in the 'pillarised' Dutch structure of the second half of last century, it is in need of being rethought. The choice to focus more on the relation between religion and secularity from the overall perspective of studying the role of social imaginaries seems to be a very promising and interesting research strategy. By merging within the department of Cultural Dynamics, this evolution is likely to be strengthened. The 'soft' human consequences of globalization are important for exploration alongside the more corporatized developments that have received considerable public attention.

## 2B.2 Project: Ageing Well: Well-Being, Meaning and Human Dignity

Programme leaders: Prof. Peter Derkx  
Research staff: 1.68 FTE in 2012

Assessments:           Quality:           3  
                                  Productivity:       3  
                                  Relevance:         4

### Introduction

The research project Ageing Well: Well-Being, Meaning and Human Dignity started in March 2008. Investigating ageing well is important, as life expectancy in Western countries has increased so drastically that many alive today will continue to live as an ‘elderly’ person for many years. Within the debate around ageing, there are at least three discourses. First, there is the financial discourse in which the ‘greying of society’ is mainly seen in terms of the financial consequences for pension schemes and health care. In such a discourse, the elderly are compared with other population groups on the basis of chronological age. Second, there is the biomedical discourse in which research is done on the biological and pathological processes which are associated with the ‘senescence’ of the bodies of people living in time. In the Ageing Well research project, a third discourse is being used and highlighted in relation to the two other discourses. Ways of living of elderly people are regarded as existential, socially situated processes, which we can talk and think about with a view to meaningful and dignified life course. This discourse is mainly based on the humanist tradition.

The humanist normative aims of the research group have been translated into an effort to combine (socio)critical gerontology with a focus on existential issues. The research project Ageing Well: Well-Being, Meaning and Human Dignity was finished at the end of 2012. From 1 January 2013 it largely continued – together with an important part of the project ‘Resilience and Humanism’ - in the research project ‘Humanist Tradition, Meaning in Life and Ageing Well’ of the new department of ‘Foundations and Methods’. Within the context of that new department research on ageing is performed from the perspective of humanism as offering different frameworks of meaning.

### Quality

The specific existential interest in the relationship between meaningful life and a life in well-being (based on the theory of well-being of Carol Ryff) is of utmost importance in the study of ageing well. It remains in all cases important to develop an existential theory on the life-course of elderly people in which learning, working, caring are combined as a part of the idea about ‘positive ageing’. That specific focus of the research programme needs to be retained and even further developed.

However, there are tensions and strains between academic output and output for a broader audience, between international (English) and national (Dutch) output and between the existential/conceptual and the rather underdeveloped empirical approach. Furthermore, there is no evidence of benchmarking and not enough evidence of co-operating with other universities in the Netherlands, which are focusing on the same issues.

### Productivity

As to output, researchers have to do their share of peer reviewed journals, and must remain publishing in journals that are not academic. At the same time, it remains a challenge to

merge academic research with more practical and professional impact. (cf. Appendix 4) This project definitely has a good national output, but the output in international peer-reviewed journals is rather weak, both in number of publications as in number of citations.

Productivity can be augmented in collaboration with the department 'Care and Welfare'. Merging with the department 'Care and Welfare' seems to be a better future option than remaining part of the department 'Foundations and Methods'. Extensive attendance at high profile international conferences, for both faculty and students, is recommended. The focus on Horizon 2020 is interesting, but remains vulnerable. In order to translate a number of interesting ideas on the topic of Ageing well into a greater international visibility, there is a need for stronger control on research in the department. The Committee recommends appointing a research director, who traces a course of action for fund-raising and international co-operation.

### **Societal Relevance**

This specific research, from an existential and humanist background is and remains of great relevance. However, the gap between expectations and reality must be bridged, mainly by becoming part of a consortium with other universities working in the Netherlands on existential discourse and by co-operating with the Department 'Care and Welfare' within the University of Humanistic Studies. The main challenge for the new Department consists in finding a balance between remaining loyal to their existential and humanist approach of ageing well on the one hand and getting adapted to the network-society and the new research atmosphere on the other.

### 2B.3 Project: Resilience and Humanism

Programme leaders: Prof. Joachim Duyndam  
Research staff: 3.51 FTE in 2012

Assessments:           Quality:           **3.5**  
                          Productivity:       **3**  
                          Relevance:         **4**

#### Introduction

The research project Resilience and Humanism has been a short term project; it ran from 2010 through 2012. Officially it has finished, but the project is clearly seen as the foundation for future developments. Most of it has merged in the new departments, so its strengths and weaknesses need to be considered.

Overall, the project has presumed that humanism should be in effect operationally defined through the study of ageing well and spiritual counseling (with implications for establishing criteria for these which might inform practice and policy for care), and resilience, which is defined in two distinct ways. One definition, deriving from van Praag's concerns about totalitarianism, relates to resistance to social pressures. A second relates to well-being and the capacity of recuperation or stress management.

#### Quality

Despite the aim of defining humanism from philosophical perspectives, there seems little reference to the vibrant current writings around the principles that at least underpin humanism as an ethical or universalistic worldview, such as the work of Nussbaum, Sen, Appiah or Taylor, *inter alia*. Seeing humanism as manifested in ageing well (or showing resilience) may be instructive, and seeing ageing well and good spiritual counseling as giving pointers to how humanistic principles might be elaborated, could be helpful but equally, can be a circular argument if no external resources are brought into the conceptualization. The work on exemplary figures is promising but still would benefit from connection to a wider range of international writings on similar topics.

