



university of  
 groningen

faculty of economics  
 and business

# strategic plan

2021-2026



Faculty of Economics and Business  
 University of Groningen

Connecting for Impact





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University of Groningen

## Connecting For Impact

December 2020

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# 1 Introduction

The Faculty of Economics and Business (FEB) is part of the University of Groningen (UG) and, within this university, is active in research, education and creating impact in all disciplines relevant to the economics and business discipline.

In the past decade, the Faculty has grown substantially. We now have around 7000 students and 600 employees with an annual turnover of around €55 million. We have become much more international, with around 25% of students on our English-taught degree programmes from outside the Netherlands and about 35% of our academic staff having international backgrounds. Especially in recent years, we have invested substantially in the hiring of new academic staff. We belong to the top 1% of schools worldwide that have both AACSB<sup>1</sup> and EQUIS<sup>2</sup> accreditations. Moreover, we have improved the quality of our education and research as reflected in global and national rankings and in research and education evaluations. Moreover, we have started new activities:

- With the creation of the University Groningen Business School (UGBS), we have become active and visible in the area of executive education;
- Jointly with UMCG<sup>3</sup>, we have initiated the Aletta Jacobs School of Public Health (AJSPH)<sup>4</sup>;
- Together with our study associations we have set up career services, and we have become more active in offering practical experiences and insights to our students, both intra- and extra-curricular;
- We have invested in signature areas to stimulate interdisciplinary research.

In this strategic plan for 2021-2026, we aim to discuss the strategic directions of our faculty. This plan builds on FEB's earlier strategic plans. Furthermore, it takes into account recent evaluation reports by EQUIS and the mid-term research review. This plan has arisen from extensive and stimulating discussions with relevant internal and external stakeholders. We have ensured it is aligned with the strategic plan of UG. This strategic plan has been affected by the COVID-19 pandemic, which has unprecedented effects on our organization. These effects are explicitly discussed.

We first provide an external and internal analysis that functioned as a basis for our strategic plan. Next, we focus on the mission and vision of the faculty and our leading values and principles. Subsequently, we discuss the positioning of our faculty's research and education. Furthermore, we discuss our strategic directions in the areas of research, education, impact, HRM and organization. We put forward clear plans in striving to meet our concrete objectives.

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1 See: [www.aacsb.edu](http://www.aacsb.edu)

2 See: [www.efmdglobal.org/accreditations/business-schools/equis](http://www.efmdglobal.org/accreditations/business-schools/equis)

3 See: [www.umcg.nl/EN/Research/Paginas/default.aspx](http://www.umcg.nl/EN/Research/Paginas/default.aspx)

4 See: [www.rug.nl/aletta](http://www.rug.nl/aletta)

## 2 External and Internal Developments

### 2.1 External and Internal Developments

#### *External Developments*

We can observe the following relevant major external developments:

- An increased focus on societal impact and contributions to societally relevant themes, such as Sustainability, a Healthy Society, and Energy Transition and Climate Change. These themes require a multidisciplinary approach from staff and students.
- An increasing digitalization of society, which is reflected in new research themes, degree programmes and teaching methods.
- A strong focus on important values such as ethics, integrity, diversity and inclusion.
- Highly competitive markets for research funding and good staff.
- Within the Dutch university landscape, there is an ongoing discussion on how the performance of scientific staff members should be recognized and valued (*Erkennen & Waarderen*). Specifically, there is a pledge for more diverse career paths.
- The evaluation of research output is being discussed. The Declaration of Research Assessment (DORA) has a strong impact on how, for example, NWO<sup>1</sup> evaluates proposals while, within business research internationally, there is a new movement for Responsible Research in Management.
- Dutch universities have made quality agreements with the Dutch government, where plans with additional resources should focus on quality improvement of education.
- A shift in the government's focus and policy towards beta studies, resulting in a tighter financial framework for Economics and Business faculties, which will effectively decrease the revenues FEB receives for education.
- A stronger university-wide focus on the role of UG in the region, resulting in new initiatives with strong links with northern societal and business partners.
- UG will start four broad schools on societally relevant themes, such as the Energy Transition and Digitalization. The Aletta Jacobs School of Public Health (AJSPH) is one of these schools.

#### *Internal Developments*

We observe the following major relevant internal developments:

- New strategic initiatives in research and teaching have been started, such as the University of Groningen Business School and the AJSPH. Several initiatives, such as career services, learning communities and signature areas, have started.
- We have successfully set up the University Groningen Business School with new, accredited executive programmes (i.e. MBA) and executive programmes.
- Increased internationalization of our workforce and student body, leading to a diverse and intercultural Faculty.
- Work pressure is high. Through various measures (e.g. work pressure funds) the Faculty Board has aimed to reduce this work pressure. In 2020, as a consequence of the COVID-19 pandemic, our education programmes have been digitalized, which has created additional work pressure for our staff.

Given the enormous impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, in-depth discussions continue on the potential effects of this pandemic. Our assumption is that the pandemic will not only have short-term but also long-term effects.

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1 See [www.nwo.nl/en](http://www.nwo.nl/en)

## 2.2 Effects of the COVID-19 Pandemic

In the midst of developing this strategic plan, the COVID-19 pandemic has occurred. This crisis has had a severe effect on society, and on our university. During the lockdown, we were forced to offer all our education, including examinations, online and all our meetings became virtual. A form of forced digital transformation occurred, with a strong impact on our staff and students. We expect that COVID-19 will have an enduring effect on FEB. The exact impact is still unclear. The major consequences we identify are as follows:

- The move to online education, with all its limitations in terms of available capabilities and (technological) support, has been forced by COVID-19 and we expect that this will speed up the broader digital transformation in higher education with a stronger focus on online education and hybrid learning.
- Despite initially expecting a decrease in the inflow of students, there is a slight increase in the inflow of students in 2020-2021. Nevertheless, there are many uncertainties in both the size and composition of our inflow.
- Temporary measures (e.g., abandoning the binding study advice, abandoning the hard bachelor-master cut) may decrease the student success rate.
- Online education may pose challenges for students in continuing with their study.
- We expect a decrease in external revenues because the increased attention required for online education has meant less attention can be given to the acquisition of external revenues and, furthermore, the budgets of many organizations are lower due to the extremely difficult economic times in some sectors.

Other, but still uncertain, consequences might be:

- We will work more online and be less in the office in both the short- and long-runs. This will also affect our culture.
- The strong support by the government for the economy, combined with an expected recession, may lead to budget cuts in higher education under the next government.
- Research output and funding efforts may suffer due to the increased attention required for education and stressful personal circumstances. These effects may differ widely between individuals.
- Specific topics may gain even more societal attention and business importance, such as healthy society, digitalization and economic prosperity.

## 2.3 Conclusions

FEB has performed well in recent years. Many new initiatives have been taken, such as the successful development of UGBS and the development of Aletta Jacobs School of Public Health. We have also set up signature areas stimulating interdisciplinary research on important themes, which will provide important input. Our education is successful in attracting a sufficient number of a diverse group of students. We have been able to achieve good quality research, and we have been able to attract good junior and senior staff. However, we can observe many external developments that have an impact on our Faculty. These changes are severe in that they concern combinations of financial, technological, societal and scientific policy, and university changes. Moreover, the recent COVID-19 has strongly affected how we function as a university and Faculty, which throws up challenges that we have never experienced during the existence of our Faculty and its predecessors. We expect our environment to remain uncertain and that, in the upcoming years, we have to be able to cope with this uncertainty and be flexible in how and what we do. Throughout the first years of this strategic plan, we foresee a potential headwind due to COVID-19. We will implement measures to address the budget consequences of the Van Rijn Commission and a structural imbalance in our revenues and costs, while we carefully monitor the COVID-19 consequences. We will use the additional budget resulting from the quality agreements to finance improvements in education, while continuing to use the working pressure funds to reduce the workload of our staff.



