Regulations governing the financial support of international students incurring study delay as a result of extraordinary circumstances, 2015-2016.

The Board of the University of Groningen, in its meeting on 10 August 2015,

Taking into consideration that:
Article 7.51 of the Higher Education and Research Act (WHW) does not cover financial support in the event of study delay caused by extraordinary circumstances on the part of international students who are not entitled to a performance-related grant as referred to in Chapter 5 of the Student Finance Act 2000 (WSF),

has decided to adopt the following regulations:

Article 1 Definitions
The following definitions are used in these regulations:
Extraordinary circumstances: a situation that results in study delay for an international student.
International student: a student registered at the University of Groningen for a full-time degree programme who either does not have Dutch nationality or is not treated as a Dutch citizen on the basis of a legal provision and who does not qualify for a performance-related grant under the Student Finance Act 2000 (WSF 2000)
CLRS: Centraal Loket Rechtsbescherming Studenten; Central Portal for the Legal Protection of Student Rights
Board of the University: The Board of the University of Groningen
Programme duration: the nominal duration of a Bachelor’s or Master’s degree programme
University tuition fees: tuition fees which apply to students who do not meet the requirements for the statutory tuition fees as referred to in Article 7.45a WHW
RUG: University of Groningen
SSC: Student Service Centre
Student counsellor: contact person for students who have study progress problems
Study advisor: employee of the Faculty; advisor for study-related issues and the first person to whom study delays must be reported
UFC (Universitaire Fondsencommissie): University Funds Committee: a committee, installed by the Board of the University, which advises the Board with regard to decisions made on the basis of these regulations
WHW: Wet op het hoger onderwijs en wetenschappelijk onderzoek; Higher Education and Research Act
WSF 2000: Wet op de Studiefinanciering 2000; Student Finance Act 2000

Article 2 Scope
These Regulations only apply to international students who are following a full-time degree programme at the University of Groningen and who do not qualify for a performance-related student grant under WSF 2000.
Article 3   Extraordinary circumstances
1. The following may constitute grounds for financial assistance:
   a. illness of the claimant
   b. pregnancy of the claimant
   c. physical, sensory or other functional disorders/chronic illness contracted during the nominal programme duration on the part of the claimant
   d. death of a relation by blood or affinity in the first degree
   e. an insufficiently feasible study programme
   f. other extraordinary circumstances, if rejection would result in a situation of unfairness of an overriding nature.
2. Other extraordinary circumstances include:
   a. Administrative and consultative positions as referred to in the University of Groningen 2015-2016 Financial Support Regulations for student members of consultative/administrative bodies, committee members of student organizations and top-level athletes
   b. Top level sport as referred to in the University of Groningen 2015-2016 Financial Support Regulations for student members of consultative/administrative bodies, committee members of student organizations and top-level athletes.

Article 4   Conditions for financial support
1. Students who incur study delay due to extraordinary circumstances as referred to in Article 3.1 may apply for financial support:
   a. if they satisfy the age criteria laid down in the WSF 2000 at the start of the programme, and
   b. if they have registered as a full-time student at the University of Groningen and have paid statutory or University tuition fees to the University for the period covered by the request.
2. Students must be able to prove that they have no other sources of financial support available to them. This means that they must provide information concerning any financial allowance or student grant they are receiving or have received.

Article 5   Duration of support
1. Students are eligible for financial support for study delay they incur as referred to in Article 3.1 of these Regulations for the duration of a Bachelor's Degree Programme calculated from the first year of registration in Higher Education plus one academic year (Ba+1).
2. Students are eligible for financial support for study delay they incur as referred to in Article 3.1 of these Regulations for the duration of a Master's Degree Programme calculated from the first year of registration for a Master's Degree Programme plus one academic year (Ma+1).

Article 6   Reporting to the study advisor and student counsellor
1. As soon as a student incurs study delay or expects to incur study delay, they must immediately report to their study advisor as soon as it becomes clear that the extraordinary circumstance will last more than a month (a study delay of 5 ECTS or more) to discuss how the study delay can be limited as much as possible.
2. If it appears that the delay will be more than 15 ECTS, the student must make an appointment with a student counsellor at the SSC. If a student is unable to report to the study advisor they must appoint someone to do this for them.
3. In order to be eligible for financial support the student must follow the study advisor’s advice and do everything they can to limit the delay as much as possible.
Article 7    Determining the extent of the study delay
1. The link between the extraordinary circumstance as referred to in Article 3.1 and the study programme will be taken into consideration when deciding on the extent of the study delay. Thus the number of months of study delay caused by an extraordinary circumstance can normally only be calculated at the end of the period Ba+1 or Ma+1.
2. Financial support is only granted per full month.
3. No financial support will be granted for study delays of less than one month (less than 5 ECTS).