The contact with other institutions working on resilience is clearly a major benefit but it is also clear that these groups have very different perspectives on and definitions of, resilience. These differences might be seen as fruitful areas of contestation that could provoke the development of concepts (on both sides) but at the moment it is not clear to what extent the teams have explored the implications of the different perspectives. There are, first, distinctions between resilience as autonomy, and resilience as recuperative energy. Within the latter, there are different methods of measurement with different underlying assumptions. Resilience as resistance to social pressure has been very extensively researched within social, moral and developmental psychology, little of which is cited by the team.

The problems spelt out above are evident in the writings available, and work needs to be done to develop more sophisticated, nuanced, and well-resourced arguments. If this were done, major contributions could be made. The materials on practice indicate that the application of the ideas is helpful and performs useful functions.

**Productivity**

There are few publications in academic outlets and few are peer-reviewed. To make an impact, the output needs to be in scholarly publications that establish credibility, but also in more widely read and accessible media, including popular books and articles, and broadcasting. Extensive attendance at high profile international conferences, for both faculty and students, is recommended.

**Societal Relevance**

Potentially, this work, both the theoretical and practical components, has considerable relevance to contemporary issues but to continue to do so, and not be sidelined into just another humane healing system, there needs to be rigorous thinking and research to support it.

## 2B.4 Project: Normative Professionalisation

Programme leaders: Prof. Harry Kunneman

Research staff: 1.44 FTE in 2012

Assessments:           Quality:           4  
                          Productivity:       3  
                          Relevance:         4

### Introduction

Research on normative professionalisation has a rich history at the University of Humanistic Studies, dating back to 1991. Since 2008 it is integrated in the research programme as a separate project. The project developed from a rich bedrock of conceptual and philosophical sources, encompassing hermeneutics, poststructuralism and complexity theory, and has made some distinctive contributions to discussion in the field at a sophisticated level. However, it is also grounded and practical, with a passionate commitment to valorising the “invisible” dimensions of professionalism that resist quantisation but are essential to successful professional practice. As such, it offers a vital and important corrective to performance initiatives in a number of areas, including New Public Management.

### Quality

The self-evaluation report was of a very high quality, the discussion exploring sophisticated questions at an epistemological level, following the knowledge concerns of Habermas, Ricoeur, Foucault, and their broader concerns with power and domination. However and surprisingly given the ontological context of humanism, it did not engage with ontology and left some connections unarticulated beyond the idea that culture and ethics are human inventions, which have evolved. In terms of focus there was strong evidence that problem-fixing was being accomplished at a fine-grain level, but that connections that might lead to innovative problem redefinition remained to be fully exploited (such as with “ethics of care”).

Where innovation seemed to be occurring, it was along the lines of “horizontal morality” in relation to dialogue and pluralism in which humanism is explored as one of a number of interesting voices. Humanism connects to but does not determine meaning, which is articulated from context. Here Van Praag is seen as contributing by the embedding of humanism in broader society, although this was limited by pillarization. The view presented was a complex articulation of a dynamic and clearly well-discussed and many-sided perspective.

### Productivity

A large list of collaborations was presented, but these were not detailed in the textual material. Discussions identified some interesting possibilities with for example the US “Good Work” project, but a familiar issue that European approaches that are more critically aware and immersed in perhaps more radical political analytic traditions do not always find US partnerships readily. This was identified as an objective for the future, however.

Collaborations more generally seemed improvised and creative, rather than systematic and strategic, with careful connections to specific outputs (e.g. visitors having identified objectives with measurable or at least identifiable product). More strategic collaboration from the group’s network of 20 lectors in universities of applied sciences would be possible, as would a better reflection of international collaboration in internationally recognised quality outputs.

Regarding publications strategy the quality of the product, whilst very good on the whole, is not reflected in the selected output journals. There are other sources that might give a better return regarding exposure with at least as high a quality level.

Impact factors as a measure of quality are insufficient on their own, being a very narrow and often weak demonstration of social relevance and quality, but they do indicate about visibility to a specific type of audience. Relevance is a separate question, but again success in making relevant contributions to Dutch society could also have wider relevance that needs to be communicated, rather than remaining a beautiful secret. The quality of the work being done needs to be better connected to leverage greater rewards (funding) and communicated to achieve greater recognition.

### **Societal Relevance**

Internal organization of the project reflected a tension between the need to develop the field and secure grant income (i.e. supporting the next generation of scholars) and the fact that the PhDs in the area are mostly practitioners. Social impact is important and successful here, but the balance between scientific debate and practice needs constant and sustained attention.

The continuing mission of normative professionalization as a scholarly and professional project identifies social relevance in the Netherlands being good, but international contacts could be better and there is more to be gained from linking into international debates and initiatives.

Over all this was perhaps the most sophisticated project in the University, which has produced very good quality. Methods for securing continuity are not yet fully in place, and there may be room for new views to contribute to maintain responsiveness to contextual changes and better connect to developments internationally.