To summarize, our conclusions are that we shall:

- Continue with our high-quality research and educational programmes in the main domains of Economics and Business.
- Seamlessly embed relevant societal themes (Healthy Society, Digitalization and Artificial Intelligence, Leadership and Governance, Future Prosperity & Sustainability and Energy Transition and Climate Change) in our research, education and impact creation.
- Reflect on our educational philosophy of research-driven education and, in addition, create an inclusive environment and develop a vision and formats for our education programmes reflecting their role and links to practice.
- Embed online education in our education programmes after COVID-19, thereby adjusting our focus from campus-based physical interaction to a more hybrid education model.
- Continue and improve our connections with practice.
- Strive for growth in executive education.
- Focus more on activities to reduce workload
- Continue to focus on remaining an attractive employer for all staff members and ensure an open, diverse and inclusive working environment.
- Take measures to achieve a financially healthy organization with a sufficient financial reserve (about 15% of annual turnover) by 2026, so that we can cope with the budget consequences of the van Rijn committee and the potentially negative financial consequences of COVID-19.

## 3 Mission, Vision and Values

### 3.1 FEB's mission

*FEB empowers and connects students, academics and external stakeholders to have a joint positive impact on regional, national and global economic and business challenges in science and society.*

With this mission statement we emphasize that FEB's main assets are its students and academics, and that we work together with external stakeholders. We need, and inherently want, to collaborate to have a positive impact. This impact will be primarily scientific, but we also aim to have an impact beyond science within business practice and society. We empower our students with knowledge and skills in our E&B discipline and emerging relevant societal themes. We conduct high-quality research within the E&B disciplines. In addition, we focus our research on emerging societal, economics and business challenges that frequently require interdisciplinary collaboration. We want to be active, visible and connected with the northern region of the Netherlands, while retaining our strong national and international focus.

Our new slogan resulting from this mission is: **Connecting for Impact**

### 3.2 FEB's vision

In the domain of Economics and Business, we aim to:

- conduct high-quality research in the main fields within economics and business
- exchange state-of-the art knowledge with students and provide excellent education
- develop the relevant skills, knowledge and attitudes of students to prepare them for their future careers
- have a strong positive impact on science, society and business
- have an open, inspiring, honest, inclusive, diverse and safe working and study environment
- have an international focus embedded within our regional context.

### 3.3 FEB's values

- **Engaged:** We are easily accessible and actively engaged with communities in our region and in the broader world – learning about their needs and strengths, and applying impactful knowledge for the benefit of our academic aspirations and our society at large.
- **Ambitious:** We empower students, academics, professionals and external stakeholders to unleash their potential, making a difference in the communities we are connected to. At the same time, as one of the top 1% of business schools worldwide, we stimulate our staff, students and alumni to aim high and strive for the best.
- **Personal:** We debate and cooperate closely with each other as co-producers in a way that is inclusive and individual. We value a personal touch built on trust, mutual respect and social responsibility.
- **Down-to-earth:** We share sound practical and realistic attitudes.

### 3.4 FEB's profile

FEB is a broad Faculty of economics and business, active in all the major subdisciplines organized in the following departments and research programmes: Economics, Econometrics and Finance (EEF), Operations Management and Operations Management (OPERA), Human Resource Management and Organizational Behavior (HRM&OB), Global Economics and Management GEM), Accounting & Accountancy (ACCT&ACCTC) Marketing (MKT) and Innovation Management & Strategy (IM&S). We consider these subdisciplines to be the main pillars of FEB and they remain very important as our main disciplines within Economics and Business alongside underlying sub-areas (i.e. labour economics, supply chain management, consumer behaviour) where high-quality research and high-quality education are executed.

In addition, we have defined five societally relevant themes on which our staff from different disciplines and departments will be stimulated to work together to further enhance our impact on emerging societal, economic and business challenges. In our previous plan we focussed on nine signature areas but not all proved successful, and the new plan will focus on five themes that more clearly show our positioning. Here, we recognize that action is specifically required to enhance our external connections and impact on the world of practice (as also suggested by EQUIS).

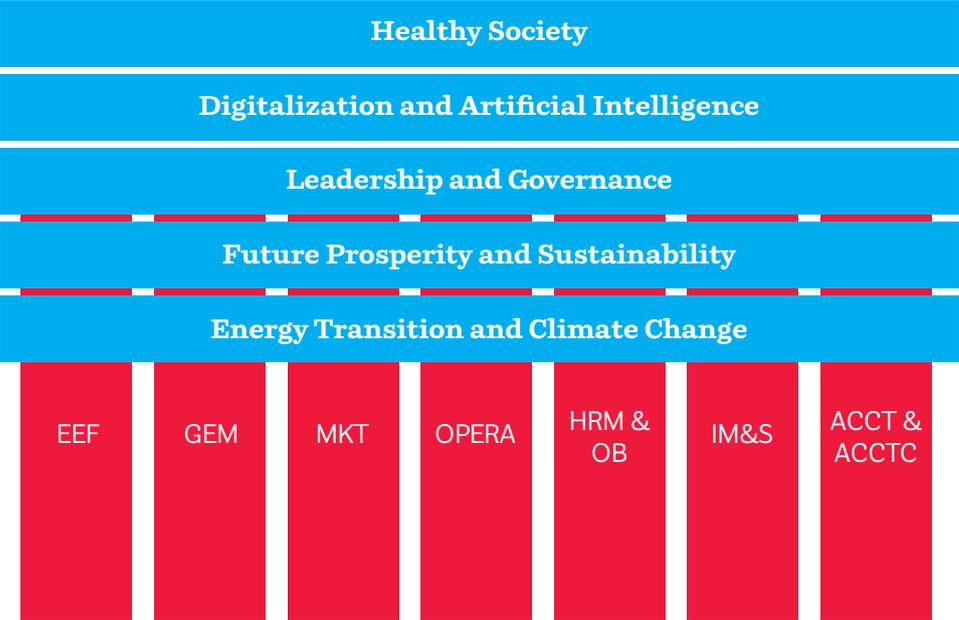
FEB has identified the following five themes:

1. Healthy Society
2. Digitalization and Artificial Intelligence
3. Leadership and Governance
4. Future Prosperity and Sustainability
5. Energy Transition and Climate Change

We have chosen these themes because they are (1) societally relevant, (2) FEB has already built up multidisciplinary research and education on these themes in our previous strategic plan and they form focus areas in our education programmes, (3) we foresee good funding opportunities and (4) the UG is developing four interdisciplinary schools on similar (i.e. AJSPH) or related themes and will invest in scholarships. These UG-wide schools address: (i) Energy transition and climate adaptation, (ii) Healthy ageing for healthy society, (iii) Digital society and technology, and (iv) Governance and politics for a sustainable society.

The FEB themes sit on top of the disciplinary pillars. Their link with the university-wide themes will enable interdisciplinary research and collaborations with academics from other faculties.

Our aim is that these themes will become clearly visible to our students and stakeholders. To this end, they should be visible in (internal) research collaborations, education programmes and connections with the world of practice (e.g. centres of expertise). The previously successful signature areas will be transformed into these themes, while we will stop investing in other signature areas that have failed to develop into successful multidisciplinary research initiatives in the past five years.



