Evaluation Report MetaForum Pilot
March 2017
1. Introduction
During the exam weeks of the first academic quarter, Groep-één studied the crowdedness in the MetaForum. A survey in cooperation with the TU/e Real Estate Management Department (Dienst Huisvesting) showed that two-thirds of the nearly three hundred participating students were not able to find a study spot. In addition, TU/e students mentioned that instead of studying somewhere else on campus, they went home if the MetaForum was overcrowded. All findings can be found in the position paper ‘Crowdedness in MetaForum, December 2016’ (see attached).

As a result of this position paper, the TU/e has approved a pilot in which only TU/e students and employees have access to the MetaForum Library during the three-week exam period of the second quarter of academic year 2016-2017.

This report discusses our findings concerning the pilot experiment. The results of the polls are analyzed, the situation in the MetaForum is evaluated and the conclusions are summarized. The report concludes with a proposal how the study comfort and capacity should be increased for the TU/e students, on short and long term.

2. Pilot
During the exam period of the second academic quarter (January 16th up until February 3rd) only TU/e students and employees were allowed access to the MetaForum Library on floors 0 and -1 (MFL) upon showing the TU/e campus card, while MetaForum floor 1 (MF1) remained open to the public. From Monday up until Friday between 8.30 and 18.00 hour, TU/e security employees checked visitors for TU/e campus cards. Ergo, access was only restricted during ‘office-hours’.

Neighbouring educational institutions Fontys, Summa College and Eckart were informed about the restricted access during the pilot. Despite the notice, non-TU/e visitors showed up at MetaForum Library and had to be denied access. These visitors were asked to fill in a quick poll concerning the use of the MetaForum Library and the pilot. Only 39 visitors filled in the poll. Results are briefly summarized later on in this report.

To gain insight in the opinion and experiences of TU/e students during the pilot, a poll was sent to all TU/e students on Monday February 6th. The list of questions asked can be found in Appendix A. After seven days, 1093 TU/e students filled in the poll. Results are summarized in this report.
3. Results

a. TU/e students

The following summary has been drawn up from the results of the poll for TU/e students.

**Participation:** Students filled in the survey 1093 times.

- 925 students studied in the MetaForum during the Pilot.
- 168 students did not study in the MetaForum, but studied predominantly at home or their departmental building.

![Figure 1: Number of respondents, in absolute values and as fraction of student population, by department. * Data of 01-10-2016](image)

**Different locations to study:** Students were asked where they predominantly studied during the pilot in quarter 2 and where they used to study in the previous exam period(s).

- 151 students moved from home to the MetaForum Library.
- 40 students moved from their department to the MetaForum Library.
- Few students did study on MetaForum floor 1 and in Auditorium.
- 424 students studied in the MetaForum Library and remained in the MetaForum Library.
- 74 students studied in their department and remained in their department.
- 234 students studied at home and remained at home.

**Table 1:** Answers of students where they studied during the pilot in Q2 and previous exam periods.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Studied in quarter 1 and previous exam periods</th>
<th>Aud.</th>
<th>Dept.</th>
<th>Home</th>
<th>MF1</th>
<th>MFL</th>
<th>(blank)</th>
<th>Total Q2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Studied in quarter 2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Audl.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dept.</td>
<td></td>
<td>74</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>20</td>
<td></td>
<td>111</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Home</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>234</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>19</td>
<td></td>
<td>268</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MF1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td>48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MFL</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>151</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>424</td>
<td></td>
<td>640</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(blank)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>6</td>
<td></td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Q1</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>125</td>
<td>422</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>480</td>
<td></td>
<td>1093</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Crowdedness: How did students experience finding a spot to study during the day in the MetaForum, compared to previous exam periods?

- Students say it was easier to find a study spot.

![Bar chart showing the number of students' responses to crowdedness.](image)

Figure 2: Answers of students how easy they could find a study spot in the MetaForum.

MetaForum floor 0: How did students experience the atmosphere on floor 0, compared to previous exam periods?