## 2C. Department level

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### 2C.1 Department: Care and Welfare

Programme leaders:	Prof. Carlo Leget
Full professors	Prof. Carlo Leget and prof. Frans Vosman
Research staff	3.09 FTE in 2013
Assessments:	Vitality and 4 feasibility

#### Introduction

In the department Care and Welfare, the themes of meaning and humanization are studied starting from two societal problems: the breakdown of traditional institutional structures that support the search for existential meaning, and the dehumanization in healthcare in late modern society. These problems are studied from the perspectives of spiritual counseling and the ethics of care. The programme of spiritual counseling sciences focuses on both the discovery and loss of meaning in personal life stories. The programme of ethics of care concentrates on the (de)humanization of care and welfare practices. Organizational settings as general hospitals, the care for intellectually disabled people and community care settings are the research domain. The two research programmes share a common methodological interest in the reciprocal relation between empirical and conceptual research.

#### General assessment

This programme benefits from a strong focus on practical and policy issues, and the theoretical components seems to be integrated well. A focus especially on ethics of care, and the relationship that this has with humanistic ideas, seems quite integrated with practice. However, a more comprehensive acquaintance with the many international scholars in philosophy, psychology and sociology who have been addressing the ethics of care is recommended.

The relationship between conceptual research and empirical research is emphasized but not explained. More efforts should be made to structure these two methodological approaches in a way that they are fruitful for both.

This group shows sensitivity to the international scene. The full professors are involved in important international collaborations regarding end-of-life care and ethics of care, but it could be enriched further especially to make a larger impact. The full professors have good leadership capacities what should enable them to develop a future oriented strategy and policy for this department.

The papers from this group are appropriately skewed towards professional outlets and it is clear that there is likely to be visibility. This is a growing and vibrant field internationally and it should be possible to make a substantial impact and have high (inter)national visibility, provided there are sufficient resources to support research and its dissemination. The number of academic publications is increasing, as well as the citations (e.g. h-index Leget: 6; h-index Olthuis: 4). However, this positive trend should be continued in the coming years. A possible way to increase academic publications is to transform excellent master theses into academic publications. Another option is to transform professional publications into academic publications and vice versa.

The societal relevance is evident. The academic leaders have a great visibility in the Netherlands and Belgium in the fields of spiritual care, end-of-life care, and ethics of care.

### **Assessment vitality and feasibility**

This department has a great potentiality to be developed in the coming years. Spiritual counseling and ethics of care are important research topics on a national and international level. However, the department should develop a strategic pathway in order to translate this potentiality into more international publications and funded research projects. There is a need for going beyond national boundaries in seeking resources.

The department should also develop a clear description of the research content (is ageing also a research topic?) and research methodology (conceptual and empirical) within the context of a comprehensive research strategy. In this regard, the role of humanism in the ethics of care programme should be clarified. It is promising to see that this department has an open mind towards humanism as a dynamic and inclusive worldview. Hence, the relationship of this department with the department of 'Foundations and methods' should be clarified in order to develop innovative extensions to the humanist tradition so dominant at this university. Care and Welfare is a viable programme and could contribute on an (inter)national level in important ways to both theory and practice.

This department undoubtedly has its strengths in picking up deliberately post-Christian global and national challenges of meaning and (de)humanization in care contexts. The research agenda provides a most promising frame.

## 2C.2 Department: Cultural Dynamics

Programme leaders:	Prof. Hans Alma (until 1 May 2014), prof. Evelien Tonkens (from 1 May 2014)
Full professors	Prof. Hans Alma, prof. Evelien Tonkens and prof. Wiel Veugelers
Research staff	3.93 FTE in 2013
Assessments:	Vitality and 4 feasibility

### Introduction

The research department Cultural Dynamics shelters the fields of normative professionalism and humanism as a worldview. It includes researchers from the former programs Citizenship in an intercultural Society and Normative Professionalization. The program aims at developing the ethics and aesthetics of normative professionalization and developing ethics and aesthetics of humanism in the context of globalization. The program is a collaboration of educational studies, critical organizational studies and globalization studies.

The department is building a consortium of partners from Europe, US, India and South Africa, 'Simagine: social imaginaries in a globalizing world'. It has developed a conceptual framework that was aimed to bridge central questions of educational studies, critical organizational studies and globalization studies.

The department initiated and coordinates the Education for Democratic Intercultural Citizenship (EDIC) network and participates in RIAIPE3, an EU-co-funded project that focuses on how institutions of higher education can contribute to equal opportunities, social cohesion and democracy. It also participates in a consortium which is conducting a review study into citizenship and education in Europe.

### General assessment

The department gives 'a grand picture' and is well 'in control of its stories'. Its view on culture placing the emphasis on dynamics is very original, and the work of the department demonstrates quality. It shows the potential to innovate the research of the whole university, if it is placed in the best position to do so.

The group offers an overall perspective to the whole university's research, by developing a conceptual framework that starts from Taylor's notion of social imaginaries as constitutive and steering for the concept of humanism. It also incorporates Appadurai's notion of aspiration, in relation to the issues of citizenship, power and politics. The group relocates humanism in the debate about these concepts by taking a dialogical stance and by including such notions as religion and secularism into the concept. It has developed a clear and positively critical view on the relation of the university and the Humanistic League. The further advance of the notion of humanism goes hand in hand with the development of new methodologies. There is a need, however, to share and consolidate ideas more – the core concepts mentioned by the department such as globalization, pluralism, multiculturalism etc are all defined slightly differently by the contributing groups and the connections and contrasts need to be worked through. Globalization is particularly multifaceted, but apart from a brief mention of one part of Appadurai's work, there was no sense that it is approached from a postcolonial perspective, which one might expect to unite critical organization studies and citizenship. Even liberation theology has been mentioned in organization studies journals recently, so there is plenty of room for positive articulation.