**Figure 1:** FEB T-Model for strong subdisciplines with five societally relevant themes

### 3.5 Targets & Timeline

Targets	Timeline
Develop an integrated plan with objectives on how themes will be integrated into the current organization of research and education.	2021
Further develop existing themes within the existing interdisciplinary infrastructure: Healthy Society (AJSPH) and Digitalization & Artificial Intelligence (GDBC <sup>1</sup> ).	2021-2022
Themes on Leadership & Governance, Future Prosperity & Sustainability, and Energy Transition & Climate Change will be further developed.	2022-2023
In 2026, we will have developed five successful multidisciplinary themes that are visible in our research and education where staff members from multiple disciplines cooperate within FEB and beyond on each theme.	2021-2026

1 See: [www.rug.nl/gdbc](http://www.rug.nl/gdbc)

## 4 Internationalization, Diversity & Inclusion

### 4.1 Vision

With the strong increase in the numbers of international students and staff over the past decade, FEB has developed into an international Faculty, where students and staff work together in a diverse international classroom and academic community. In recent years, we have shifted our attention from becoming more international in the sense of more international students, staff and activities, to embedding internationalization throughout our organization. In the forthcoming years, we will continue this trend, aiming to develop the quality of our internationalization by further embedding it as a major element in our education, research, impact, organization and culture. We believe this comprehensive internationalization is important as, in today's global world, it is fundamental that our staff and students have a strong international and inclusive orientation.

We see that the diversity of our staff and student population goes beyond nationality, language and culture, and we are increasingly aware of diversity in terms of gender, work experience, religious affiliation, socioeconomic background and more. Based on our experiences, as well as societal developments with regard to diversity and inclusion, we understand the need to broaden the scope of internationalization, focussing on diversity and inclusion in education and in the organization, as well as intercultural competence development.

At the same time, as an international Faculty, we still have a clear regional and national role and impact. With our broad, international perspective, we aim to further connect the region with the world and vice versa, for example by participating in the University's strategy regarding the "University of the North".

### 4.2 Focus Areas

#### 4.2.1 Connecting with Staff and Students

Diversity, inclusion and social safety are important values in our internationalizing community. They are critical to FEB if it is to support the full potential of our diverse community. Therefore, we aim to increase the awareness of diversity and inclusion issues, for which we are building on recommendations from the internationalization and inclusion pilot projects to professionalize the mindset regarding diversity and inclusion in our education and organization.

Furthermore, we will incorporate the forthcoming recommendations of the project group on Diversity, Inclusion and Social Safety on how to navigate increased diversity in our workforce.

Our aim is to work towards an inclusive organizational culture at FEB, one where we value diversity. This means that we will seek to involve more staff and students in decision-making. Alongside this, we are initiating open procedures using appointment committees to fill management functions. By doing so we aim to increase the diversity of our management. Similarly, we are striving to establish diverse appointment committees when hiring for all future functions.

#### 4.2.2 Education

With regard to internationalization and education, we aim to connect students from diverse backgrounds with each other in an inclusive international classroom, having them experience multiple perspectives and providing them with knowledge and skills that allow them to make an impact both regionally and globally. For this, we will use the results from the pilot projects on the international classroom and other projects related to diversity and inclusion to further embed internationalization in all FEB degree programmes (see Section 5 Education).

We aim to maintain the percentage of international students on our international degree programmes at around the current 25% (of students in English-taught programmes) but will endeavour to make the inflow more diverse in terms of nationalities. We will have a special focus on encouraging an international inflow into our Master

programmes. In our student recruitment, we will focus more on an online marketing strategy. Further, we will focus on the international exchange of students to enhance their intercultural competences.

#### 4.2.3 Connecting to the international academic world

We aim to keep our extensive, diverse global network of international student exchange partners at roughly the current level. We regularly evaluate all our collaborations to see whether the partnership is working as expected. If not, we will end the agreement. Further, we have a more entrenched cooperation in education (and research) with selected international universities through our double-degree programmes. While we aim to carefully extend the portfolio of double-degree options, we will also evaluate the ongoing ones and terminate those that do not meet expectations.

We also aim to further develop our new knowledge partnership with the EQUIS-accredited schools (Aarhus BSS and the University of Gothenburg School of Business, Economics and Law), for example by arranging staff exchanges for academic and support staff, as well as developing joint initiatives in education and research.

Finally, we aim to develop deeper research relationships with regional and international strategic partners at the university level (e.g. University of Hamburg, Nanyang Technological University, University of Stellenbosch), aiming to establish intensive collaborations that can help us bring our fundamental and interdisciplinary research to a higher level.

#### 4.2.4 Corporate Connections, connecting the Region and the World

As a Faculty, we seek to interact with local and global partners in society and the corporate world in order to connect our staff and students to the societal issues and challenges that we would like to address in our teaching and research. To further improve our connections with the international corporate world, we will work together with the University (see also Section 9 Organization).

The University of Groningen has the ambition to play a key role in connecting the northern part of the Netherlands with the world. FEB will play its part in this university-wide ambition, which aims to make more visible locally what we do internationally, to intensify our efforts to link local industry with our international community, and stimulate our international students to improve their Dutch language skills (making it easier for regional employers to involve them in internships and projects).

We will also participate in the university's strategy regarding the "University of the North" in which the University of Groningen collaborates with regional knowledge partners (including in northern Germany, e.g. Oldenburg) such as educational institutions, regional governments and regional firms to strengthen the region and the impact of University of Groningen in this region.

### 4.3 Targets & Timeline

Targets	Timeline
Develop a more diverse and inclusive culture at FEB building on recommendations of the pilot projects with regard to diversity and inclusion, and of the working group on Diversity, Inclusion and Social Safety	2021-2026
Maintain the inflow of international degree students at around 25%	2021-2026
Evaluate Double-Degree Programmes and stop unsuccessful ones.	2021-2022
Continue and extend partnership with Aarhus BSS and University of Gothenburg School of Business, Economics and Law	2021-2026
More deeply embed internationalization in all FEB degree programmes, building on results from the pilot projects on the international classroom and other projects related to diversity and inclusion (see Section 5 Education)	2021-2026

# 5 Education

## 5.1 Vision

In the past five years, we have made important steps to improve and extend education at FEB. Our degree programmes increasingly integrate new and relevant societal themes such as future prosperity and sustainability, digitalization, healthcare management and health economics in their content. Skills training (data analytics, personal skills, domain-related skills) has been given a more prominent place, and the further internationalizing of our intended diversity also features in our learning goals and our learning environment. Many students have been offered careers services, and connections to practice have been extended. Moreover, our University Groningen Business School (UGBS) offers a broad variety of postgraduate education.

There are three specific external developments affecting our education:

1. The COVID-19 pandemic has forced us to move to online education, which is evolving into a hybrid model for future online and offline, on campus, education.
2. The additional revenues for each student will decrease due to the implications of the committee van Rijn report.
3. In 2019-2020, FEB introduced plans, in the context of the quality agreements, to improve the quality of our education.

In the coming years, we face the need to enhance students' competences so they are prepared for a more complex society in which societal, business and economic goals have to be balanced, and in which connecting with other E&B subdisciplines, other domains, nationalities and diverse (virtual) practices will become a differentiating competence. Both multidisciplinary and interdisciplinary education as well as learning deep domain-specific knowledge and skills will have their own value in learning.

Based on the developments mentioned above, FEB wants to refresh its education portfolio.

