





Corona Monitor 2

VU Amsterdam

MAIN REPORT

November 2020

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1 Introduction

Objective

As a result of the Corona crisis, working from home was the standard at VU Amsterdam during March, April, and May. From June onwards, VU Amsterdam has gradually and partly reopened the activities on campus. This means, among other things, that there were limited possibilities to work on campus again. From the beginning of November, additional measures were introduced asking everyone to work at home, unless really necessary.

To examine how employees are doing and to choose the right interventions, the first measurement of the Corona Monitor was held in June 2020. To monitor changes, the second measurement was held in the fall of 2020. This report contains the results of the second monitor.

The results will also be used to interpret the results of the Work Experience Survey in the right context. The monitor includes a short questionnaire about, for example, the well-being of employees, communication by VU Amsterdam, involvement with colleagues/VU Amsterdam, working from home and possible difficulties and future wishes. The results of the monitor are the basis for the evaluation of the VU Amsterdam policy during the corona crisis and the formulation of areas for action.

Response

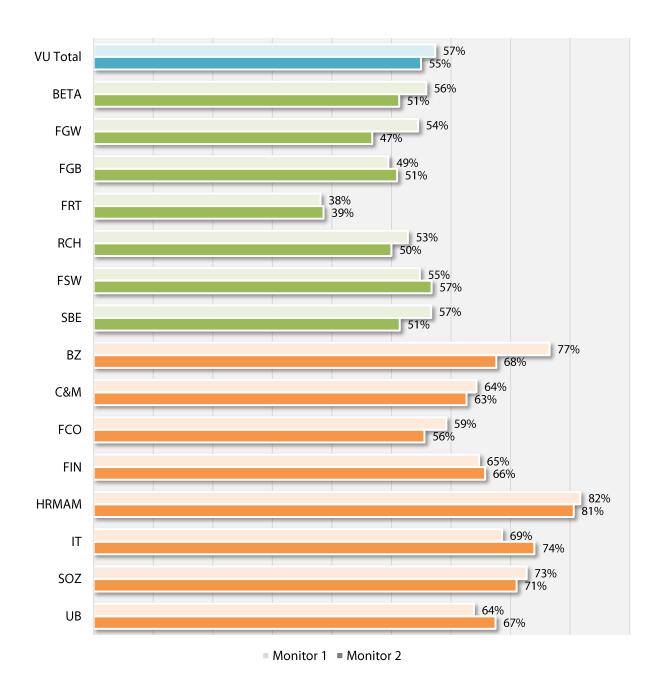
On 27 October 2020, 4,472 VU Amsterdam employees¹ received an e-mail containing a link to the online questionnaire. Several measures were taken to stimulate the response. For instance, a brief explanation was part of the invitation e-mail. Also, two reminders were sent to employees who had not yet (fully) completed the questionnaire at the time of sending. Furthermore, the employees could ask the IVA Onderwijs Helpdesk for help. Finally, within VU Amsterdam attention was paid to the Corona Monitor in various ways.

After closing the survey on 10 November 2020, 2,458 employees (55.0%) had returned a usable survey. The response was considered usable when at least the first content-related question was completed². IVA Onderwijs read through the answers to the open questions and the most important or frequently mentioned remarks have been included in this report.

External employees of VU Amsterdam (including external PhD candidates) have not been included in the study.

^{2,376} employees (53.1% of the population) have fully completed the questionnaire.





Representativity

To assess whether the response group is a proper reflection of the total population, we examined whether the response group matches the total population in terms of faculty/unit, job category (AS/SMS), gender, and age. The results indicate that the response group is a good reflection of the total population within VU Amsterdam for all characteristics. The deviations are relatively small, meaning it is not necessary to correct the results for particular characteristics through weighing.



Reading guide

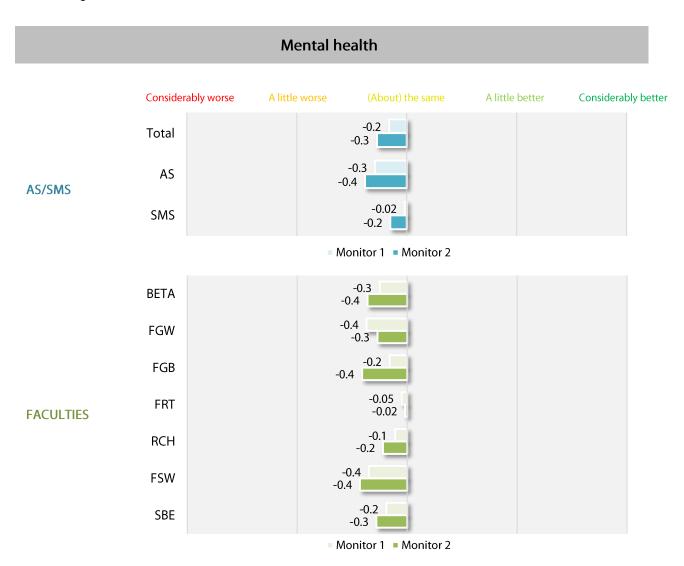
- As a result of rounding off, in bar charts, bars with the same scores may differ in length. E.g., a bar with a score of 3.47 is shorter than a bar with a score of 3.53. However, both scores are rounded off to 3.5.
- As a result of rounding off, in some cases, the sum of the column or row percentages may not be exactly 100%.
- When a group contains less than ten respondents, we will not report on it for reasons of anonymity. In the tables, we put a dash in place (-).
- Not all respondents answered all questions due to, for example, excluding specific respondents from a question or by leaving out the category of 'do not know/n/a'.



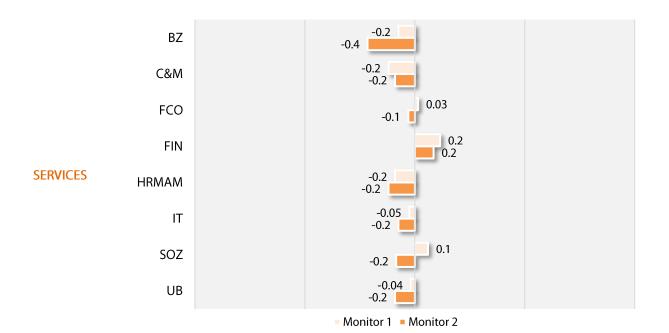
2 Changes

Working from home leads, among other things, to a changed relationship between the organisation and employees and between fellow workers. It can also be mentally stressful, for example, because it is more difficult to separate work and private life, because they miss social contacts, or because of frustrations about an unpleasant workplace at home. This chapter shows to what extent some aspects have changed in the past three months.