With regard to publications, there is room to develop work for more prestigious outlets, and better targeting of journals – for example, it is surprising to see the omission of *Organization* from the list given that it is the leading journal in critical organization studies; and the omission of *Human Relations* is puzzling given the journals clearly signaled orientation, but also its interest in complex human systems. The quality of work in the department needs to be more visible and better leveraged.

The topic of the department has high societal potency, and the conceptual components as well as Normative Professionalization have considerable relevance to contemporary issues and practices.

### **Assessment vitality and feasibility**

The Committee would like to encourage the expansion of the department, so that it can further provide a framework for the research of the entire university, as sketched in the assessment of the Institute (2A). The strong need to take into account international needs and writings, and scholarship in general – as formulated in the Committee’s assessment of the institute as a whole – is especially important for this vital department. The same holds for the opportunities the department should get to connect physically with other groups by extended collaborations and by participating in international networks, conferences etc. It would help to develop a more specified perspective on intercultural processes, cultural contacts and in general, more social anthropological, cultural and psychological orientations. The work of the department is likely to be highly sensitive to cultural variation, and this could be the strength of it.

There is other research council funded international research on citizenship (in the UK) and the new humanities (Denmark) and a significant initiative by the Carnegie Foundation on the role of the humanities in professional education. The Department should be aware of and where possible linked in to this work.

It is the feeling of the Committee that the innovative work on Foundations and Methods is being done in this group rather than in the thus named research team.

The position of Normative Professionalization in the department relative to the other groups is not completely clear and this needs to be better worked out and articulated. As we have elaborated in 2A, we distinguish between two perspectives, one of which is strongly provided for by this department, and four domains or topics, of which normative professionalization is one.

The department should also develop a roadmap for a publication strategy as well as for external funding, as sketched in the review of the Institute (2A).

Overall there is clarity at a micro-level in the research being done, and some clearly identified bigger picture goals, but the Department needs to work out the “mid-range” – how to get from micro practices to broader goals and how the elements in the Department can and will contribute. The leadership of the department is in transition and not yet clear. In every case, given its importance for the UHS, the department needs a strong and senior leader able to articulate an evolving vision and develop younger staff.

## 2C.3 Department: Foundations and Methods

Programme leaders:	Prof. Peter Derkx
Full professors	Prof. Peter Derkx, prof. Joachim Duyndam, prof. Gerty Lensvelt-Mulders
Research staff	5.74 FTE in 2013
Assessments:	Vitality and 3 feasibility

### Introduction

In the department Foundations and Methods humanism is studied as a meaning frame, more in particular by investigating its humanising contribution to ageing well. The department starts from the idea that research on the humanist tradition, meaning in life and ageing are strengthened if they are linked. The methodological research in the department focuses on the integration of qualitative and quantitative research and on methods from the basic disciplines that constitute humanistic studies: historical sciences, philosophy and the social sciences.

### General assessment

The attempt to locate methodology, one of the ‘orientations’ (humanism) and one of the topics (ageing) in one department seems to the Committee to be misguided and asking too much of a single group. Also, it appears to the Committee that methodological strengths are greater in the other departments, especially Cultural Dynamics. The strengths of the Foundations and Methods group lie mainly in Ageing. Due to the strongly felt need to correct biases in much research on ageing, the group could not avoid the impression to stand somewhat isolated in the international context of research on ageing and to have a somewhat negative look of other research in the field.

As to humanism, please see the comments on the Resilience and Humanism project, which apply also to the department as there is overlap with personnel. We feel that there is ambivalence about the desired future of work on humanism; is it translating the principles of humanism as they currently exist, building in part on van Praag, into the practice and policy elements of the topics/domains, or is there a wish to enter into the vibrant international cutting –edge community of people addressing the core issues of humanism from a range of disciplines and perspectives? The Netherlands does have a significant history of humanistic thought, going back to Erasmus, and it would be very appropriate for the University to invest in such innovation, possibly with more focused collaborations with key figures in the field as well as productive collaboration within the University. There also needs to be very considerably more visibility of this agenda in the international academic literature, in conferences and meetings, and in writing for a wide audience – these issues are highly salient in contemporary public debate.

As to imaginaries, at the moment this is lacking in this department, along with an elaborated sense of cultural context and recognition of the importance of social construction and negotiation, including with regard to ageing. As this is a strength of other departments not this one, we do not see this as an agenda for future research of this department but we would hope that this orientation will impact on the work on ageing, as it develops in the University.

As has been said, the strengths of the Foundations and Methods group lie mainly in Ageing. Research on this topic is highly relevant from an existential and humanist background.

However, this research group seems to take a rather narrow framework of ageing. The group would benefit from being more open to a broader range of state of the art research of elderly people. Extensive attendance at high profile national and international conferences is recommended. Furthermore, the Committee feels that the strength of the department would be enhanced by attention to methodology.

