Research Master Cognitive and Clinical Neuroscience

General information clinical internship

Coordinators
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The second year of the research master is devoted in large part to internships. In addition to the research internship, during which the Master's thesis research is performed, students following the Neuropsychology (NP) specialization may choose to spend at least 13 weeks (520 hours) of the total internship period doing a clinical internship and research for the Minor's thesis in a health care setting. In the case of a clinical internship, the research internship is reduced in length to approximately 19-21 weeks. Alternatively, research and clinical internships may be combined at one institution or location; see section 2 below.

1. Purpose of the internship

The aims of the clinical internship in the Research Master (RM) are twofold. Firstly, the internship is meant to provide experience in conducting research in a clinical setting; a small-scale research project culminates in the Minor's thesis. Secondly, the internship provides an introduction to the organization and practice of mental health care, as well as basic experience in clinical diagnosis and therapeutic interventions. For students who intend to pursue post-academic clinical training as a health care psychologist, psychotherapist, or clinical (neuro)psychologist, for example after completing a PhD, participation in these internship activities is a prerequisite for admission to many programmes. Provided certain additional requirements are met, the clinical internship provides the opportunity for students interested in a clinical career in the Netherlands to obtain two official certificates (the BAPD and GZ certificates; see section 8) that are important for entering the field of mental health care in this country.

2. Timing and duration

The clinical internship and the research internship both take place in the second year of the RM, after completion of the first 8 weeks of scheduled coursework. The two internships can be conducted either separately (in any order) or in combination with each other. A separate clinical internship lasts at least 13 weeks (520 hours – so if you do a part-time clinical internship, you may need longer that 13 weeks). In a combined internship (during a total of approximately 34 weeks), you can establish a plan with your supervisor about scheduling the components of the two internships, as long as the clinical part is equivalent to at least 520 hours.

A clinical internship includes performance of a small-scale clinical research project, in addition to clinical activities. These research activities and thesis (representing 4 European credits) should be accomplished in approximately 13 days, or about 1/5 of the minimally required clinical internship period of 13 weeks.

3. Locating a clinical internship institution

Criteria for internship institutions: The internship must be conducted within an institution that deals with disorders or disabilities in which cognitive, emotional, and/or behavioural problems play an important role. Diagnostic procedures and interventions (e.g., psychological treatments, neuropsychological training or psychoeducation) offered must be focused to a large extent on these problems. Note that these criteria do not limit you to adult mental

health outpatient clinics or hospitals. Possibilities extend to health care settings for children, adolescents, adults, and the elderly, and to institutions ranging from somatic medicine, rehabilitation, mental health, forensic institutions, institutions for the mentally disabled, nursing homes, and others.

Strategies for locating a suitable institution for the clinical internship depend on a number of factors: The main persons to turn to are the track internship coordinators (Ieke Winkens for NP). They can advise you where you can apply and can also direct you to FPN and FHML faculty members who can function as supervisors for your Minor's thesis. The teaching staff of the research master has extensive networks in the Netherlands and other countries and is prepared to help you. Institutions that have previously hosted an RM clinical internship are very likely to welcome new applicants from our programme. You can also search via internet to get an overview of mental health institutions in The Netherlands (e.g., www.zorgkaartnederland.nl/ggz; www.idee-pmc.nl/hulpverleners/instellingen.html) or other countries, keeping in mind that institutions do not always offer internships for external students.

Tips to consider:

First discuss with the general or track internship coordinator how to approach the institutions you are interested in. You will need to write an application letter, in which you also describe the requirements of the clinical internship and its role in the research master programme.

Clinical internships are generally more difficult to arrange than research internships; combining the two internships is likely to create more options.

Working in a clinical setting requires proficiency in the local language. Successfully arranging a clinical internship will require that you can demonstrate excellent communication skills. A clinical institution may require an interview with you before agreeing to accept you as an intern.

Note that the clinical internship for the research master requires you to do a small-scale research project! You will need to explain this requirement to the institution and discuss feasibility.