As with the first measurement, the second measurement also shows the largest changes in the involvement with VU Amsterdam (decreased), the involvement with colleagues (decreased) and the work load (increased). The number of caring tasks has increased less than in the first measurement.







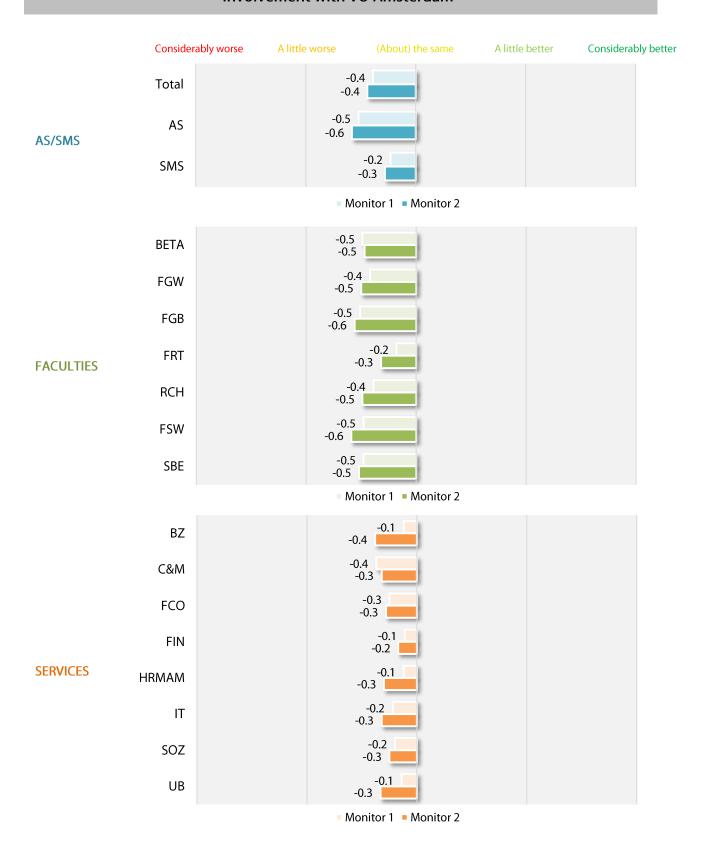


Physical health





Involvement with VU Amsterdam



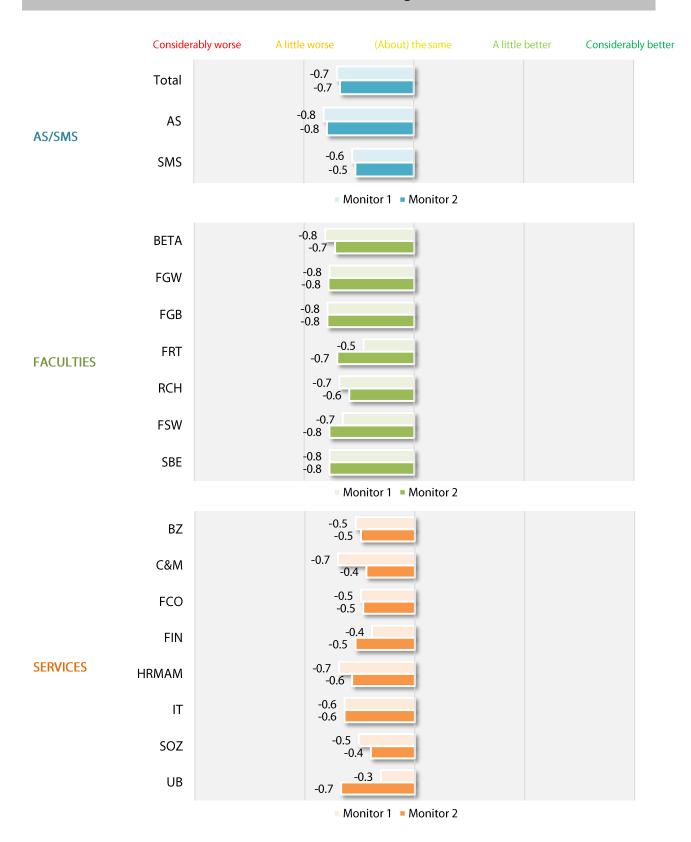


Cooperation with supervisor



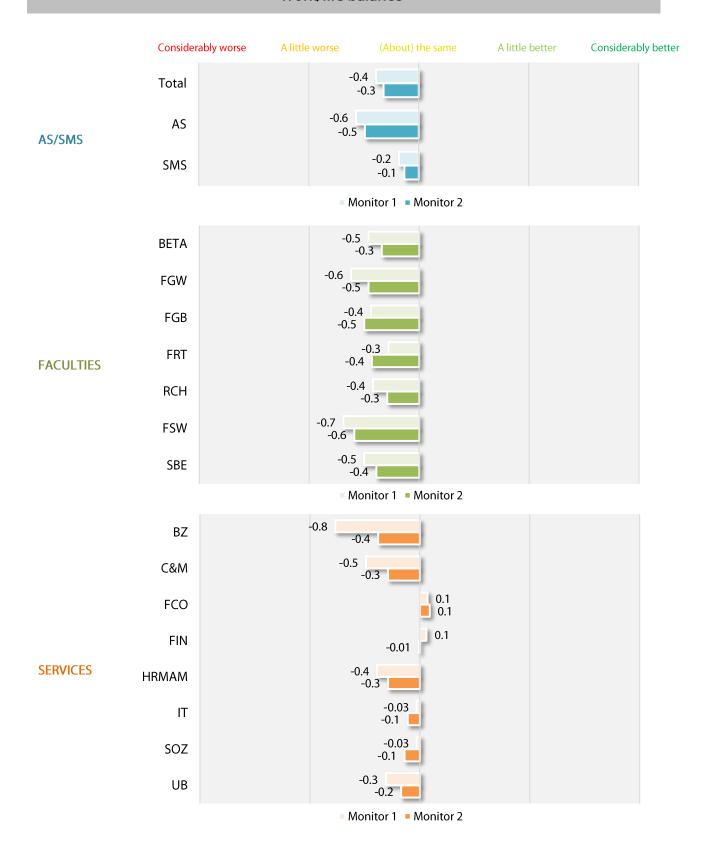


Involvement with colleagues





Work/life balance



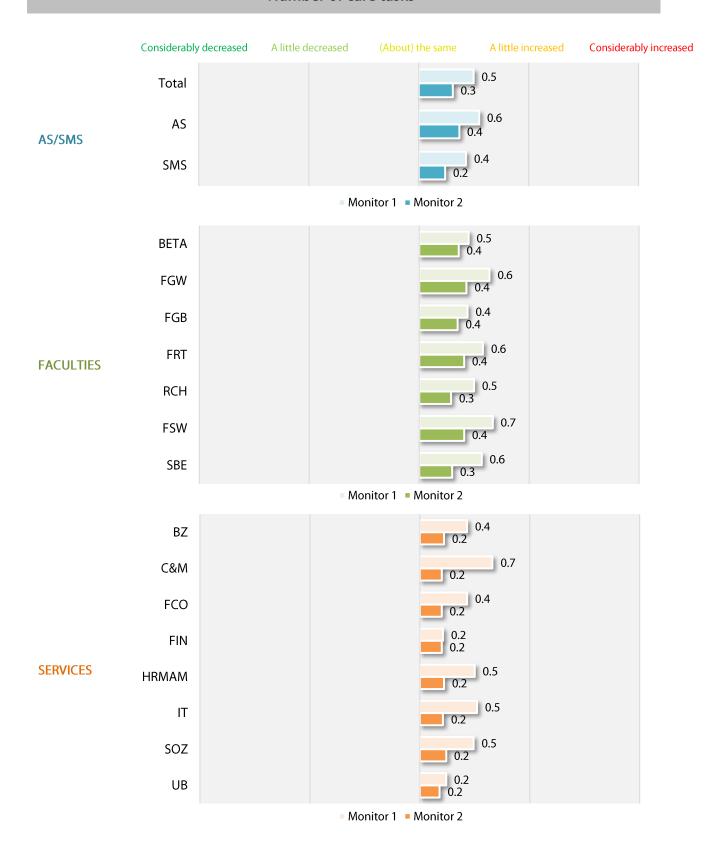


Workload





Number of care tasks





3 Workload

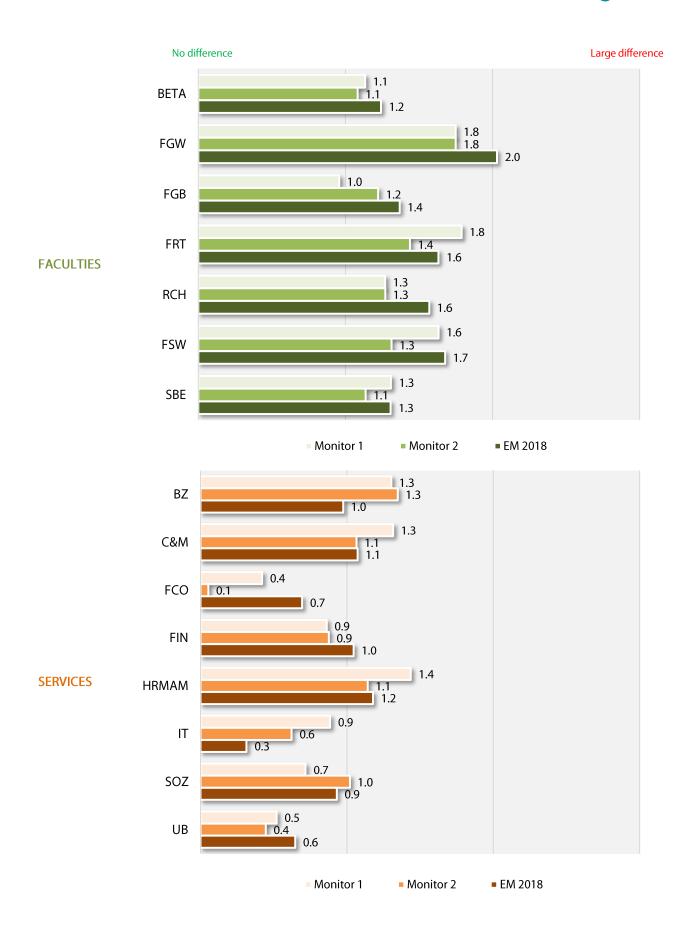
Employees were asked to express the work pressure of the past three months and the acceptable workload for the past three months in marks ranging from 1 (no workload) to 10 (extremely high workload). Since the previous Corona Monitor showed that the experienced workload of the employees had increased, this second measurement asked which factors contribute to this.

Overall, the experienced workload still exceeds the acceptable workload with more than a point, although the difference across the board has decreased slightly. The most important factors that have increased the workload are different from those mentioned in the questionnaire, including online education, technical/ICT problems, and the introduction of/by new employees. The digitisation of work, online consultations and meetings, and the change in the amount of work have also contributed to a relatively large extent to a higher workload. Managers also experience remote management of employees as an increased workload. The flexibility in working hours and the combination of working partly at home and partly at VU Amsterdam have eased the workload to some extent.