### **Assessment vitality and feasibility**

The Committee considers that there is potential in the department for both enriching the University's use of sophisticated methods, and for contributing to the literature on methodology and epistemology. To do this, the Committee feels that faculty in all departments, including ageing, need to become acquainted with the cutting edge developments in the field, especially but not only in their domains of research. This requires a wider familiarity with the literature, but also active involvement with communities who focus on methodological issues – such as critical, hermeneutic, discursive etc. The Committee noted above that quantitative work is closely scrutinized by referees; this is equally true of qualitative work.

The quality of research in this department would furthermore be enhanced by a greater familiarity with and connection to the international scene of theory, research and practice and emerging work in this domain. The application of humanism to ageing (and the contribution of ageing to developing humanism) will be enhanced by a considerable development of conceptual work on humanism itself.

## Appendices



## Appendix 1: Curricula vitae of the committee members

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**Marcel Barnard** is professor of Practical Theology (Worship and Formation) and research leader of Practical Theology, at the Protestant Theological University (Amsterdam, the Netherlands). Furthermore he is professor of Liturgical Studies at VU University Amsterdam, and Professor Extraordinary of Practical Theology at the University of Stellenbosch (South Africa). He has been involved in a series of academic research groups in his field of expertise, including the Netherlands School for Advanced Studies in Theology and Religion NOSTER, the Societas Liturgica (An International Society for Liturgical Study and Renewal) and the Research Unit Practical Theology University of Pretoria, South Africa. Barnard studied Theology at the University of Amsterdam and served the (predecessors of) the Protestant Church in the Netherlands as a minister from 1986 onwards. He has been, and still is, actively involved in boards of societal and ecclesial organisations, like the Vermeulen Brauckmanstichting (2009 - now), the Museum Catharijneconvent (2008 – now), and the Prof. Dr G. van der Leeuw Foundation (Meeting Centre for Church and the Arts, 2003-2008). Barnard has also been supervisor of the 'Nieuwe Bijbelvertaling (the New Bible Translation, 1994-2004) and has been a member of a considerable number of editorial boards.

**Chris Gastmans** is full professor of medical ethics at the Centre for Biomedical Ethics and Law (CBMER) of the Catholic University of Leuven (Belgium), and President of the European Association of Centres of Medical Ethics (EACME, since 2013). He obtained his doctoral degree in Theology in 1995 with a critical study of the historical, anthropological, and moral theological foundations of nursing ethics, conceptualized as an ethics of care. Currently Gastmans is the coordinator of various empirical and philosophical research projects regarding elderly care and end-of-life care. He teaches Medical Ethics (Faculty of Medicine and Faculty of Theology) and Ethics of Care (Faculty of Medicine and Faculty of Philosophy), and he coordinates the Intensive Course Nursing Ethics (Erasmus Mundus Master of Bioethics) at the Catholic University of Leuven. Furthermore, he serves as an ethicist in the ethics board of European funded projects (e.g. PROactive), as well as in the ethics committees of Zorgnet Flanders and of the University Hospitals of Leuven. Gastmans has published many peer reviewed articles and book chapters on end-of-life care ethics, elderly care ethics, empirical ethics, ethics of care, and nursing ethics. He is also member of the Editorial Board of the international journals "Nursing Ethics" (SAGE, London) and "Nursing Philosophy" (Blackwell Publishing, Oxford), co-editor of the book series "Ethics of Care" (Peeters Publishers, Leuven) and author of "Between Technology and Humanity" (Leuven University Press, 2002) and "New pathways for European Bioethics" (Intersentia, 2007).

**Helen Haste** is Professor Emeritus of Psychology at University of Bath (United Kingdom), Visiting Professor at Harvard Graduate School of Education, and a Visiting Professor at the University of Exeter. Haste received the Nevitt Sanford Award for Lifetime Contributions to Political Psychology in 2005. She has a long record of research and publication in moral, social and political values, and on the interface of science and culture, including issues in gender and science. Her work includes research on culture and metaphor, on the public image of science particularly in the media, and on ethics and citizenship education. She is the author or editor of five books, and numerous research reports. She has published in popular science journals and news media as well as extensively in the academic literature. Haste was involved for thirty years with the British Association for the Advancement of Science, of which she has been a Vice-President, and was Chair from 2004-5. Furthermore she has been, and still is, on the editorial boards of several scholarly journals, and is a Fellow of the British Psychological

Society, and of the Royal Society of Arts, and an Academician of the Academy of Social Sciences (UK).

**Stephen Linstead** is Professor of Critical Management, Director of Postgraduate Research and Director of the Centre for the Study of Working Lives at The York Management School, University of York (United Kingdom). Linstead obtained a PhD from Sheffield Hallam University and higher doctorate (DLitt) from the University of Durham. He has held Chairs at Wollongong (NSW), Sunderland, Essex and Durham before moving to York. He also spent two years as a Visiting Scholar at Hong Kong University of Science and Technology. He is a Fellow of the Chartered Institute of Personnel Development, Chartered Institute of Management, Royal Society of Arts, and the Academy of the Social Sciences. A former editor of the journal *Culture and Organization*, he remains a member of 14 editorial boards, and has published 14 books, 16 journal special issues, 67 journal articles and 58 book chapters. His active research falls into five main areas – organization theory and philosophy; aesthetic approaches to organization, including film, music and song; language based approaches to organization; gender and sexuality in organizations; qualitative methods, ethnography and culture, including globalization and postcolonialism.