- FEB offers four broad **bachelor programmes** within two programme options for specialization. In the coming years we want to integrate new and relevant societal themes in these programmes, and innovate the learning environment.
- We aim to enhance the impact of our graduates in society and the attractiveness of our **master portfolio** for undergraduates through offering:
  - ✓ a broad portfolio of specialized master's programmes embedded in our research programmes.
  - ✓ programmes that address managerial and policy issues that are relevant in their specific E&B domain, and
  - ✓ programmes that incorporate relevant societal themes, for instance through focus areas that are open to multiple master programmes. Note that we do not intend to develop programmes that focus on specific sectors or societally relevant themes.
- Since 2017, FEB has also offered new executive accredited master programmes (i.e. EMBA) as well as **postgraduate non-degree programmes and training** for business people in the University Groningen Business School (UGBS). UGBS aims to expand its activities in executive education by introducing new programmes and modules and to increase the number of clients for its in-company programmes. In achieving a greater impact, UGBS intends to co-develop new programmes, experiment with new forms of teaching (blended), and form a link in the valorization of FEB research.

These innovations and improvements in the education we offer will be financed out of available national funds under the so-called Quality Agreements. The Faculty will receive a substantial amount of money (over four years) to innovate our bachelor and master education. A project plan will be communicated in autumn 2020.

## 5.2 Focus areas

### 5.2.1 Embedding of societally relevant themes in Bachelor and Master programmes

We will focus on the following themes that need to be integrated in our programmes in a customized way.

#### *Digitalization and Artificial Intelligence*

The internet and new technologies such as artificial intelligence and machine learning, as well as access to numerous data, provide opportunities to develop innovative and impactful solutions, while also committing to ethical and responsible use. It is becoming relevant to embed a broad range of relevant knowledge and skills on digitalization in our programmes. The particular manner in which this will be achieved will depend on the specific degree programme. For example, embedding digitalization in our master programmes can vary from teaching the competences required to use information from data scientists for problem-solving and decision-making (for instance in HRM), through to a deep understanding of digital business models and digital transformation, provided through a set of lectures in a focus area, to teaching data science and analytic skills in several programmes. Being a broad Economics & Business school, we lecture at different levels of data science literacy (for example the levels seen in *Technology and Operations Management* and *Marketing Analytics and Data Science* to *Econometrics, Operations Research and Actuarial Studies*) in diverse application fields (such as marketing, operations, finance). We have to carefully consider how we clearly and effectively communicate this data science focus in our master programmes to the outside world (i.e. branding).

As several Dutch competitors (i.e., Vrij Universiteit, UVA and Maastricht) have introduced new and successful business analytics bachelor programmes, the Faculty will explore the need to develop a new Business Analytics bachelor programme or track.

#### *Future Prosperity and Sustainability*

Societal challenges such as climate change and increasing inequality and social exclusion are urgent and relate directly to economic and business decision-making and activities. Many of these societal challenges (i.e. Energy Transition and Climate Change) demand a multidisciplinary and interdisciplinary approach focusing on, for instance, future prosperity, social inclusion, cohesion and justice, and environmental sustainability. Good leadership and governance in organizations are key to attaining these goals. We intend to integrate Future Prosperity and Sustainability topics in our education programmes. However, a 'one-size-fits-all' approach to sustainability will not work due to the diversity of our degree programmes that serve different labour market segments.

Programme directors in close cooperation with the vice-dean of Education will develop a tailor-made implementation plan to embed societal relevant themes in both bachelor and master programmes.

### 5.2.2 Cost-effective education

One of the strengths of our Faculty is the large and broad portfolio of master, bachelor, pre-master and executive master programmes. In this strategically challenging period, we will search for ways to continue to provide high-quality education that is adaptable and attractive to the large variety of incoming students. Moreover, we have to offer cost-effective programmes given the tighter financial budgets.

This implies that we will have to make choices in what we offer and how we provide education. The challenge is to reduce the total number of courses while also finding ways to preserve or increase the already high quality of our programmes. Partly, we want to achieve this by offering minors, focus areas and courses that contain core components that are common to all students, but also components that can be adapted to a specific group of students. We will investigate whether blended and hybrid ways of teaching might facilitate this way of organizing our offerings. What is clear is that the development of new courses or programmes will have to be accompanied by



reducing the number of existing courses (single courses and/or tracks).

We also aim to reduce the size (the number of ECTS credits) of the pre-master programmes while taking measures to preserve the quality of the inflow of pre-master students to our master programmes. We also aim to increase the inflow of our bachelor students into our master programmes by offering an attractive master portfolio. Plans for cost-efficient education will be developed.

### 5.2.3 Vitalized blended learning environment

Research-driven education (RDE) remains the pillar of our approach to education. Our students learn about research, about doing research and do research, the three pillars of RDE. Nevertheless, we also aim to energize our teaching approach through developing a vision on the role and link to practice in our RDE programmes, through involving and explaining to our students the kinds of competences that are enhanced while studying on our programmes and participating in extracurricular activities, and through enriching and renewing the way we practice RDE.

We also aim to achieve a sound and wise combination of on-campus and online teaching (i.e., blended/hybrid teaching), meaning that lecturers purposefully integrate online and remote ways of teaching in their didactic approach to support campus-based education. Both virtual and on-campus education should have clear added value in the learning process, and provide flexibility. Online assessment needs to be improved, to prevent fraud and reduce the workload of teachers. Programme directors and academic staff will also be stimulated to use technology-enabled teaching tools and methods to enhance the quality of education and the learning experience. At a programme level, the teaching philosophy has to be clarified, communicated and explained to all students so that expectations are clear. Ultimately, we aim to provide an effective, inspiring, inclusive, safe and equitable learning environment in which students actively participate, and in which we work closely together with Advisory Boards and alumni.

### 5.2.4 Visible and actively built employability profiles

One of the goals of the education we provide is to prepare students for the labour market. In the past, our graduates have found it easy to find employment but the labour market in the years ahead might be much more challenging, making it even more important to empower students throughout their study period with intra- and extra-curricular activities so they are ready for their futures. Various competences enhance students' employability : (a) relevant knowledge; (b) field-specific, academic and personal skills; (c) practical experience; and (d) career development. This perspective shows how employability value is everywhere in what we teach. The goal is that our graduates enter the labour market with the right qualifications in terms of knowledge, skills and attitudes that will allow them to successfully navigate the labour market. It is important for students to get a sound understanding of what their qualifications mean, how they can actively build their own profile, and how their qualifications match the requirements of the labour market. In the upcoming years, we aim to strengthen this perspective on employability in our programmes and extra-curricular career activities. We view this as best achieved by having, first, a student focus and, second, a programme focus. Career Services, Study Advice and our study associations can, in turn, support each programme with these developments and with enhancing students' life-balance and wellbeing skills.

### 5.2.5 Internationalization, diversity and inclusion

The results of our internationalization projects provide ample insights and directions to broaden the internationalization programme to include diversity and inclusion, and to expand this across the Faculty. All programmes are being stimulated to develop an inclusive learning environment *that caters to the specific programme* (see Section 4). This will involve:

- Enhancing the awareness of staff as to what inclusion implies for the didactic approach, engagement with students, group work and course materials;
- Embedding a clear focus on attention to diversity and inclusion in every programme (in the formal, informal and hidden curricula);

- Developing hands-on tools and professional training to facilitate and support staff and programmes in developing an inclusive learning environment.