Difference between experienced and acceptable workload

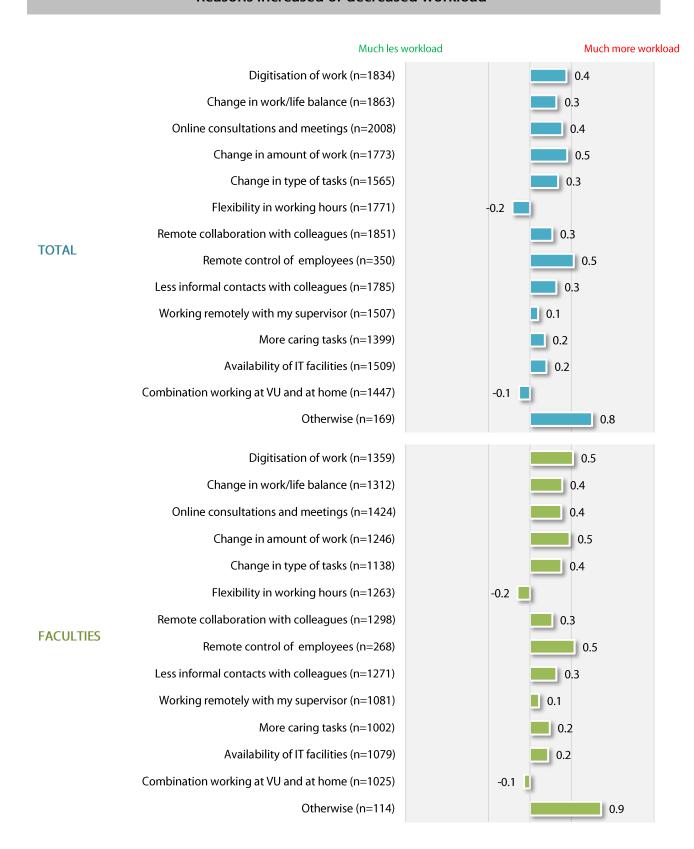




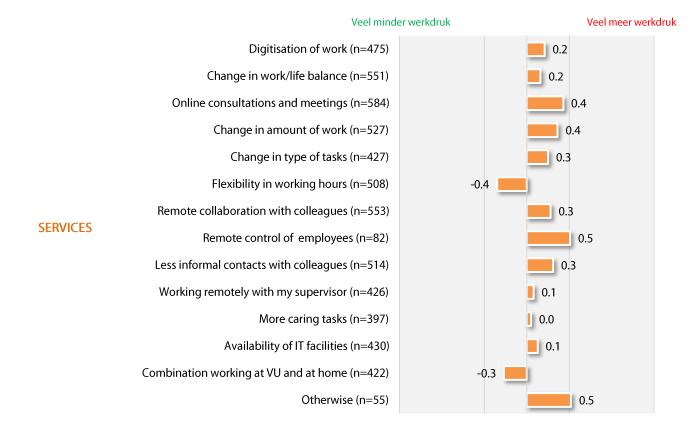




Reasons increased or decreased workload







Difficulties often mentioned at 'Otherwise, namely' (workload decreasing)

No travelling time

Difficulties often mentioned at 'Otherwise, namely' (workload increasing)

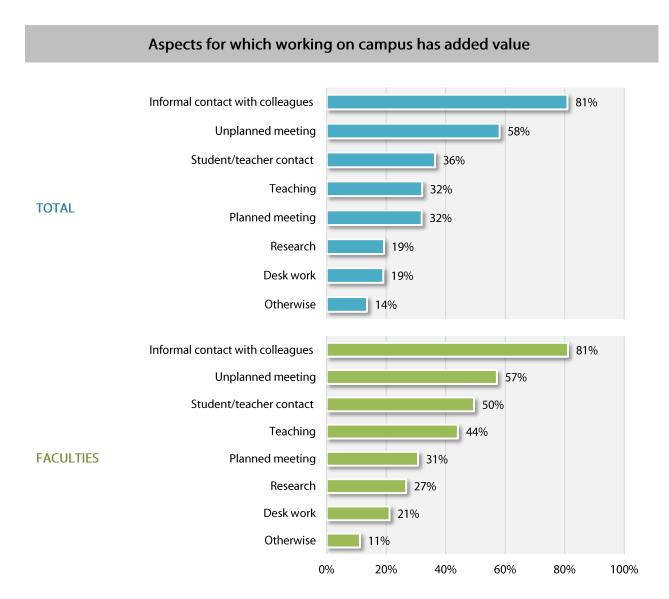
- (Partly) online teaching
- Remote introduction/starting a new job during corona
- Technical/ICT problems



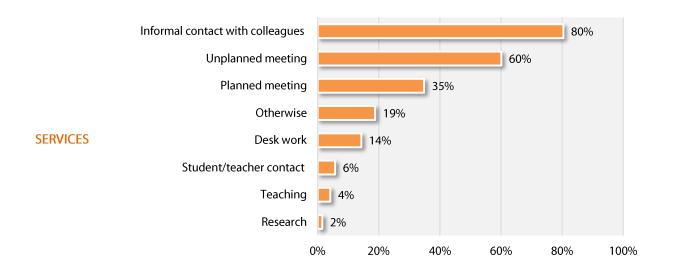
4 Hybrid working

VU Amsterdam is developing a view on hybrid working, the combination of working from home and working on VU-campus. This chapter discusses the aspects for which working on campus has added value over working from home and whether working from home affects the quality of work.

The results show that informal contact is an aspect for which working on campus has added value for more than 80% of the employees. Unplanned meetings and contacts between students and teachers are also aspects that for 58% and 36%, respectively, take place on campus rather than at home. For almost half of them, working (partly) from home has no influence on the quality of their work. A quarter experiences a (much) lower quality of work, while the other quarter believes they can deliver (much) higher quality.

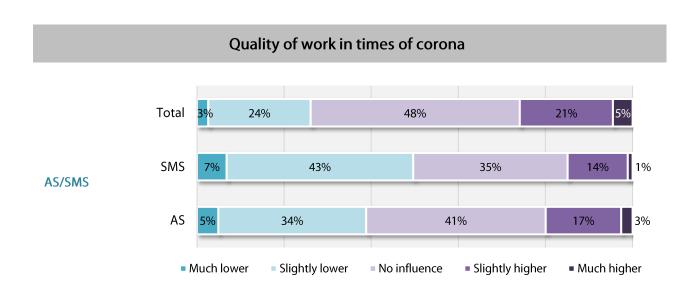




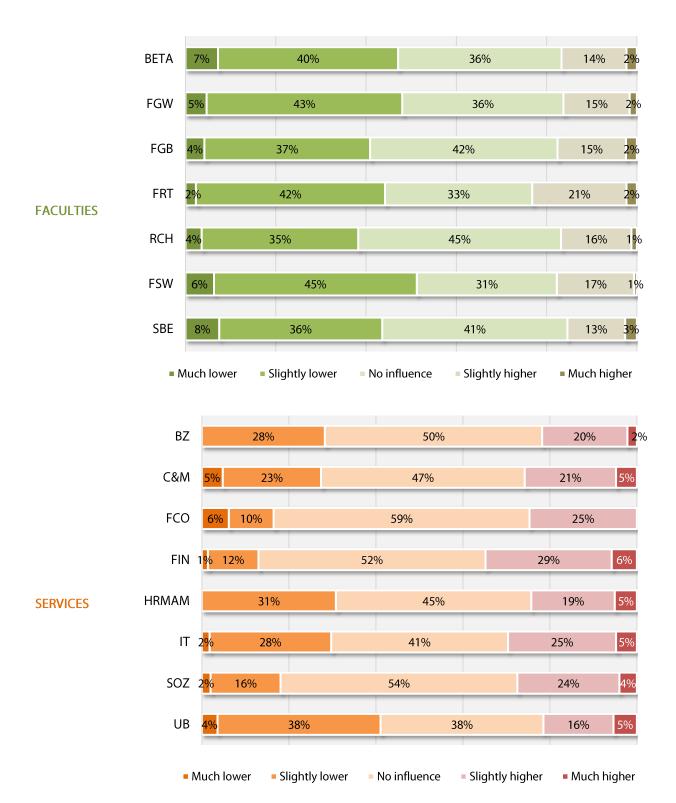


Factor often mentioned at 'Otherwise'