Before you contact an institution you should have decided whether you want to obtain the Dutch health care psychologist certificate (GZ-verklaring) and BAPD (see Section 8 in this manual) or not, because these certificates impose additional requirements upon the internship.

As soon as you have located an internship institution and a faculty supervisor for your Minor's thesis, complete the application form for an internship (see AskPsy) and submit it via the Collent. This should be done at least 8 weeks before starting the internship.

4. Contracts and agreements

Once an institution has informally agreed to accept you, formal contracts need to be signed to finalize arrangements concerning both the clinical and the research aspects of the internship: its length, the actual tasks to be performed on location, the type of supervision provided by the institution, who will function as the institutional supervisor, and who will serve as the UM supervisor for the Minor's thesis. Additional details are mentioned under sections 5 and 6, below.

The FPN Education Office is responsible for setting up these contracts, based on the information provided in your internship application form. Before finalizing your contract, the Education Office will ask the Exam Administration office to confirm that you have met all course requirements.

The student, the institutional supervisor, the UM supervisor and the track-specific internship coordinator must sign the internship contract and return it to the FPN Educational Office at least 4 weeks before the starting date of the internship. The contract is not valid until signed by the track-specific internship coordinator.

5. Minor's thesis research in the clinical setting

Description and scope of the research activities: Conducting research in a clinical setting is essential to further scientific understanding in the fields of psychopathology and clinical neuropsychology. By testing theories and evaluating the effects of diagnostic or therapeutic interventions in individuals seeking help for cognitive, emotional and behavioral problems, clinical researchers add to the evidence base that guides and helps refine current treatment approaches. Given the limited time available, your clinical research project should be clearly formulated and limited in scope. Case-series designs are often feasible in this context, or analysis of test performance, questionnaire or interview data. Ideally, you should have collected at least some of these data yourself. In many clinical settings you may benefit from analysis of 'historical' data already obtained on patients. Discuss this possibility with both your institutional supervisor and your UM Minor's thesis supervisor. As this is a clinical research study, the research question should be relevant in the context of the institution where the research is performed, and the sample must include patients or clients with clinically significant behavioral, cognitive or emotional complaints.

Minor's thesis permission statement: At the beginning of your clinical internship, your institutional supervisor must sign a statement form that s/he agrees to the requirement that you will also conduct research with patients, medical records and/or 'historical' data from the institution. This will be part of the clinical internship contract (see Section 4 above). You must send the signed form back to the FPN Education Office during the first weeks of your internship (along with the signed contract). Failure to do so before starting the research project may disqualify you from obtaining credit for the Minor's thesis.

Research supervision: Your clinical research will be supervised by a member of the UM faculty (needs to hold a PhD; there is an exception for PhD-students and for UM lecturers without a PhD. When they completed the UTQ workshop 'assessment', and already supervised two research internships as a second supervisor, they can also act as supervisor for the minor thesis). In addition to approving your research proposal and evaluating your Minor's thesis, this supervisor is responsible for monitoring your progress. This can be done by means of periodic meetings or, if your institution is far away, by e-mail or telephone. The role of your internship institution in supervising your research is determined case by case. If, for example, your research project forms part of a study conducted by the institution or its members, you may receive additional supervision as part of a research team. These details are agreed upon in advance, as part of the contract for the clinical internship. In all cases, however, the thesis is evaluated by only one assessor: the UM supervisor.

Research proposal: After you have located a suitable institution for the clinical internship, you need to formulate a clinical research proposal. You must submit your research proposal to your UM Minor's thesis supervisor within two weeks after the start of the clinical internship. Note that if approval from an institutional review board or ethical commission is necessary, you and your thesis supervisor should initiate this process several months ahead of time. To insure both the quality and the feasibility of your plan, this proposal must be approved by your UM Minor's thesis supervisor before you initiate any research activities. You may not start *any* research activities until you have formal permission. Your UM Minor's thesis supervisor must submit his/her approval of the research proposal via Collent.