**Guido (Guy) Vanheeswijck** is currently Full Professor at the Department of Philosophy of the University of Antwerp, where he teaches courses in Philosophy of Culture, Philosophy of Religion and Metaphysics and part-time professor at the Institute of Philosophy of the Catholic University Leuven. He studied Germanic philology and philosophy at the Catholic University of Leuven. There, he obtained his doctoral degree with a study of R.G. Collingwood's concept of metaphysics in 1990. Subsequently, he started working at the UFSIA (later the University of Antwerp). From 2006 till 2012 he was Chairman of the Centre for Active Pluralism, Centrum Pieter Gillis (University Antwerp). Currently his research focuses on 20th century Metaphysics, the relation between secularization and religion and the historical foundations of European culture. Vanheeswijck is member of 5 editorial boards, has published 18 books, more than 100 journal articles and book chapters. His most recent publications include: "Collingwood's 'Reformed Metaphysics' and the Radical-Conversion-Hypothesis": in *Journal of the History of Philosophy*, 52 (3), July 2014, pp. 577-600; "The Kantian Heritage of R.G. Collingwood and P.F. Strawson: Two Varieties of Descriptive Metaphysics": in *History of Philosophy Quarterly*, 31 (3), July 2014, 271-292

## Appendix 2: Explanation of the SEP scores

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Excellent (5)	Research is world leading. Researchers are working at the forefront of their field internationally and their research has an important and substantial impact in the field.
Very Good (4)	Research is nationally leading. Research is internationally competitive and makes a significant contribution to the field.
Good (3)	Research is internationally visible. Work is competitive at the national level and makes a valuable contribution in the international field.
Satisfactory (2)	Research is nationally visible. Work adds to our understanding and is solid, but not exciting.
Unsatisfactory (1)	Work is neither solid nor exciting, flawed in the scientific and/or technical approach, repetitions of other work, etc.

*Quality* is to be seen as a measure of excellence and excitement. It refers to the eminence of a group's research activities, its abilities to perform at the highest level and its achievements in the international scientific community. It rests on the proficiency and rigour of research concepts and conduct; it shows in the success of the group at the forefront of scientific development.

*Productivity* refers to the total output of the group; that is, the variegated ways in which results of research and knowledge development are publicised. The output needs to be reviewed in relation to the input in terms of human resources.

*Societal relevance* covers the social, economic and cultural relevance of the research. Aspects are:

- societal quality of the work. Efforts to interact in a productive way with stakeholders in society who are interested in input from scientific research, and contributions to important issues and debates in society;
- societal impact of the work. Research affects specific stakeholders or procedures in society;
- valorisation of the work. Activities aimed at making research results available and suitable for application in products, processes and services. This includes interaction with public and private organisations, as well as commercial or non-profit use of research results and expertise.

*Vitality and feasibility.* This dual criterion regards the institute's ability to react adequately to important changes in the environment. It refers to both internal (personnel, research themes) and external (developments in the field, in society) dynamics of the group. On the one hand, this criterion measures the flexibility of a group, which appears in its ability to close research lines that have no future and to initiate new venture projects. On the other hand, it measures the capacity of the management to run projects in a professional way. Policy decisions and project management are assessed, including cost-benefit analysis.



## Appendix 3: Programme of the site visit

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### 25 June Malie hotel

15:00	Arrival committee members
16:00	Committee meeting
-	
18:00	
19:00	Dinner

### 26 June UvH

09:00	Welcome by the Rector	
-		
09:15		
09:30	Meeting with Rector and former Rector	Prof. Gerty Lensvelt-Mulders (Rector and President of the Executive Board) and Prof. Hans Alma (former Rector and President of the Executive Board)
-		
10:15		<i>Including a short presentation of 8 minutes by the Rector</i>
10:30	Project Normative Professionalisation	Prof. Harry Kunneman (project leader) and dr Gaby Jacobs
-		
11:15		<i>Including a short presentation of 8 minutes by the project leader</i>
11:30	Project Citizenship in an Intercultural Society	Dr. Laurens ten Kate and dr Caroline Suransky (project leaders)
-		
12:15		<i>Including a short presentation of 8 minutes by the project leader</i>
12:30-	Lunch	
13:30	Project Resilience and humanism	Prof. Joachim Duyndam (project leader) and dr Christa Anbeek
-		
14:15		<i>Including a short presentation of 8 minutes by the project leader</i>
14:30	Project Ageing Well	Prof. Peter Derkx (project leader) and dr Anja Machielse
-		
15:15		<i>Including a short presentation of 8 minutes by the project leader</i>
	Short Break	
15:45	Management graduate school	Dr. Caroline Suransky, dr Wander van der Vaart, (coordinators teaching programme)
-		
16:15		<i>Including a short presentation of 8 minutes by one of the</i>

*coordinators*

16:30	PhD students	Dr Isolde de Groot, drs Hanne Laceulle, drs Vincent Stolk (employees)
-		
17:30		Drs Monique Bussman, drs Ben de Boer, dr Paulien Rijkhoek, drs Eric van der Vet, drs Jan Willem Uringa (external PhDs)
19:00	Dinner	