- Variety/'riot'/living in working environment
- Clearer demarcation/separation of work and private life
- Availability of specific resources, systems, or facilities (e.g. library, printing, scanner, PC)
- Contacts
- Introduction new colleague/organisation as a new colleague
- Faster tuning/communication







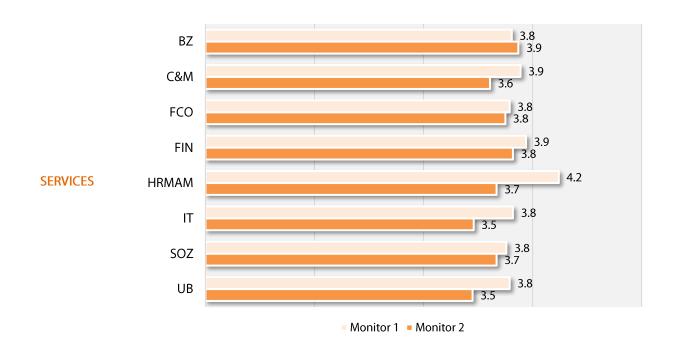


5 Communication

This chapter focuses on satisfaction with communication about the Corona crisis over the past three months. In general, employees are reasonably satisfied with both the communication from VU Amsterdam and that from the faculty or service. Overall, employees are somewhat less satisfied than during the first measurement.

















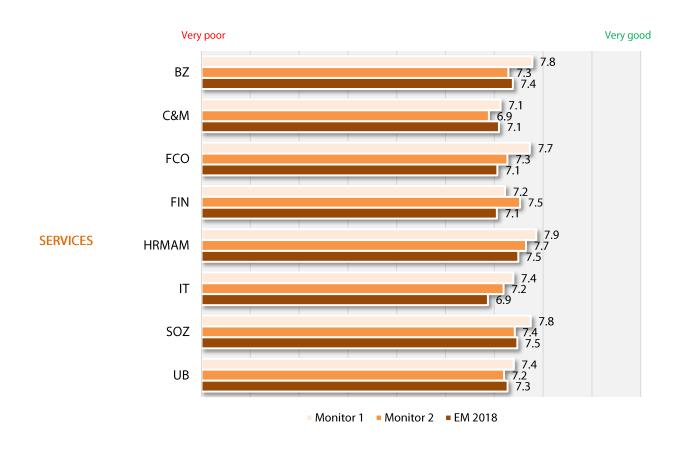
6 General assessment

To get an overall picture of satisfaction with VU Amsterdam, employees were asked to assess both working at VU Amsterdam and VU Amsterdam as an employer. Compared to the previous measurement, employees are slightly less satisfied with working at VU Amsterdam and with VU Amsterdam as an employer.

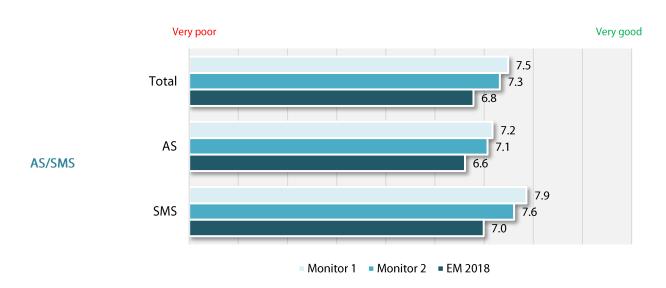
Assessment working at VU Amsterdam (incl. comparison 2018 EM)







Assessment VU Amsterdam as an employer (incl. comparison with 2018 EM)





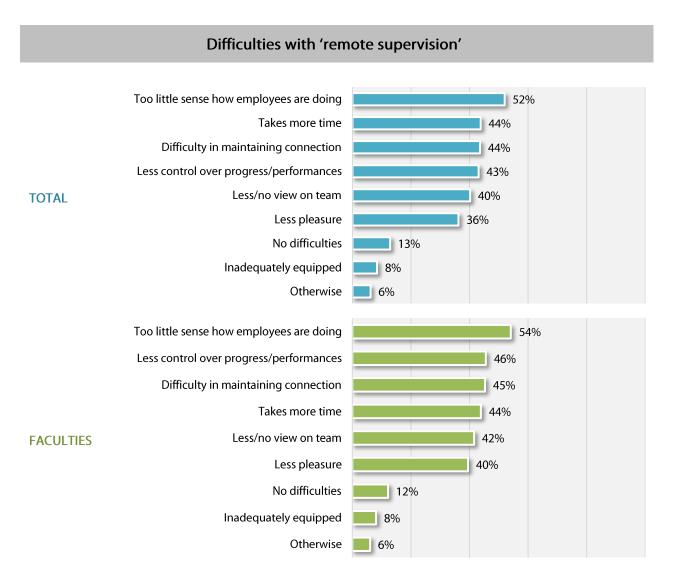




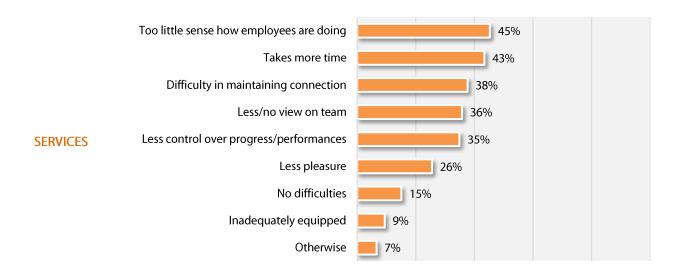
7 Remote supervision

For supervisors, the Corona crisis has an extra dimension: remote supervision. This chapter focuses on the obstacles supervisors experience and what could support them in good remote supervision.

13% of the supervisors do not experience any obstacles in remote management. The largest obstacle for supervisors experiencing obstacles is that they have too little understanding of how their employees are doing (52%). Supervision also takes more time (44%), supervisors find it difficult to maintain the connection between employees (44%) and have less control over the progress and performances of their employees (43%). (Periodic) physical meetings at VU Amsterdam with the department, section or team could support 58% of the supervisor in good remote supervision. More time for supervisory tasks (33%) and practical information and tips on remote supervision (28%) could also support them.