#### 5.2.6 Growth of our executive education portfolio to foster life-long learning

Since 2017, FEB has also offered postgraduate programmes and modules to businesspeople in the University Groningen Business School (UGBS). UGBS plays an important role in the provision of life-long learning. The goal of UGBS is to inspire highly educated professionals to develop themselves further by confronting them with the latest academic insights, by advancing participants' knowledge and skills, and by providing a platform for network development. After successfully introducing an accredited Executive MBA (EMBA) and an accredited Master in Mergers & Acquisitions and Valuations plus several shorter programmes on energy transition, health, customer experience, leadership and governance, UGBS aims to increase its activities in executive education. UGBS will introduce three new EMBA tracks with a focus on energy transition, healthcare management and sustainable business models. A further aim is to develop new shorter programmes and also increase the number of clients for our in-company programmes. In increasing its impact, UGBS intends to co-develop new programmes, experiment with new forms of teaching (blended), and form a link in the valorization of FEB research. A recognized concern given these ambitions is how the current economic situation might affect the demand for executive education. Flexibility and limiting fixed costs within UGBS is therefore important.

## 5.3 Targets & Timeline<sup>1</sup>

Targets	Timeline
<p><b>1. Embedding of societal relevant themes in Bachelor and Master programmes</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Programme directors in close cooperation with the vice-dean of Education will develop a tailor-made implementation plan to embed societally relevant themes in our bachelor and master programmes.</li> <li>• Strategic themes will be clearly visible to our students and stakeholders in minors, focus areas and courses, and valued by our students.</li> <li>• Realization of these plans.</li> </ul>	<p>Spring 2021</p> <p>Mid 2021</p> <p>2021-2024</p>
<p><b>2. Cost-effective education</b></p> <p>Reduce the total number of courses while also finding ways to preserve or increase the already high quality of our programmes.</p>	<p>End 2024</p>
<p><b>3. Vitalized hybrid learning environment</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Vision on hybrid education is developed, including online assessment.</li> <li>• Plan is available on how to vitalize RDE: enrich and renew the way we practice RDE, and clear vision and formats for linking practice in RDE.</li> <li>• Teaching philosophy is clarified, communicated and explained to all students so that expectations are clear.</li> <li>• Execution of plans.</li> </ul>	<p>2021</p> <p>2022</p> <p>2022</p> <p>2022-2024</p>
<p><b>4. Visible and actively built employability profiles</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• New vision on employability policy is discussed.</li> <li>• Programmes provide transparency into the kinds of competences that are enhanced, and how these match with the national and global labour market in the Economics &amp; Business field.</li> <li>• Students are empowered to monitor the competences they acquire during their study period and experience more active ownership.</li> </ul>	<p>Autumn 2020</p> <p>2024-2026</p> <p>2024-2026</p>
<p><b>5. Broaden the internationalization programme into a diversity and inclusion programme, and expand it across the Faculty</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The existing internationalization projects are evaluated and a plan for their broadening and Faculty-wide expansion is agreed.</li> <li>• Realization of these plans.</li> </ul>	<p>Early 2021</p> <p>2021-2026</p>
<p><b>6. Growth of executive education:</b></p> <p><b>6.1 Strengthen product portfolio</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Implement three new tracks: on Energy Transition, Health, and Sustainability/Digital.</li> <li>• Optimize portfolio of executive programmes by designing consecutive paths (“leerlijnen”) that help a diverse population of business professionals advance their careers.</li> </ul> <p><b>6.2 Enable lifelong learning</b></p> <p>Implement a digital platform for lifelong learning that facilitates participants’ choices.</p>	<p>2021</p> <p>2021-2024</p> <p>2022</p>

<sup>1</sup> Support and resources (quality agreements) for targets 1-4 are already available

## 6 Research

### 6.1 Vision

Research at FEB takes place within the Research Institute SOM. SOM has two interrelated units: a Research Institute with six underlying research programmes, and a Graduate School covering a Research Master and PhD training programmes. SOM was evaluated very positively in the 2015 national Economics & Business Research Review. In particular, the societal relevance of research conducted at FEB scored very highly.

Between 2015 and 2020, FEB's research quality has increased further, as evidenced by a growing number of top publications, and improved positions in international rankings. This was acknowledged by the review committee that performed the 2018 mid-term evaluation of SOM's research performance. We achieved our aim of becoming an international top-10 research school in Economics and Business in Europe. Further, initiatives to stimulate interdisciplinary research efforts led to successful collaborations across research programmes (e.g., more joint papers by staff from different departments), a visiting scholarship programme was successfully established, and we improved the placements of PhD students and the dissemination of research findings.

Despite these positive developments, it is clear that the research landscape in which we operate is changing. There is an increasing trend towards more strongly valuing the societal impact of research, there are pressures to publish research findings in open-access outlets, and policymakers and funding agencies call for interdisciplinary research and tend to use more qualitative rather than quantitative indicators of research performance (see, for example, the DORA statement). At the same time, due to policy measures at the national and university levels, and the COVID-19 pandemic, we need to look carefully at our budget for research. Given these changes, a major challenge for the future will be to maintain our current position. Our ambition remains to be an international top research school in Economics and Business in Europe. At the same time, we aim to improve our societal impact and take account of specific developments in our research environment. Towards this end, we elaborate a number of strategic choices below.

### 6.2 Focus areas

#### 6.2.1 Maintain the quality and recognition of our research

The international status of our school and its individual scholars strongly depends on the quality of our research output in the Economics and Business domain. In recent years, we have implemented an incentive system that rewards and stimulates high-quality individual research performance. This system considers individual researchers' ten best publications over a period of five years and uses an external, objective indicator of research quality. An individual's performance based on this system is used to determine the percentage of their time they can dedicate to research. This approach was evaluated positively in the recent mid-term review and similar systems are used in other Dutch E&B faculties. Nevertheless, the DORA developments and the movement for Responsible Research in Management call for the inclusion of research performance indicators related to achieving societal impact. Moreover, the pressures on our financial budget prompt us to re-evaluate and further sharpen the performance criteria used in our current system, and particularly to take societal impact into account. This however needs to be done wisely, with an eye to the consequences for research quality and our international competitive position. Jointly with research programme directors, the new vice-dean for research will refine the current system or develop a new system.

#### 6.2.2 Stimulate interdisciplinary research initiatives

Many of the major challenges faced by our society require research-based insights from multiple disciplines. In the recent past, we therefore invested in signature areas, and these were recently evaluated. Extending these developments, we now aim to more formally embed our successful signature areas into the five multidisciplinary themes discussed in Section 2. These new multidisciplinary themes are digitalization and artificial intelligence,



energy transition and climate change, healthy society, future prosperity and sustainability, and leadership and governance. Research on these themes could take place within a single discipline (e.g., research on online marketing in the ‘digital’ theme) or across disciplines (e.g., research on the interplay between governance and leadership), leading to publications in both highly ranked discipline-specific journals and journals with a more interdisciplinary or societal focus (e.g., Health Economics). We clearly want to stimulate (especially more senior) staff members to participate with research in the multi-disciplinary research themes given our focus on societal impact and the opportunities for funding. However, we emphasize that research in our main disciplines remains very important and that staff members can choose to participate in the themes.

We will invest in the five themes by, for example, allocating bursaries to five or six PhD students within these themes each year, and providing additional resources to develop these themes. In addition, we will contribute to university-wide interdisciplinary schools (e.g., AJSPH). In total, we have projected a budget of €500k to invest in these themes. Given that these themes also provide numerous funding opportunities (e.g., ZONMW, NWO, EU), we will also stimulate activities within these themes focusing on obtaining external research funding. This should further finance the development of these themes.