**27 June UvH**

09:00	Department Foundations and Methods	Prof. Peter Derkx (head of the department), prof. Joachim Duyndam and Dr. Anja Machielse
-		
09:45		<i>Including a short presentation of 8 minutes by the head of the department</i>
10:00	Department Care and Welfare	Prof. Carlo Leget (head of the department) and prof. Christa Anbeek
-		
10:45		<i>Including a short presentation of 8 minutes by the head of the department</i>
11:00	Department Cultural Dynamics	Prof. Hans Alma (former head of the department), prof. Evelien Tonkens (head of the department since May 1 <sup>st</sup> , 2014)
-		
11:45		<i>Including a short presentation of 8 minutes by the former head of the department</i>
12:00	Young university staff	Dr. Nicole Immler (assistant professor History and Cultural Studies, Department Cultural Dynamics)
-		
12:30		Dr. Inge van Nistelrooij (assistant professor Ethics of Care, Department Care and Welfare)
		Dr. Joanna Wojtkowiak (assistant professor Spiritual Counselling, Department Care and Welfare)
12:30	Lunch	
-		
13:30		
13:30	Meeting committee	
-		
14:15		

14:30	Final session with the Rector,	Prof. Gerty Lensvelt-Mulders (Rector and President of the
-	former rector and Heads of the	Executive Board)
15:00	Departments	
		Prof. Hans Alma (former head of the department of
		Cultural Dynamics and former Rector and President of the
		Executive Board)
		Prof. Peter Derkx (head of the department of Foundations
		and Methods)
		Prof. Carlo Leget (head of the department of Care and
		Welfare)
		Prof. Evelien Tonkens (head of the department of Cultural
		Dynamics)
15:15	Drinks	
-		
16:00		



## Appendix 4: Quantitative data

Table 1: Research staff

Total research staff	2008		2009		2010		2011		2012		2013	
	number	FTE	number	FTE	number	FTE	number	FTE	number	FTE	number	FTE
Tenured Staff	27	5.46	27	6.66	28	6.82	27	6.60	30	6.99	35	7.97
Non-tenured staff	4	0.19	4	0.19	4	0.19	4	0.27	1	0.38	6	0.57
Subtotal	31	5.65	31	6.85	32	7.01	31	6.87	31	7.37	41	8.54
Extraordinary professors	6	0.68	7	0.64	5	0.72	7	0.65	11	0.82	12	1.09
PhD students	6	2.45	9	2.74	8	4.22	7	3.03	7	3.07	6	3.02
Total research staff	43	8.78	47	10.23	45	11.95	45	10.55	49	11.26	59	12.65
Support staff	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Visiting fellows	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
<b>Total</b>	<b>43</b>	<b>8.78</b>	<b>47</b>	<b>10.23</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>11.95</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>10.55</b>	<b>49</b>	<b>11.26</b>	<b>59</b>	<b>12.65</b>

Research time lost due to sick leave or pregnancy leave for a period of more than three months is left out. This concerns 0.17 FTE research time of tenured staff in 2010, 1.07 FTE research time of PhD students in 2011, 0.34 FTE research time of tenured staff and 0.52 FTE of PhD students in 2012, and 0.38 FTE research time of tenured staff in 2013.

Table 2: Funding

	2008		2009		2010			
	FTE	%	FTE	%	FTE	%		
Direct funding	7.31	83%	9.1	89%	11.04	92%		
Research funds	0.6	7%	0.3	3%	0	0%		
Contracts	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%		
Other <sup>1</sup>	0.87	10%	0.83	8%	0.91	8%		
<b>Total</b>	<b>8.78</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>10.23</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>11.95</b>	<b>100%</b>		

<sup>1</sup> Extraordinary Professors and external tutors PhD programme MiO

	2011		2012		2013		Average	
	FTE	%						
Direct funding	9.63	91%	10.33	92%	11.56	91%	9.82	90%
Research funds	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0,15	1%
Contracts	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
Other	0.92	9%	0.93	8%	1.09	9%	0.93	8%
<b>Total</b>	<b>10.55</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>11.26</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>12.65</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>10.90</b>	<b>100%</b>

Table 3: Total number of articles in international peer-reviewed journals

	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	Total 2008-13	Average 2008-13
High impact	8	10	13	13	8	12	64	10.7
Low or no Impact (special relevance)	4 (-)	6 (-)	7 (1)	6(-)	15 (2)	8(-)	46(3)	7.6(0.5)
Total	12	16	20	19	23	20	110	18.3
In preferred journals	3 (25%)	3 (19%)	6 (30%)	4 (21%)	6 (26%)	11 (55%)	33(30%)	5.5 (30%)

Total number of articles in international peer-reviewed journals (2008-2013) by staff members, extraordinary professors and PhD students employed by the university.