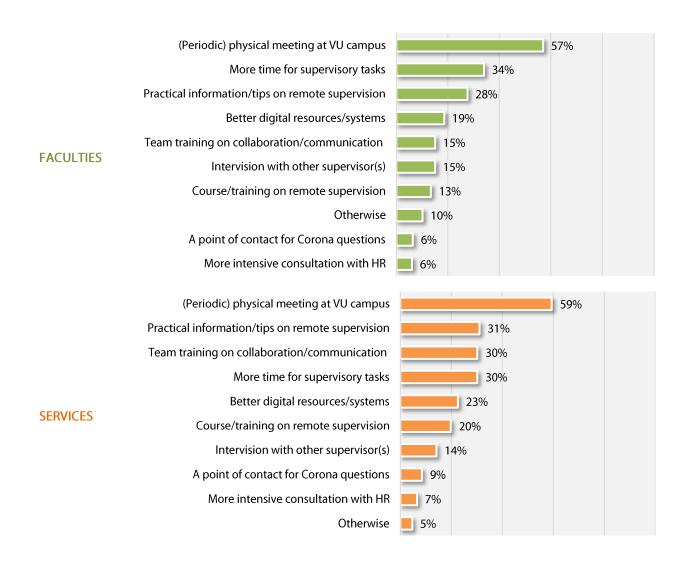


Difficulties often mentioned at 'Otherwise, namely'

- Employees have more (often) problems
- Less informal/spontaneous contact

Desired support in 'remote supervision' (Periodic) physical meeting at VU campus 58% More time for supervisory tasks 33% Practical information/tips on remote supervision 28% Better digital resources/systems 20% Team training on collaboration/communication 19% **TOTAL** Course/training on remote supervision 15% Otherwise 9% A point of contact for Corona questions 7% More intensive consultation with HR 6% Intervision with other supervisor(s)





Support often mentioned at 'Otherwise, namely'

- Time
- Online team training focused on social aspects/well-being



8 Culture

In times of Corona, there are fewer opportunities for leisure outdoors, while leisure is important as a variation from working at home. Griffioen Cultural Hub would like to know if there is any interest in online courses and workshops.

The results show that 30% of the employees are interested, especially in the topic Body & Mind (62%). More than half of the employees who are interested are open to both a course series and a one-time workshop.

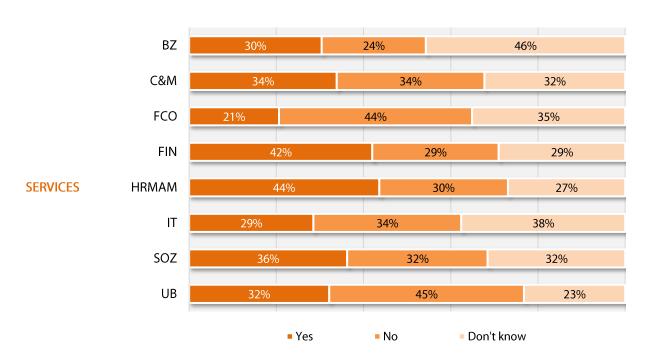
Interest in cultural courses and/or workshops Griffioen 34% Total 30% 37% AS 27% 39% 34% AS/SMS SMS 32% 34% 34% Yes No Don't know **BETA** 30% 35% 35% **FGW** 25% 41% 34% **FGB** 29% 38% 33% FRT 42% 30% **FACULTIES RCH** 29% 38% 32% **FSW** 38% 34% SBE 24% 40% 35%

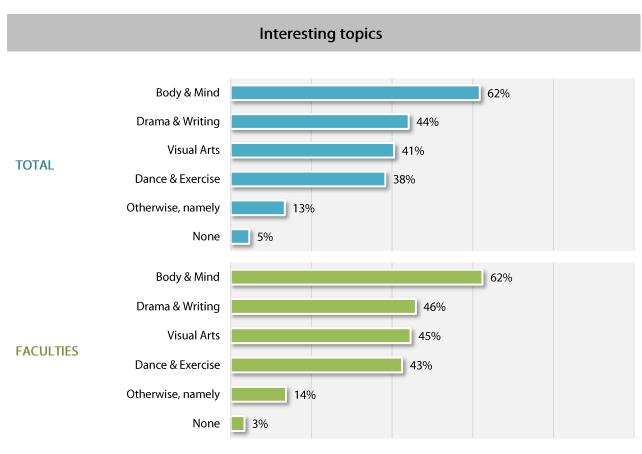
Yes

■ No

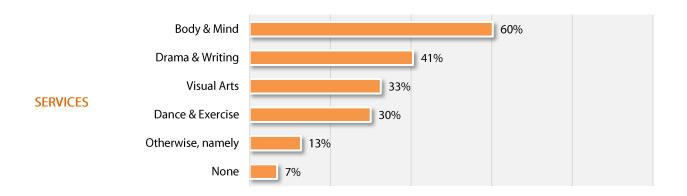
Don't know



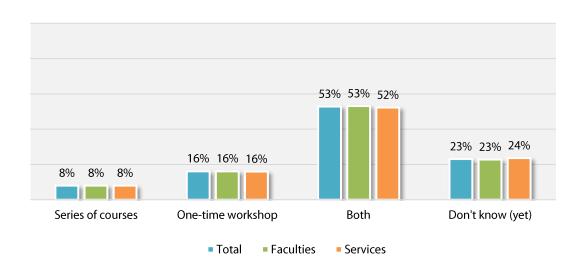








Series of courses or a one-time workshop

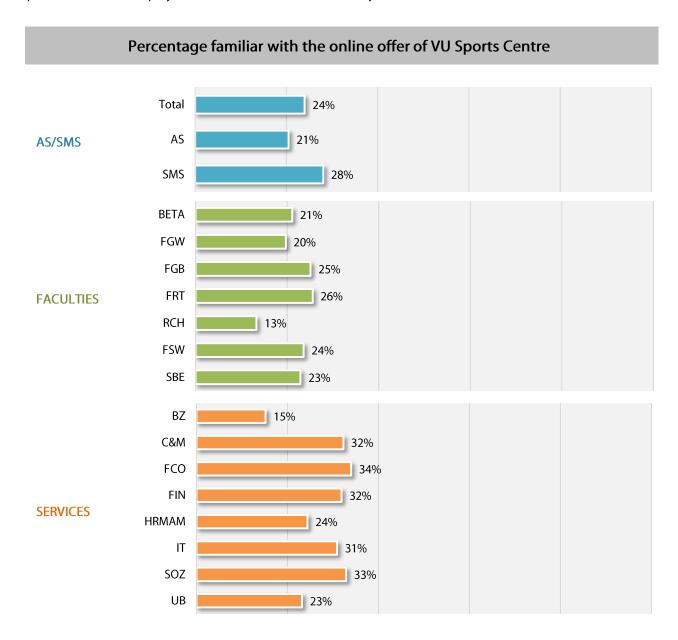




9 Sports

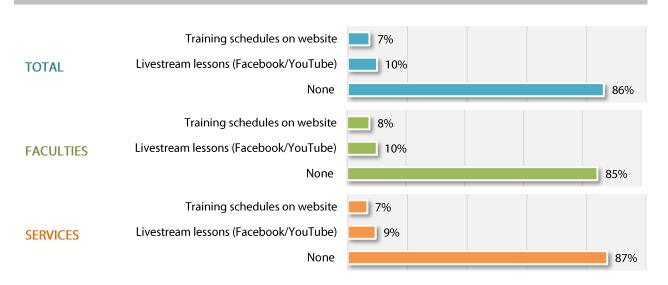
The previous Corona monitor indicated that some VU employees get less exercise because of working from home. Since the Corona crisis, VU Sports Centre has an online offer.