Minor's thesis: This research paper consists of a title page, abstract, introduction (including a statement of the goals of the study and literature review), method, results, discussion, and a reference list. The thesis is written in English, following APA style guidelines (6 edition). Length should be approximately 3000 words, including all tables, references, and figures. The Minor's thesis is evaluated on a ten-point scale, with half-point increments, by the UM supervisor. In general, the final version of the Minor's thesis should be submitted to the UM supervisor via Collent by late July, in order to participate in the graduation ceremony in September. Be sure to discuss timing with your supervisor!

6. Clinical aspects of the internship

Description and scope of the activities: the clinical internship provides an opportunity for you to acquire knowledge of the health care system, practice diagnostic and therapeutic skills, and gain deeper insights into your future career options in clinical research. Based on the clinical skills trainings and theoretical background you have obtained as a bachelor student and during the Research Master, you are able to conduct intakes and other interviews with clients (including written summaries), perform diagnostic tests (including written summaries), and/or set up individual treatment plans. These activities all take place under supervision! The first weeks of the internship generally include an orientation within the institution, accompanying and observing other health care professionals. You will begin writing reports. As the internship progresses, you will have more opportunities to conduct parts of interviews and/or diagnostic or therapeutic intervention, under supervision. By the end of the internship, you will be able to conduct more or less independent interventions with clients, present and discuss your findings in team meetings, and write good summary reports. The nature of client contacts can vary during the internship and will also depend on the specific institution. Intake sessions, diagnostic procedures, and therapeutic interventions are among the possibilities; in the case of both diagnostic and therapeutic interventions, these will often be according to a fixed protocol.

Learning goals: What you can learn during the clinical internship depends on your own learning goals as well as the opportunities available at a given institution. These goals, and the activities that you will perform in order to achieve them, should be briefly outlined in your contract with the institution.

Clinical supervision: The person who is responsible for guiding and evaluating the aspects of the internship will usually be an employee of the institution and not a member of the UM faculty. This clinical supervisor is a qualified mental health care professional (preferably with an academic degree) who is responsible for some aspect of treatment offered by the internship institution; this could be, for example, a health care psychologist (GZ-Psycholoog), clinical (neuro)psychologist (K(N)P), psychiatrist, other physician, remedial education expert, mental health scientist (Geestelijk Gezondheidkundige), or social worker with advanced training in mental health care.

Evaluation: successful completion of the clinical internship depends on both clinical and research (minor's thesis) components. Performance in the clinical setting is assessed on the basis of (1) the student's final clinical activities report (see below), evaluated by the UM minor's thesis supervisor and (2) the evaluation of the practical aspects of the internship, for which the institutional supervisor fills out a rating form. You can download this rating form on AskPsy and hand it to your supervisor. Your supervisor, after completing this rating form, should send it directly to your UM minor's thesis supervisor. He or she will fill out an Individual Assessment Form and submit it via Collent. Materials should reach the Education Office within 2 weeks after the date the internship is completed.

Clinical activities report: Your final report serves three purposes: (1) it enables you both to reflect on personal experience gained during the internship and to deepen knowledge and insights concerning the structure and functioning of an institution providing mental health care, (2) it provides the internship coordinator with an overview of the various activities you conducted during the internship, and (3) it provides information to the institutional supervisor and internship institution that can be used to assess your accomplishments and their own roles in guiding and facilitating the internship. Guidelines concerning form and content of the final report are available on AskPsy (Guidelines clinical activities report). The report is written in English; the internship coordinator may allow reports written in Dutch if the institution specifically requests this. The length is approximately 20 pages. Within 2 weeks of completing the internship, you must submit this report via Collent (see guidelines clinical activities report on AskPsy). Assessment of this report (sufficient/insufficient) is done by the UM supervisor only. The Education Office can send a copy of your approved report to the host institution, if so requested.