- Students say the atmosphere was similar or less noisy, so the atmosphere was improved on floor 0.

![Bar chart showing the number of students' responses to the atmosphere on MetaForum floor 0.](image)

Figure 3: Answers of students how they experienced the atmosphere on MetaForum floor 0.

MetaForum silent floor -1: How did students experience the atmosphere on floor -1, compared to previous exam periods?

- Students say the atmosphere was similar or less noisy, so the atmosphere was improved on floor -1.

![Bar chart showing the number of students' responses to the atmosphere on MetaForum floor -1 (silent floor).](image)

Figure 4: Answers of students how they experienced the atmosphere on MetaForum floor -1 (silent floor).
**Noise from upper floors:** How did students experience the noise coming from upper floors, compared to previous exam periods?

- Students say the noise coming from upper floors was similar.
- 26% of the students say the noise from upper floors did not annoy.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Less upper</td>
<td>146</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Similar</td>
<td>508</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More upper</td>
<td>119</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Didn't annoy</td>
<td>282</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(blank)</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Study habits of students:** When do students prefer to study in the MetaForum Library during the exam period?

- Most students prefer to study during office hours.
- Most students prefer to study during the week.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Morning</td>
<td>356</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Afternoon</td>
<td>318</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evening</td>
<td>80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No preference</td>
<td>316</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(blank)</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Week</td>
<td>663</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Weekend</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Both</td>
<td>358</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(blank)</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Study capacity in departments:** Do students think there is enough room to study in their departmental building?

- Students of most departments think there is not enough room to study in their departmental building.

![Figure 8: Answers of students whether they think there is enough room to study in their departmental building.](image)

**Preference for department or MetaForum:** Would students prefer studying in their departmental building instead of in the MetaForum (if similar study spots are available)?

- It is remarkable that students from departments with relatively new buildings do prefer to study at their department, in contrast to students from departments with older buildings.

![Figure 9: Answers of students whether they prefer studying in their departmental building over the MetaForum.](image)
b. Non-TU/e visitors

Denied non-TU/e visitors during the pilot:

- During the three weeks of the pilot, a total of 413 visitors have been denied access to the MetaForum Library, counted by the TU/e security employees. Over time, the number decreased as can be seen in table 2.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Pre-exam week</th>
<th>#</th>
<th>Exam week 1</th>
<th>#</th>
<th>Exam week 2</th>
<th>#</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Monday</td>
<td>16-01-17</td>
<td>77</td>
<td>23-01-17</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>30-01-17</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tuesday</td>
<td>17-01-17</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>24-01-17</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>31-01-17</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wednesday</td>
<td>18-01-17</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>25-01-17</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>01-02-17</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thursday</td>
<td>19-01-17</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>26-01-17</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>02-02-17</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Friday</td>
<td>20-01-17</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>27-01-17</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>03-02-17</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>231</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>109</strong></td>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>73</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The following summary has been drawn up from the results of the poll for non-TU/e visitors:

- Only 39 visitors filled in the complete poll, making it difficult to gain insight in the different groups of denied visitors.
- Almost all responses were given by Fontys students, especially from those studying on location Rachelsmolen.
- Reasons to visit the MetaForum Library instead of using their own educational institute’s facilities were:
  - Low quality facilities at own institute.
  - Insufficient capacity of study spots at own institute.
  - Own institute is not open in the evening.
  - No good regulations to have a calm place to study at own institute.
  - Better atmosphere to work and study in MetaForum.
- Some students from other universities in the Netherlands like to visit the MetaForum Library to work or meet because of its open character.
4. Conclusions & Discussion

Over a thousand students responded to the poll, a sign that this surely is a hot topic amongst students. The entry gates of the library estimated a slight decrease in people traffic and visitors in the library, which results in some margin on the loading of the facilities. The results from the poll also show that it was easier to find a spot to study, it was less noisy on floor 0 and floor -1 and more students studied in the MetaForum Library instead of at home. All these aspects contribute to a better study climate for TU/e students to study for their exams. In this respect, the pilot can be considered a success.