Almost a quarter of the employees are familiar with this offer and 17% of them have also made use of the online possibilities (training schedules on the website or livestream lessons via Facebook or YouTube. The most important reason for employees who have not used it is that they do not need it.

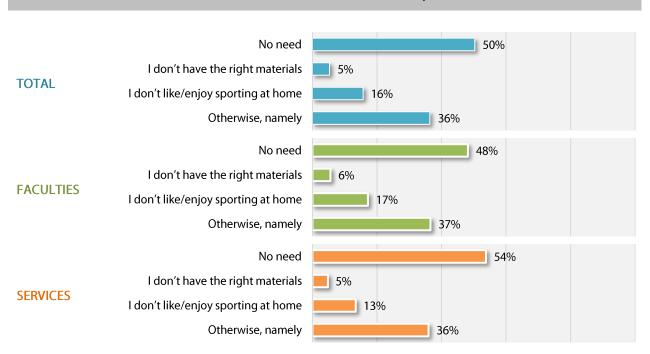




Online possibilities of VU Sports Centre used



Reasons no use of online features of VU Sports Centre



Reasons often mentioned at 'Otherwise, namely'

- Already a member of another club
- No time
- Not informed



Appendix: Questionnaire

Thank you for your willingness to participate in the second Corona Monitor. VU Amsterdam considers it important to gain insight into the employees' wellbeing in times of working from home and other restrictive measures due to the Corona crisis.

If you close the questionnaire before completing it, your answers will be saved. When you want to continue, you will automatically begin at the question where you left off.

VU Amsterdam has charged IVA Onderwijs with conducting the survey. If you have any questions about this questionnaire, you can contact the researchers: contact@iva-onderwijs.nl.

Thank you for your cooperation!

Privacy disclaimer

The privacy of staff who take part in the Corona Monitor is ensured using the following measures:

- The survey is carried out by IVA Onderwijs, an independent research agency that adheres to the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR). The agency is legally bound by a confidentiality agreement, which requires that information files are secured in different ways. VU Amsterdam will never have access to individual responses.
- The results are presented in such a way that they can never be traced back to the responses of individual employees.

 Reporting is based on groups with at least 10 respondents. Your responses are therefore never visible.



General questions

1. At which faculty or service do you work?

If you work at more than one faculty or service, please choose the one at which you work the most hours. In case of an equal amount of hours, please choose the one for which you wish to fill in this questionnaire.

<Lijst faculteiten en diensten>

2. At which department do you work?

If you work at multiple departments, please fill in the one you work the most for. In case of an equal amount of hours, please choose the one for which you wish to fill in this questionnaire.

<Lijst afdelingen per aangevinkte faculteit/dienst>

3.	In which category would you classify your position?
0	Academic staff (WP)

O Support and management staff (OBP)

<als vraag 3 = WP, openklappen op zelfde pagina als v3>

4. Which position do you hold?

If you hold various positions, please choose the one in which you work the most hours. In case of an equal amount of hours, please choose the one for which you wish to fill in this questionnaire.

O	Dean
O	Professor
O	Associate professor (UHD)
O	Assistant professor (UD)
O	Teacher
0	Researcher

Special professor

O PhD student

O Other

<als vraag 3 = OBP, openklappen op zelfde pagina als v3>

5. To which function family ① does your function belong? <pop-up bij①: Toelichting functiefamilies> If you have various functions, please choose the one in which you work the most hours. In case of an equal amount of hours, please choose the one for which you wish to fill in this questionnaire.

0	Education and Research Support
O	Administrative and Secretarial Support
O	Student Support
O	Facility Services
O	Occupational Health, Safety and Environment
O	ICT

Management and administrative support

O PR, information, and communication



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6.	Do you have a supervisory pos	sition?					
O	Yes						
0	No						
<als< td=""><td>s vorige vraag = Yes></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td></als<>	s vorige vraag = Yes>						
7.	How many people do you supe	ervise?					
O	1 - 10 employees						
0	11 - 25 employees						
0	26 - 50 employees						
0	Over 50 employees						
8.	What kind of employment do	you have?					
0	Permanent appointment						
0	Temporary appointment						
0	Other						
9.	What is the total scope of you	ır employment a	t VU Amste	erdam?			
0	0,8 fte or more						
0	0,5 to 0,8 fte						
0	Less than 0,5 fte						
O	Do not know/n.a.						
10.	How long have you been wor	king at VU Amst	erdam?				
O	Less than 6 months						
O	6 months – 3 years						
O	3 - 10 years						
O	10 years or more						
Cl	hanges in your	health a	nd wo	ork exp	erienc	e	
	•						
11.	To what extent have the aspec	cts below change	ed <u>in the pa</u>	ast three mon	ths? <items< td=""><td>a-f random></td><td></td></items<>	a-f random>	
							Don't
		Considera-	A little	(About) the	A little bet-	Considera-	know/
		bly worse	worse	same	ter	bly better	N.A.
a.	Your mental health	O	•	O	O	O	O

•

O

O O

O

 \mathbf{O}

O Personnel and organisation

Your physical health

b.