7. Summary of requirements for passing the examination for the Clinical Internship

Successful completion of all requirements is equivalent to 20 European credits. In a combined internship, the clinical (Minor's thesis) and research (Master's thesis) portions entail separate evaluations and credits.

- Research proposal for Minor's thesis approved (pass/fail) by UM Minor's thesis supervisor
- Minor's thesis evaluated 6 or higher on a 10-point scale by UM Minor's thesis supervisor
- Final clinical activities report approved (pass/fail) by the UM Minor's thesis supervisor
- Satisfactory evaluation of internship performance by the institutional supervisor

8. Meeting requirements for BAPD and the post-academic health care psychologist programme (GZ)

For the Netherlands, two certificates are of importance:

Certification of basic proficiency in psychodiagnostics (BAPD)

The certification of basic proficiency in psychodiagnostics ("Basisaantekening psychodiagnostiek" or "BAPD") is issued by the Netherlands Institute of Psychology ("Nederlands Instituut voor Psychologie" or NIP). It is a necessary (but not sufficient) prerequisite for post-academic clinical training programs in the Netherlands. It is also important for obtaining clinical positions in mental health care in general, as institutions often will only hire psychologists who have this certificate. For details, go to the NIP website http://www.psynip.nl/registratie/basisaantekening-psychodiagnostiek-bapd_.html. You can also consult the documents on AskPsy. Note that this document is in Dutch, as it is only relevant for Dutch (speaking) students. If you have further questions you can consult Ieke Winkens. See for contact information below (section 9, RM contact persons).

Certification of meeting admission requirements to the post-academic programme Health Care Psychologist (GZ certificate)

In the Netherlands, several clinical psychology titles are protected by the law concerning professions in individual health care ("Beroepen in Individuele Gezondheidszorg" or BIG), and these titles, such as "Health Care Psychologist", can be obtained by following post-academic programmes. These programmes combine working in mental health care with one day per week of training at special institutes for post-academic education in mental health care. In the Netherlands, there are 6 institutes that provide such education: 4 RINOs (see, for example, ww.rinozuid.nl), PPO (see www.ppo-opleidingen.nl), and RSCW (see www.rcsw.nl). All are members of the "Landelijk Overleg GGZ Opleidingsinstellingen" (LOGO) association. Such post-academic programmes are only open to master's graduates who have acquired the LOGO certification for meeting admission requirements.
Meeting the LOGO requirements is also important for students who want to work in adult GGZ or forensic settings, due to the criteria set by the so-called Zorgprestatiemodel.

NP students who hold a UM psychology bachelor diploma, and also completed the coursework for their RM specialization and the clinical internship, will in most cases meet educational prerequisites for admission to the post-academic programme for health care psychologist (GZ) in the Netherlands (see www.logo-ggz.nl/centrale-aanmelding/logo-verklaring). Students who obtained their psychology bachelor diploma elsewhere or in a different field usually have to meet additional requirements in terms of theoretical knowledge and skills (see below under ***Whether you are eligible for the certificates depends on your bachelor diploma***). It should be noted, however, that completing the RM clinical internship and thereby acquiring the GZ certificate and the BAPD (needed for obtaining the LOGO certification) does not guarantee *admission* to this post-academic training programme.

The mentioned institutions (NIP and LOGO) normally issue these certificates independent of the university. However, these institutions have evaluated several Bachelor-Master programs from Maastricht University, and the FPN has been granted the right to issue these certificates to students who followed these tracks, provided certain extra requirements are met. The tracks evaluated include the RM track Neuropsychology. If you have further questions, you can contact the general internship coordinator (Ieke Winkens). The Board of Examiners has the end responsibility for determining whether you have met the requirements for the Health Care Psychologist certificate (GZ-verklaring) and BAPD. If you meet the requirements you will obtain these certificates upon graduating (i.e. you receive the BAPD and the verklaring vooropleiding with which you can then pursue the cLOGO certificate via the vLOGO committee). See contact information below (section 9. RM contact persons).