### 6.2.3 Focus on increased impact through open science

One of the strengths of research conducted at FEB is its societal relevance and impact. The 2015 Review Committee evaluated this aspect of our research as “world-class”. We aim to further increase the impact of our research by bundling our research efforts to focus on important major challenges in the five research themes mentioned above. In addition, we aim to stimulate interaction and collaboration with companies and societal partners to increase the direct impact of our research. Doing so responds to the call in the last EQUIS report to further strengthen our connections with and impact on practice. We will do so by making research data, laboratory notes and other research processes freely available where possible, under terms that enable the reuse, redistribution and reproduction of the research and its underlying data and methods. Doing so will not only result in a more transparent, verifiable and faster research process, it will also enable companies and societal organizations to readily gain access to, and use, scientific information in an early phase. To realize this goal, we aim to further intensify the implementation of our research data management plan and improve the access to and communication about scientific information.

### 6.2.4 Continued focus on external funding for research projects

Gaining external funding becomes ever more important in today’s academic environment as internal support for research time is becoming scarcer. Here, the COVID-19 pandemic may pose challenges for gaining funds due to a reduced availability of funding from business. We also face uncertainty regarding how the provision of individual grants (VENI, VIDI, VICI) will continue at NWO<sup>1</sup>. To make obtaining external funding a higher priority for senior staff (associate professors, full professors), their success in this area will be explicitly discussed during their performance appraisal interviews and funding will be an explicit criterion in the promotion decisions for associate professors. Following the comments of the mid-term review report, we will put less emphasis on funding junior staff in the new tenure track system (assistant professors). Moreover, and building on the proven success of our current policies, we aim to put extra effort into attracting funding for large-scale projects in collaboration with partners in international research consortia. Finally, we aim to further improve the activities aimed at supporting potential grant applicants, by providing specialized expertise, financial means and compensation for the time invested. Our focus will mainly be on funding opportunities that enable us to partly cover the research time of individual researchers and that add to the prestige and status of our researchers and the institute (SOM) as a whole.

### 6.2.5 PhD Programme & Research Master: Organization and Inflow

We will continue our PhD programme and aim to continue the finance of an inflow of 12 PhD students per year into the programme. While several initiatives during recent years have helped to enhance the supervision quality and placement of our PhD students, we continue to strive to improve the quality of our PhD programme, in particular

1 See: [www.nwo.nl/en](http://www.nwo.nl/en)

through fine-tuning several aspects that improve the experience and wellbeing of our doctoral students. We have already implemented an assessment procedure to match supervision practices to individual student needs, and a placement programme to improve PhD students' preparation for their future careers. We plan to extend these initiatives with training opportunities for PhD students to support the development of teaching skills that will both enhance career perspectives as well as teaching effectiveness and satisfaction. In addition, we will develop a training programme for supervisors at both junior and senior levels. This will become an integral part of our HR policy.

We also aim to steadily improve the inflow of good PhD students, which should result in an increase in the number PhD defences. One challenge we face is the limited supply of good PhD students in today's competitive job market. Another challenge is the COVID-19 crisis. This crisis will lead to budget cuts and, in the short term it will be more difficult to attract PhD students from abroad. For example, events like international PhD recruitment fairs have been cancelled. We will develop collaborations with strategic UG partners to create sandwich PhD positions and to expand our double-degree PhD programmes. However, the consequences of the current crisis may also create opportunities. All courses are currently taught online and, if we continue to do so, it will be easier to expand our part-time PhD programme. Under the current programme, attendance at courses in Groningen is required in the first phase. If at least some of these courses can be offered in an online format, we should be able to attract more candidates from abroad. In addition, the current shift to online teaching will enable us to explore opportunities for offering high quality courses to external PhD students online.

Our research master programme remains important in supporting the inflow of PhD students. Nevertheless, budgetary pressures and a relatively low inflow of students has forced us to terminate the Business Analytics & Econometrics profile in our research master programme from 2021.

### 6.3 Targets & Timeline

Targets	Timeline
<b>1. Remain a top E&amp;B research school</b> within Europe (i.e., best 10%)	2021-2016
<b>2. Maintain the quality of and recognition for our research:</b> The current system for measurement of research performance will be evaluated and refined starting in 2021.	2021-2022
<b>3. Stimulate interdisciplinary research initiatives:</b> By the end of 2023, our research themes will be clearly visible to our students and stakeholders in research collaborations and impact activities.	2021-2023
<b>4. Focus on increased impact through open science:</b> By the end of 2024, all active researchers will be adhering to the rules and procedures laid out in our research data management plan. Where possible, all relevant information from ongoing and recently completed research projects will be stored in a central repository that can be easily and electronically accessed by interested internal and external parties.	End 2024
<b>5. Continued focus on external funding for research projects:</b> Notwithstanding the current uncertainties, we aim to maintain the current level of funding and adapt our ambitions over time	2021-2026
<b>6. PhD Programme &amp; Research Master: Organization and Inflow:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Training programmes: first courses offered in academic year 2020/21</li> <li>• Inflow: stabilize at 30 per year</li> <li>• Explore opportunities enabled by online teaching</li> <li>• Terminate Business Analytics &amp; Econometrics profile in RM</li> </ul>	2020-2021 2021-2026 2021-2026 2021-2022

# 7 Impact and Connections with Practice

## 7.1 Vision

In today's scientific environment, the impact on and connections with practice are becoming more relevant. This was also identified as an important area for improvement in the most recent EQUIS accreditation. We have implemented several initiatives to increase our impact, such as the development of Centres of Expertise, the establishment of an alumni and corporate relations office and advisory boards for FEB and its education programmes. The successful development of UGBS, with new executive master programmes and non-degree programmes, has also improved our connections and impact on practice (see Section 4.2). Further, through career services activities and UGBS we have made more connections with regional firms and public institutions. In our strategy, creating impact will become more important and we aim to embed our connections with practice more. Here, we take a strong national and regional focus and aim to cooperate with the UG's broad initiative (through the Dean of Industry Relations) to develop corporate partnerships. To ensure our strategies are successful, specific actions are required in the following areas:

1. Centres of Expertise
2. Advisory Boards
3. External Regional, National and International Connections

## 7.2 Focus areas

### 7.2.1 Centres of Expertise and Themes

Our Centres of Expertise have been very instrumental in creating an impact and fostering research. We will continue with successful Centres of Expertise to connect our academic research with practice for knowledge transfer as well as in joint research projects. These centres will get a stronger role in joint-funding proposals with business partners to increase our funding opportunities. As noted earlier, we aim to increase our societal impact through a focus on five identified interdisciplinary themes and thereby actively participate in university-wide interdisciplinary schools (i.e. Aletta Jacobs School of Public Health) and/or use internal centres of expertise (e.g. GDBC, In the Lead) to connect with practice. We aim to link internal centres to these themes when this seems appropriate. However, some centres have been rather inactive, have limited revenues and/or have not been able to create a strong synergy between impact and research and these will be closed.

### 7.2.2 Advisory Boards & Alumni

We continue with advisory boards at both the Faculty level and the education programme level to provide us with input on employers' needs from our education programmes and the strategy of our Faculty. The composition of these boards aims to reflect our connections with the northern region, Dutch society and the international community. We also consider our alumni relations as important for connections with and input from practice in our education programmes. We will continue our focus on developing our centres of expertise and the success of our executive education programmes. We will also focus on the development of relationships through the use of the developed CRM system. We will seek more cooperation with Ubbo Emmius (UG alumni) in our alumni activities.

### 7.2.3 Regional, National and International Connections

We aim to build up strong connections with specific regional and national business partners in the future to enhance the quality of our connections, which will help the employability of our students, the development of executive education, and funding for research. This will be a new responsibility of the dean, jointly with a new external relations advisor. We have explicitly decided not to focus on building global connections with business. Following the UG strategy, our focus will first be on the 'northern region' including parts of northern Germany region (e.g., Hamburg, Oldenburg, Papenburg) and on international subsidiaries operating in this region (e.g. IBM, Google), rather than on building connections with global business partners. We will also seek connections

with leading Dutch multinational firms and public institutions. We will work strongly together with UG's Dean of Industry Relations.

