

Summary

This Faculty of Geosciences strategic memorandum links the university's spring 2012 strategic plan and the strategic plans drawn up by our various departments. The memorandum outlines how the faculty is seeking to position itself over the coming years and the action that will be required to achieve this positioning. The major challenges facing the faculty include changes in degree programmes as a result of BaMa 3.0, the university's decision to focus on four strategic research themes, the introduction of a new financial allocation model for universities and the extensive relocation project.

2013–2016: where are we going?

The Faculty of Geosciences is doing well. We have grown considerably since 2009, while our external revenues have risen and student numbers on several degree programmes have increased. Our mission is to contribute to a sustainable earth by performing top-level research, providing excellent education and visibly profiling ourselves. Geosciences will play a key role in the university's strategic theme of Sustainability over the coming years. As well as focusing on this strategic theme, we will also proactively be looking for new opportunities and themes to increase our knowledge and for new needs in science and society that our knowledge and capabilities will allow us to meet. Our focus in education will be on quality and differentiation, while we will also be placing greater emphasis on valorisation. Once we move into our new building in 2016, all our academic and service departments will finally be housed at a single location.

Research: clear choices

Geosciences' aim for 2013–2016 is to perform top-level research with a clear focus, excellent research groups and leading partners. The faculty will be able to develop major strengths in the theme of Sustainability and profile itself even more prominently. By 2016, scientists from all over the world will know where to find our faculty's experts and will be pleased to have the opportunity to work with us on innovative projects.

Research objectives

- OZ1* To increasingly focus our research on the strategic theme of Sustainability and on the subthemes of Water, Climate & Ecosystems, Energy and Resources and Healthy Urban Living;
- OZ2* To obtain more EU funding and retain the same number of NWO projects;
- OZ3* To maintain the same level of income from contract research;
- OZ4* To strengthen national and international forms of cooperation;
- OZ5* To further reinforce our research profile by valuing researchers, winding down weaker groups and reconsidering individual research assignments;
- OZ6* To optimise quality assurance in PhD programmes.

Achieving these objectives will mean actively scouting for leading research talent from abroad, deploying available policy scope for sustainability-driven research, devising a strategy to retain the current level of income from contract research, making long-term agreements with national strategic partners and so on.

Education: implementing BaMa 3.0

The quality of the Faculty of Geosciences' teaching will continue to improve over the coming period because we will focus on differentiation in education and on further professionalising our teaching staff. Geoscience programmes will play a leading role in Sustainability-related education by 2016. The high quality of our programmes, our broad and attractive range of courses and the proven quality of our teaching staff will make students from the Netherlands and abroad keen to register for our Geoscience programmes.

Education objectives

- OW1* To further improve quality assurance, expand e-learning activities and ensure degree programmes focus more on future employment opportunities;
- OW2* To offer greater differentiation in education by introducing a new honours programme;
- OW3* To develop a cohesive package of degree programmes in line with the strategic theme of Sustainability and the various subthemes;

* NB: These objectives are all listed in summarised form. Read the strategic memorandum for more information.