Table 4: Output

	2008				2009				2010				2011				2012				2013			
	Tenured and non-tenured staff	Extraordinary professors	PhDs employed by the UvH	Total <sup>2</sup>	Tenured and non-tenured staff	Extraordinary professors	PhDs employed by the UvH	Total <sup>2</sup>	Tenured and non-tenured staff	Extraordinary professors	PhDs employed by the UvH	Total <sup>2</sup>	Tenured and non-tenured staff	Extraordinary professors	PhDs employed by the UvH	Total <sup>2</sup>	Tenured and non-tenured staff	Extraordinary professors	PhDs employed by the UvH	Total <sup>2</sup>				
FTE	5.65	0.68	2.45	8.78	6.85	0.64	2.74	10.23	7.01	0.72	4.22	11.95	6.87	0.65	3.03	10.55	7.37	0.82	3.07	11.26	8.54	1.09	3.02	12.65
Dissertations <sup>3</sup>				8				5				2	5			7				6			2	8
Academic publications	49	3	3	55	43	2	4	49	51	16	4	71	48	5	2	53	32	11	3	43	39	7	1	45
Additional academic results	7	0	0	7	11	1	0	13	6	4	0	10	9	4	0	13	7	1	1	8	6	2	0	7
Professional publications	21	9	0	26	27	5	3	35	28	10	1	38	34	6	1	40	32	30	5	66	41	18	0	56
Additional results for professionals	2	1	0	2	5	0	1	6	5	1	0	6	11	2	1	14	2	1	2	5	3	1	2	5
Popular publications	9	2	0	11	9	2	0	11	9	0	0	9	13	0	0	13	13	0	0	13	12	5	1	17
<b>Total</b>	<b>88</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>109</b>	<b>95</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>119</b>	<b>99</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>139</b>	<b>115</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>140</b>	<b>86</b>	<b>43</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>141</b>	<b>101</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>138</b>

<sup>2</sup> Some publications were written by a staff member, an extraordinary professor and/ or PhD student. The total number of publications has been deduplicated.

<sup>3</sup> The total number of dissertations includes the dissertations by external PhD students. For example: in 2008 all 8 dissertations were by external PhD students. In 2010, 2 dissertations were written by PhD students that were employed by the university and 3 dissertations by external PhD students.

Table 5: Number of PhD students completing their thesis 2008-2013

	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	Total	Average
PhD students employed by the university	-	-	2	-		2	4	0.7
External PhD students	8	5	3	7	6	6	35	5.8
<b>Total</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>6.5</b>

Table 6: Active PhD students per cohort 31-12-2103

	active PhD students per 31/12
2008	19
2009	20
2010	69
2011	93
2012	112
2013	116

Active PhD students with an approved research plan. Note that the striking increase in 2010 is somewhat misleading. Many participants in the PhD programme 'Meaning in Organisation' had not presented a research plan to the Board for the Conferral of Doctoral Degrees, but were required to do so in 2010.

Table 7: Active PhD students per category 31-12-2013

31-12-2013	# PhDs
Employed by the university	5
Graduate school	65
PhDs MiO	24
External PhD students	22
<b>Total</b>	<b>116</b>

Active PhD students with an approved research plan. The Graduate school includes 8 PhD students that transferred to the graduate school at the beginning of 2011. Not including 5 PhD students whose research proposals have not yet been approved by the Board for the Conferral of Doctorate Degrees.



## Appendix 5: Response by the University of Humanistic Studies

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Utrecht, 12 december 2014  
Kenmerk: CvB/LvdS 14.106

In 2014, research performed at the University of Humanistic Studies was evaluated by an international committee of peers. The results of this peer review are discussed in this report.

Evaluating research is always a complicated process. It involves a substantial number of people from outside and inside the institute. We are most fortunate with the way the Committee members and our own researchers turned this review into a fruitful enterprise that will certainly benefit this university in the years to come. The university thanks the Committee for its intensive work, the critical and inspiring conversations during the site visit in June 2014, and the thorough and stimulating report on our research and the training of PhD researchers.

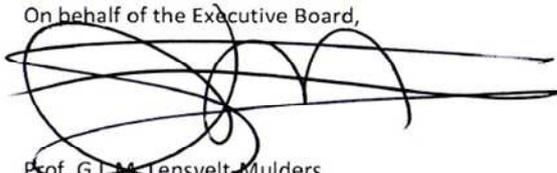
We are pleased that the Committee was impressed by our research achievements in the recent past and that it gave good to very good scores for the quality, productivity and relevance of the research projects *Citizenship in an Intercultural Society*, *Ageing Well*, *Resilience and Humanism* and *Normative Professionalisation*. These projects comprised the research programme *Humanism and Humanity in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century*, which ended September 2012. We are also glad that the Committee gave good to very good scores for the vitality and feasibility of the research of the three new departments that were formed subsequently. Although we do not share all comments on the fundamental study of humanism, we appreciate that the Committee recognises our determination to advance an open view on different theories of humanism and to take intellectual risks in crossing boundaries between disciplinary methods.

We are pleased with the Committee's positive assessment of our new Graduate School as a means to connect to professional fields and to further strengthen the university's research programme. We also appreciate the Committee's endorsement of our plans to vigorously pursue the further internationalisation of our research, to develop long-term funding strategies, to intensify collaboration with a limited number of academic and societal partners, and to develop a clear strategy to boost the societal impact and visibility of our research.

We have already started developing strategies for funding and internationalisation. The strategy to enhance societal impact will be developed further in 2015. As an example, we are building closer relations with the City of Utrecht and other knowledge institutions in the region. The Committee's report also contains specific suggestions on how to improve these strategies, which we shall gratefully use.

We thank the Committee for both its appreciation and its constructive criticism of our work. We congratulate our researchers with the appreciation they received and look forward to working with them to further improve the research and the training of PhD researchers at our university.

On behalf of the Executive Board,



Prof. G.L.M. Lensvelt-Mulders  
Rector University of Humanistic Studies