O Other



c.	Your involvement with VU Amsterdam	•	•		•	O		•	0
d.	The cooperation with your supervisor	O	•		•	O		•	O
e.	Your involvement with your colleagues	•	•		•	O		•	O
f.	Your work-life balance	O	O		•	O		0	O
		Considera-					Cor	nsidera-	Don't
		bly in-	A little in	- (Abo	ut) the	A little c		ly de-	know/
		creased	creased	-	ame	crease		eased	N.A.
g.	Your workload	Q	O		O	O	a ci	O	O
h.	The number of care tasks	0	0		o	0		0	0
Со	mmunication								
12. H	low satisfied are you with the co	ommunicatio	n about th	ie Coror	a crisis	in the pa	ast three	month	<u>s</u> ?
	•								
				fied				-	N. A.
				atis	jed			sfie	/wo
				diss	atisf	la	fied	sati	t k
				Very dissatisfied	Dissatisfied	Neutral	Satisfied	Very satisfied	Don't know/N.A.
a.	Communication from VU Amste	erdam		0	O	O	O	0	O
b.	Communication from your facu			0	0	0	0	0	0
D.	Communication from your facu	ity/service		•	•	•	•	•	•
Wc	orkload								
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	an you express the workload of			-					
	,	, , , , , , , , , , , , , , , , , , ,							
	1 2	3 4	5 6	7 8	3 9	10	Extreme	lv hiah v	work-
	No workload $\begin{array}{ccc} 1 & 2 \\ \bigcirc & \bigcirc \end{array}$	0 0	\mathbf{o}	0))	•	load	.,	
O Do	n't know / no opinion								
0									
14. V	/hat degree of workload do you	consider acc	ceptable fo	or the pa	st three	e months	s?		
							Extreme	ly hiah v	work-
	No workload $\begin{pmatrix} 1 & 2 \\ O & O \end{pmatrix}$	3 4 O O	O O	O	•		load	, ,	



The previous Corona Monitor indicated that VU employees experienced an increased workload. We would like to find out which factors play a role in the increase.

15. Which factor(s) has/have contributed to an increased or decreased workload during the period of Corona?

Only for the factors that have affected your workload you are asked whether they have caused more or less workload. <niet verplicht>

	Much more	More work-	Less work-	Much less
	workload	load	load	workload
Digitisation of work	O	O	O	O
Change in work/life balance	O	O	O	O
Online consultations and meetings	O	O	O	•
Change in amount of work	O	O	O	•
Change in type of tasks	O	O	O	0
Flexibility in working hours	O	O	O	•
Remote collaboration with colleagues	O	O	O	0
<if 6="Yes" question=""> Remote control of my employees</if>	O	O	O	O
Less informal contacts with colleagues	O	O	O	0
Working remotely with my supervisor	O	O	O	•
More caring tasks	O	O	O	0
Availability of IT facilities for carrying out my work	O	O	O	•
The combination of working partly at VU Amsterdam and partly at home	•	•	•	•
Otherwise, namely <als ingevuld,="" keuze="" verplicht=""></als>	O	O	O	•

Hybrid working

VU Amsterdam is developing a view on hybrid working, the combination of working from home and working on VU-campus.

16.	. For which	aspects of	your work c	loes working	on VU cam	pus have adde	ed value over	working from
	home?							

You	can give multiple answers.
	My work is unsuitable for working from home <uniek antwoord<="" th=""></uniek>
	Desk work
	Planned meeting
	Unplanned meeting
	Informal contact with colleagues
	Teaching



	Student/teacher contact Research Otherwise, namely None/Don't know <uniek antwoord=""></uniek>
Qı	uality of your work
	To what extent has working (partly) from home during the Corona period influenced the quality of your work?
	No influence
	The quality of my work is much lower
	The quality of my work is slightly lower
	The quality of my work is slightly higher
	The quality of my work is much higher
<als< th=""><th>vraag 6 = Ja></th></als<>	vraag 6 = Ja>
	Which difficulties do your experience with 'remote supervision'?
You	can give multiple answers.
	I don't experience any difficulties <uniek antwoord=""></uniek>
	It takes me more time
	I have less pleasure in leading
	I feel inadequately equipped to supervise remotely
	I have less control over the progress and performances of my employees
	I have less/no view on my team as a whole
	I have too little understanding of how my employees are doing I have difficulty in maintaining the connection between employees
	Otherwise, namely
	vorige vraag ≠ 1° optie>
	What could support you in good 'remote supervision'?
_	can give multiple answers. Consultation/intervision with other supervisor(s)
	More intensive consultation with HR on personnel matters
	Course or training on remote supervision
	Practical information and tips on remote supervision
	A point of contact where my employees (or I) can go with all kinds of Corona questions.



□ Tra □ Be	ore time for aining for n etter digital eriodic) phy herwise, na	ny team o resource ysical me	on other fes/system	orms of c						
Gen	eral a	asses	ssme	nt						
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		_			J Amster	dam at t	his mome	ent on a	scale of	1 to 10, what grade
wo	uld you giv	re?								
-	poor, 10 =									
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Don't know/N.A.
0	0	0	O	0	O	0	0	O	O	O
word 1 = very	uld you giv poor, 10 =	ve? very god	od							f 1 to 10, what grade
1 •	2 •	3 •	4 •	5 Q	6 O	7 O	8 •	9 •	10 •	Don't know/N.A. O
	ure a									
										ortant as a varia-
	om workines and work	_	ne. Griffic	en Cultu	ral Hub v	would like	e to knov	/ if there	is any ir	nterest in online
in to Ye	hese?	ltural Hu	b is goin	g to offe	r online c	ultural co	ourses an	d/or wor	kshops,	are you interested
23. Wh You can	rige vraag = ich topics v give multi _l rama & Writ sual Arts	would yo		teresting	?					



	Dance & Exercise Body & Mind Otherwise, namely
	None of these <uniek antwoord=""></uniek>
<als< th=""><th>vraag 22 = Ja></th></als<>	vraag 22 = Ja>
	Are you interested in a series of courses or a one-time workshop?
\mathbf{O}	Series of courses
\mathbf{C}	One-time workshop
O	Both
0	Don't know (yet)
	previous Corona Monitor indicated that some VU employees get less exercise because of working from
hor	ne. Since the Corona crisis, VU Sports Centre has an online offer.
13 /	Are you familiar with the online offer of VU Sports Centre?
O	Yes
0	No
O	Don't know
	vorige vraag = Ja>
	Have you used the following online services of VU Sports Centre?
	can give multiple answers.
	Training schedules on the Sport Centre website
	Livestream lessons via Facebook or YouTube
	None <uniek antwoord=""></uniek>
<als< td=""><td>vorige vraag = None></td></als<>	vorige vraag = None>
15. \	Why didn't you use the online services of VU Sports Centre?
You	can give multiple answers.
	No need
	I don't have the right materials
	I don't like/enjoy sporting at home
	Otherwise, namely
Fir	nally
25. I	Do you have any comments regarding this questionnaire, please indicate them below.



<na verzenden vragenlijst>

Thank you for your cooperation!

The results and plans will be shared with all VU Amsterdam employees as soon as possible, via VUnet, amongst others.

On VUnet, you will find information about working at VU Amsterdam in corona time. If you need help or advice, please take a look at the information on wellbeing and corona.