



Position document

Response from the Board of the Theological University of Apeldoorn to the Research Assessment Report 2018-2023

First of all, we express our heartfelt thanks for how the review committee did its work. We were pleased to learn of the committee's findings in the review report. We are grateful for the many good things it has found in the various echelons within the three research programs of BEST, CHCP, and FP. Above all, this visitation functions as an incentive to continue what we value highly and, of course, to seek improvements wherever possible. Based on feedback from our researchers and the visitation report, we present the following follow-up to the 2024 assessment for the 2024-2029 research programs.

General

- Promote further collaboration between the various research groups through annual research weekends and working together on a theme from the various research areas.
- Review opportunities for talented PhD students and researchers to build an academic profile as a postdoctoral researcher under the guidance of senior researchers. This supports talent management with a view to future vacancies.
- Further detail the requirements for PhD tracks, for both internal and external PhD students, in a supervision plan. This includes publishing, and attending conferences to present research there.
- Where possible, strengthen the relationship between research and education.
- Explore the possibility of knowledge centers or research centers (church music/liturgy, Christian pedagogy in cooperation with Driestar Christian University, etc.).
- Strengthen our multi-channel funding approach by appointing a dedicated fundraising officer for charity funds and private sponsorships, increase our efforts towards grants for research support infrastructure (within NLU partnership), and support staff initiatives for direct academic research grants.

Specific focal points for the research programs

Biblical Exegesis and Systematic Theology (BEST)

- Further explore how, through the leader and secretary, the group's strategic leadership can take more shape, beyond assigning authority.
- Further develop methodical reflection between BE and ST.
- Further define what we mean by public theology and develop a research program for the next five years.
- Publications: There is certainly more attention to high-ranking journals, but in addition to this, we continue to publish in book series with reputable publishers.

Church History and Church Polity (CHCP)

- Even more focus on Reformation history, while increasing staff diversity.
- Secure the involvement in REFORC and RESILIENCE for TUA.

Formational Practices (FP)

- Clarify the interpretation of “practical theology” at TUA.
- Work out the unique interaction between descriptive, conceptual, and empirical research.
- Connect the unique objective of the Chair of Theology & Music - understanding the language of sacred music - through cross-connections with other fields.

In addition to the individual staff development interviews, annual meetings with the research leaders of each domain will monitor and evaluate these developments.