For the BAPD and the Health Care Psychologist certificate (GZ-verklaring), there are specific requirements, as specified below:

The requirements that can be obtained during the clinical internship of your research master include:

For BAPD and GZ certificate: A minimum of 200 hours of psychodiagnostic work, including at least three diagnostic assessments performed independently and written up in the form of

clinical reports (“three-cases-report”), which must be submitted to one of the certified BAPD-UM-supervisors (contact Ieke Winkens).

For GZ certificate: An additional minimum of hours of experience with clinical psychological work, other than psychodiagnostics. These other activities can be performing interviews, intakes, advice and orientation meetings, counseling, prevention activities, team meetings, supervision of health care workers, treatment, etc. Note, for vLOGO, minimally 20% of the time spend on diagnostics and care needs assessment, and 80% on treatment; Or minimally 20% on treatment, and 80% on diagnostics and care needs assessment (part of the activities can be passive (attending/watching); however this can not be more than 40% of the time. At least 60% of the time candidates should actively participate in clinical activities).

Please note: Given the limited time available for the clinical internship in the Research Master and its emphasis on acquiring clinical research skills, completing the requirements for these certifications will rarely be feasible during a 13-week clinical internship. Nevertheless, RM students can take advantage of opportunities the clinical internship offers to get started on this process. Students interested in this option must consider extending the clinical internship, for example in the summer, or choosing a combined clinical and research internship of at least 34 weeks. In the event that your clinical institution stipulates that you must continue there for more than 15 weeks / 4 months (based on full-time activities), then you may have to delay graduation. Extending the clinical internship is your choice, but this does not mean that the required research internship of at least 19 weeks can be shortened!

Whether you are eligible for the certificates depends on your bachelor diploma

If you hold a UM FPN psychology bachelor:

Your bachelor program included the right theoretical background for meeting BAPD and GZ requirements.

A BAPD-UM supervisor will review your case reports. If these reports are approved, and you finished your clinical internship and minor thesis, then the Board of Examiners will issue the BAPD and Health Care Psychologist certificates.

For all other students:

You should go to the Board of Examiners of your former university to have them fill out the relevant parts on the BAPD form theoretical requirements and/or the LOGO screening form A (for the Health Care Psychologist certificate). When you receive the forms back, contact Ieke Winkens.

Then you know which knowledge and skills you still lack. Note that it may not be quick or easy to fulfill all theoretical requirements, considering that you don't have a psychology bachelor.

Filling these gaps may also involve additional costs and is your own responsibility.

If you are in doubt which requirements you don't yet meet, you can consult Ieke Winkens for BAPD and for the Health Care Psychologist certificate.

If you hold a psychology bachelor from a university outside the Netherlands and you have no intention of pursuing a career in the Netherlands

There is no need to worry about these certificates, as they are not of any use to you. They are very specific to the Dutch system. If you are interested in a career as a healthcare professional, you should contact the relevant institutions of the country in which you intend to work. Make sure you contact those institutions before you start your clinical internship, as you can tailor your internship to meet their requirements.

9. RM contact persons

General internship coordinator:
Gerda Kraag g.kraag@maastrichtuniversity.nl

RM internship coordinator NP
Ieke Winkens i.winkens@maastrichtuniversity.nl

Education Office (contract, assessment forms, and theses):
fdp-masterthese@maastrichtuniversity.nl

10. Insurance during your clinical internship

The host institution in which you conduct your clinical work is responsible for concluding a liability insurance for you. As you will work under supervision and are not yet a registered professional yourself, there is no professional liability insurance needed.

In the event your host institution failed to conclude the necessary insurance and something unforeseen does happen, the UM provides for a back-up liability insurance. The Department of Treasury of the UM will have a mediating role.

Please note that it is your own responsibility to conclude a liability insurance for the time outside your clinical work (private / off work). If you remain in the Netherlands, then you will likely already have such an insurance policy. When you go abroad, check your policy, whether you are covered abroad as well. Needless to say, you need to take care of your own health care insurance as well.