## 7.3 Targets & Timeline

Targets	Timeline
<p><b>1. Centres of Expertise and Themes:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Evaluate existing Centres of Expertise by early 2021 with the aim to continue with successful Centres of Expertise and stop unsuccessful ones in mid-2021.</li> <li>Provide those Centres of Expertise that are well matched with clear roles in establishing the five identified socially relevant themes and to ensure they team up to focus our efforts.</li> </ul>	<p>2021</p> <p>2021 - 2023</p>
<p><b>2. Advisory Boards &amp; Alumni:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Continue with advisory boards to the education programmes and to the faculty board.</li> <li>Embed alumni relations in education and research.</li> </ul>	<p>2021 - 2026</p> <p>2021 - 2026</p>
<p><b>3. Regional, National and International Connections:</b></p> <p>Build Faculty-level relationships with selected regional and national partners leading to five partnerships in 2025.</p>	<p>2022 - 2026</p>

## 8 Human Resources

### 8.1 Vision

Our staff are the most important of FEB's assets. During the COVID-19 pandemic, our staff have put enormous effort into transforming their contributions to enable them to work from home. At FEB, we aim to be an attractive employer, one that carefully considers staff development. In the area of human resources, many external and internal developments are relevant, such as talent management, acknowledging and valuing different activities, controlling work pressures, integrity and gender balance. We also strongly emphasize the importance of diversity, inclusion and social safety (see also Section 4).

### 8.2 Focus Areas

#### 8.2.1 Career and Talent Development

We will continue with a tenure track to attract good academics by providing them with a clear career path with specific requirements for progression. The proposed new tenure track will end at the Associate Professor 2 level. We also strive for a balance between the different academic positions within departments. We will actively participate in university-wide policy development on creating more diversified career paths that better recognize and reward activities such as education. We will particularly strive to develop a career path that centres on providing education. This should be started in 2021 and will be linked to the university-wide discussion on acknowledging and valuing performance in its broadest sense.

In the development of all our staff, we will focus more on our own long-term plans and ambitions (3-5 years) and on what their aims are in terms of research, funding, education, impact, management and contributions to FEB/UG and make agreements on this. The goal is to connect our strategy to the development of our staff's talents.

This is as important for our support staff as it is for our academic staff. Sustainable employability and talent development require the active stimulation of the professional development and mobility of our support staff. We see this as essential if we are to achieve optimal cooperation between academic and support staff in a changing environment.

#### 8.2.2 Diversity, Social Safety and Inclusion

As noted in Section 4, FEB has developed into an international Faculty, where students and staff work together in a diverse international classroom and academic community. The diversity of the staff goes beyond nationality, language, and culture, so we are increasingly aware of the diversity in gender, work experience, religious affiliation, socioeconomic background and more. Inclusion is therefore very important, as already discussed in Section 4. In 2020, FEB established a working-group on diversity, inclusion and social safety and they will report in the autumn of 2020. Based on their recommendations, we aim to develop and implement a policy to improve these aspects within FEB. We also aim to have achieved greater diversity in our management positions in terms of gender and international background by the end of this strategic plan. To this end, we have started to trial and will continue with open procedures for appointing academics to these management positions.

Apart from general diversity measures, we specifically aim to improve the gender balance in FEB. We will strive for an equal inflow of males and females into the Tenure Track programme and aim to substantially increase the percentage of female professors. We will implement specific measures (e.g., a more diverse composition of the BAC, clear BAC procedures for all positions as part of the new TT and promotion criteria).

### 8.2.3 Leadership and Skills Developments

Our aim is that supervisors should put more focus on mentoring and coaching junior staff. Specifically, the annual R&O appraisal talks with junior staff will involve two senior staff members. Leadership and supervisory skills will become an integral part of the development of both our junior and senior staff. There will also be a stronger focus on integrity in these talks. Associate professors will be expected to follow courses on PhD supervision and academic leadership programmes. We will stimulate senior staff to invest in academic leadership (e.g. UG leadership programmes, coaching) as well as actively stimulating SKO participation by education directors and senior academic staff with an education focus. Participation in academic leadership programmes will be integral to promotion criteria.

Simultaneously we will stimulate continuous investment in the R&O talks with support staff to ensure their professional development, wellbeing and connection.

### 8.2.4 Work pressure within Dutch universities, UG and our Faculty

In recent years, additional budget has been available to attract additional staff and reduce working pressure. This indeed seems to have had some positive effects. However, the COVID-19 pandemic and specifically the transformation to online education and specific government measures (e.g. working from home) has increased work pressure. The effects differ widely among staff members depending on their responsibilities, education load, personal circumstances etc.

To take account of the COVID-19 effects, the board has already taken specific measures (allocated additional management time to education management and extra student assistants to lecturers; and modified research performance evaluations). Further, in each R&O discussion, the staff member is asked to fill in a report on how the virus has affected their working situation, and this should be taken into account in the R&O and in agreements made. We will consider continuing and maybe extending these measures in early 2021.

Specific initiatives in this strategic plan can potentially also reduce working pressure. For example, we aim to make our education more efficient (i.e. stopping the pre-master programme), while also stopping less successful centres of expertise and have already ended unsuccessful signature areas. The development of an education track for academic staff aims to reward education efforts and provide career opportunities for education-focused academic staff. This might reduce workload by allowing staff to make specific career choices. In doing so, we aim to retain talented staff and acknowledge the importance of education efforts. Significantly, specific education improvement measures are financed by the quality agreement, providing the opportunity to finance time for staff members to develop and implement education improvements.

We will continue to budget for additional staff to reduce working pressure within departments. We will also carefully monitor how departments spend the budget for additional staff and if these measures are effective. Given the COVID-19 developments, the focus should be on relieving education pressure in the coming years.