However, the University Council thinks the public character of the MetaForum Library has advantages for the TU/e community, its surroundings and other students in the Netherlands. It is a place for people to meet, cooperate and innovate. It would be better for all parties at the TU/e campus if the capacity of high quality study spots is increased by all educational institutes for their own students. Concretely for the TU/e, this means that study facilities at both departmental and non-departmental buildings should be increased and improved where needed. The University Council also thinks the Executive Board of the TU/e should address this issue to all parties on the TU/e campus. In this way, there should be no need for restrictive measures, making the MetaForum Library accessible for everyone and the TU/e a better place for everyone.

Nevertheless, the current situation is detrimental to the situation of TU/e students during the very busy exam periods. The University Council thinks that measures should be taken to guarantee TU/e students a comfortable place to study for their exams. Since capacity problems are an issue during office hours in the exam period only, there is no need yet to restrict access during the evenings or weekends. To maintain a proper atmosphere during the evening and the weekend, surveillance and cleaning services should be intensified. If the situation becomes worse in the future, limiting access in the evening and weekend too could be an option. Entrance regulation can be done similarly as the pilot, but entry gates giving access to the library after scanning the TU/e campus card is clearly the most advantageous option in terms of flexibility.
Appendix A: Online poll for TU/e students

1. Did you study in the MetaForum the exam period of quarter 2?  
   [Yes, No]
2. Did you participate in the survey during the exam weeks of quarter 1?  
   [Yes, No]
3. From which TU/e department are you?  
   [Applied Physics, Biomedical Engineering, Built Environment, Chemical Engineering and Chemistry, Electrical Engineering, Industrial Design, Industrial Engineering (IE&IS), Innovation Sciences (IE&IS), Mathematics and Computer Sciences, Mechanical Engineering]
4. Where did you study predominantly during this exam period (January 16th – February 3rd)?  
   [MetaForum Library (floor 0 and -1), MetaForum floor 1, My departmental building, At home, Auditorium, Other: …]
5. Where did you predominantly study during previous exam periods?  
   [The same location as in previous question, MetaForum Library (floor 0 and -1), MetaForum floor 1, My departmental building, At home, Auditorium, Other: …]
6. If you moved to another location to study, what was the reason?  
7. The following questions address the differences you experienced between this exam period (Pilot) and previous exam period(s):  
8. How was it to find a study spot during the day in the MetaForum?  
   [Easier to find a spot, Similar to find a spot, More difficult to find a spot, Not applicable for me]
9. How did you experience the atmosphere on floor -1 (‘silent floor’)?  
   [Less silent, Similar, More silent, Not applicable for me]
10. How did you experience the atmosphere on floor 0? (please mind: small discussion and cooperation is allowed at floor 0)  
    [Less noisy, Similar, More noisy, Not applicable for me]
11. What other differences (both positive and negative) did you experience when studying in the MetaForum Library during the Pilot?  
    [I did experience (big) troubles with campus card control for access, Other reasons: …]
12. The following questions are asked to gain more insight in the study behavior during exam periods:  
13. In which time slots do you prefer to study in the MetaForum Library during the exam period?  
   [In the morning, In the afternoon, In the evening, No Preference]
14. When do you most often study in the MetaForum Library during the exam period?  
   [During the week, In the weekend, Both]
15. Do you think there is enough room in your department to study?  
   [Yes, plenty, It is okay, the availability matches the demand, No]
16. Would you prefer studying in your own departmental building instead of in the MetaForum (if similar study spots are available)?  
   [Yes because: … , No because: …]
17. Do you have any clear recommendations or points for improvement to increase study comfort and facilities at the TU/e?  
   […]
18. Do you have any other comments regarding the MetaForum pilot or study facilities at the TU/e?  
   […]
19. Would it be okay for you if we want to contact you? Then please leave your e-mail address:  
   […]