Article 8    Procedure for requesting conditional financial support
1. Students must request conditional financial support by means of the digital request form on the website: www.rug.nl/studievertraging.
2. Students must upload the documentary evidence via de website, and must then fill in the digital request form in accordance with this Article.
3. The following documents must be submitted:
   a. Documentary evidence of the extraordinary circumstance (e.g. doctor’s / psychologist’s statement, death certificate, faculty statement, etc.)
   b. Summary of all financial support received by the student (e.g. bank statements or other legal documents)
   c. An authorized printout of ECTS credit points from the Student Administration Office.
4. The request can be submitted between 1 September and 1 February following the academic year during which the extraordinary circumstance occurred.
5. Requests submitted after the deadline will not be considered.
6. If the request is incomplete, the student will be granted six weeks in which to complete the request. If the request is not completed within this term, it will not be considered any further. The student will be notified of this.
7. The Board of the University will make a decision with regard to the request after consultation with the UFC. This will take place as soon as possible but within a maximum of 8 weeks of receipt of the completed request.
8. The decision will be:
   a. either the conditional granting of financial support, or
   b. rejection of the request, or
   c. non-consideration of the request because it was submitted after the deadline, or
   d. non-consideration of the request because the request was incomplete and the missing information was not provided before the deadline.
9. The decision, supported by reasons, will be communicated to the student in writing. Students will be notified of the fact that they can lodge an appeal against the decision within 6 weeks.

Article 9    Definitive approval
1. A request for definitive approval of conditionally granted financial support may be submitted:
   a. one month before until no more than six months after the end of the period Ba+1 or Ma+1, or
   b. one month before until no more than six months after graduation or termination of registration.
2. The decision will be:
   a. either the definitive granting of financial support, or
   b. rejection of the request, or
   c. non-consideration of the request because it was submitted after the deadline, or
   d. non-consideration of the request because the request was incomplete and the missing information was not provided before the deadline.
3. The decision, supported by reasons, will be communicated to the student in writing. Students will be notified of the fact that they can lodge an appeal against the decision within 6 weeks.

4. The amount of financial support will depend on the amount of study delay actually incurred, which will be determined on the basis of an up-to-date printout of the student’s study results.

5. Payment will take place close to the date indicated by the student. The date of payment must be within a year of termination of the registration.

**Article 10  Extent and amount of financial support**

1. The financial support is related to the extent of the study delay and amounts to €285 per month.

2. The financial support received by the student in connection with an administrative or consultative position equals the amounts laid down in chapters 2 and 4 of the University of Groningen 2015-2016 Financial Support Regulations for student members of consultative/administrative bodies, committee members of student organizations and top-level athletes.

3. The financial support received by a student in connection with practising top level sport equals the amounts laid down in chapter 7 of the University of Groningen 2015-2016 Financial Support Regulations for student members of consultative/administrative bodies, committee members of student organizations and top-level athletes.

4. An accumulation of circumstances as referred to in Articles 3.1 and 3.2 will never result in financial support for more than 12 months per academic year.

**Article 11  Objections and appeals**

1. Students can lodge a written appeal with the Board of the University against a decision as referred to in Article 1:3 of the General Administrative Law Act taken by or on behalf of the Board of the University on the grounds of these Regulations within six weeks via the Central Portal for the Legal Protection of Student Rights, P.O. Box 72, 9700 AB Groningen, the Netherlands, www.rug.nl/studenten.

2. Students can lodge an appeal against the decision of the CLRS with the District Court.

**Article 12  Exceptions to the regulations**

In extraordinary circumstances, the Board of the University may deviate from the provisions of these Regulations.

**Article 13  Date of commencement**

These regulations will take effect on 1 September 2015 and will remain in force until 1 September 2016. The ‘Regulations governing the financial support of international students, 2014-2015’ will lapse on this date.

**Article 14  Citation and publication of these regulations**

1. These Regulations may be cited as ‘Regulations governing the financial support of foreign students 2015-16’.

2. These Regulations have been sent to the Faculty Boards for reference, published on the internet and included as an appendix in the Students’ Charter.

Groningen, 10 August 2015. The Board of the University