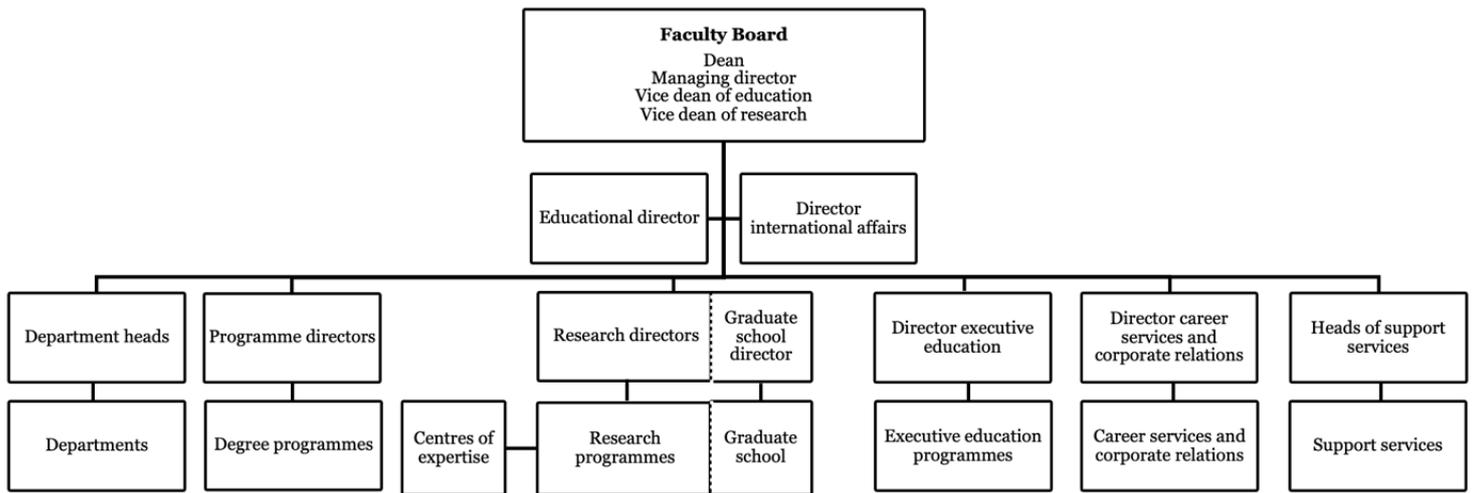
## 8.3 Targets & Timeline

Targets	Timeline
<p><b>1. Career Development:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Implement new tenure track for promotion to associate professor 2 and new criteria for promotion to associate professor 1 and professor 2.</li> <li>Develop and implement a development track for an education-focused career.</li> </ul>	<p>1-1-2021 2021 - 2022</p>
<p><b>2. Diversity, Social Safety and Inclusion:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop and start implementing a policy on diversity, social safety and inclusion based on recommendations of the working group.</li> <li>Continue with open procedure for filling vacant management functions thereby improving the diversity of our management.</li> <li>Increase the percentage of female professors.</li> </ul>	<p>Spring 2021  2021 - 2026 2021 - 2026</p>
<p><b>3. Leadership and Skills Developments:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>R&amp;O talks with junior staff will be with the supervisor and another senior staff member (this is also part of the new TT document).</li> <li>Integrity will become an integral part of R&amp;O talks.</li> <li>Attending courses covering PhD supervision and academic leadership will be integrated in promotion criteria.</li> <li>R&amp;O talks with Support Staff will stimulate professional development, mobility and connection.</li> </ul>	<p>2021 2021  2021  2021</p>
<p><b>4. Work pressure:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop plans to reduce working pressure due to COVID-19 for staff.</li> <li>Continue to make use of work pressure funds.</li> <li>Develop an active PDCA cycle to reduce work pressure.</li> </ul>	<p>Early 2021 2021 - 2026 2021 - 2026</p>

# 9 Organization of FEB

## 9.1 Vision

The organization of FEB continues to generally work well but requires some changes. We specifically aim to further embed activities in the organization in such a way that academic and support staff have joint responsibility for and ownership of strategic issues within FEB. Moreover, our aim is to increase the management quality within departments and to achieve a sustainable way of working.



## 9.2 Focus Areas

### 9.2.1 Governance & Culture

We will change the governance of research within FEB such that research policy is more embedded within the Faculty Board. We will appoint a vice-dean of research, who will be responsible for the research programmes and serve as head of the SOM research school after approval of this strategic plan. We will disband the SOM board and will use an extended version of SOM’s current advisory board to advise the Faculty Board on research matters.

Currently we have eight departments that focus on different disciplines. These departments vary widely in size and variety. FEB has very large departments (e.g. EEF) and relatively small departments (e.g. HRM & OB). The question is whether the current organization of departments is optimal since, for example, the span of control in some departments is very large, while it may also lead to a lack of focus. During the period of this strategic plan, a project group or external advisor will be asked to provide recommendations on the departmental organization structure within FEB. This advice can be used in the next strategic planning period or earlier if deemed urgent.

In each department, there will be a management team consisting of at least the department chair, the research programme director and an education programme director. This management team will discuss strategic issues within the department, prepare departmental meetings, carefully monitor the culture within the department and discuss staff development. The department chair will lead the management team. It is important that the management team has strong connections with the wider department and that they use input from the department.

We will develop a stronger learning culture within FEB, sharing best practices in interdepartmental meetings and/or within education programmes in order to continuously improve our activities. For instance, our established closed-loop quality system consisting of course evaluations, curriculum audits and discussions with year representatives, alumni, and practitioners requires a review. We aim to expand our sources used in evaluations (including peer feedback) and evaluation criteria (including establishing ILOs for each course and programme). The main focus should be on continuously improving the educational quality and less on control: a change from quality control to a quality culture.

Programmes will be invited to organize frequent meetings and annual sessions to discuss how the quality of their programme can be continuously improved.

### 9.2.2 Support Services

Since 2020, our organization has included four support service departments: Educational Quality (EQ), Marketing, Internationalization & Communications (MIC), Educational Administration & Student Support (EASS) and Career Services & Corporate Relations (CS&CR) with their own managers. These managers produce annual plans on what they want to achieve in the following year, which should be linked to the strategic plan and needs within FEB. Given the focus on embedding employability in education (see Section 5) and the foreseen budget cuts, we will reconsider this organization with a focus on the current department for Career Services and Corporate Relations.

If new innovation projects are started, our aim is that these FEB-wide projects should be more embedded within the organization, implying strong involvement of staff from different departments and education programmes in these projects. This will be reflected in the way we organize our project management and assign project leadership. Through this project organization, we will also strive to create opportunities to develop the talent of our support staff.

### 9.2.3 Targets & Timeline

Targets	Timeline
<p><b>1. Governance &amp; Culture:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A new vice-dean of research is appointed to start early 2021.</li> <li>• The SOM board is disbanded in early 2021 and replaced by an advisory board, which will advise FEB's advisory board.</li> <li>• A project group and/or external advisor will advise the Faculty Board on the department's organizational structure and centralization.</li> <li>• In 2021, within each department, a management team will be created by the department chair, who will inform the Faculty Board of the composition of this management team.</li> <li>• Development of a continuous learning and improvement culture within FEB, with stimulating departmental meetings, and within education programmes in order to continuously improve our activities.</li> <li>• Programmes will be encouraged to organize frequent meetings and annual sessions to discuss how the quality of their programme can be continuously improved.</li> </ul>	<p>2021</p> <p>2021</p> <p>2022 - 2023</p> <p>2021</p> <p>2021 - 2026</p> <p>2021 - 2026</p>
<p><b>2. Support Services:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reconsider their organization and focus on the CS &amp; CR department.</li> <li>• A project group will report on the current departmental structure.</li> <li>• Support departments will develop annual plans.</li> </ul>	<p>2021</p> <p>2022</p> <p>2021 - 2026</p>



## 10 Conclusions

In this FEB strategic plan, we have laid down strategic directions for the period 2021-2026. Since we started the process of developing this plan in autumn 2019, with meetings with several internal and external stakeholders, the COVID-19 pandemic has not only delayed the strategic plan but also strongly changed the environment in which we operate as a Faculty. Currently, while the COVID-19 pandemic is still present and strongly affecting our society and economy, we operate in a hybrid way in which we switch between online and offline working. Further, the current situation means we are faced with many uncertainties surrounding, for example, the inflow and success of students, the return to offline education as the norm, and associated financial consequences.

Despite this, at FEB, we have ambitions to take the necessary steps in the coming years to respond to many other developments in society, science, and at UG. In this strategic plan, we have set out to provide strategic directions for these changes, while also incorporating COVID-19 induced changes, building on FEB's strengths. Our intention is that our plan should have a positive impact on FEB and that we can work on the plans jointly as a Faculty. We aim for FEB to indeed have a positive impact on science and on society.

A strategic plan is written for a period of five years, but it is not fixed in stone. The unusually uncertain environment more than ever forces us to be able to adapt our plans if necessary. This requires flexibility from the organization. As a Faculty Board, our aim is to guide FEB through these uncertain times, where this plan provides a roadmap. If required, we should not be afraid to deviate from this route and define new paths to the future. As such, it is important that we stay connected, and that we can benefit from your continuing input.