

# 2018 POLICY PLAN: STUDYING WITH A PERFORMANCE DISABILITY

<b>SUMMARY</b> .....	<b>1</b>
<b>INTRODUCTION</b> .....	<b>2</b>
<b>1. FRAMEWORK: BACKGROUND AND JUSTIFICATION</b> .....	<b>3</b>
THE ROLE OF THE UNIVERSITY OF GRONINGEN .....	3
SOCIETAL DEVELOPMENTS .....	4
STUDENT SATISFACTION .....	6
LEGAL CONTEXT .....	6
<b>2. TARGET GROUP AND OBJECTIVES</b> .....	<b>8</b>
TARGET GROUP .....	8
METHOD .....	8
POLICY PLAN OBJECTIVES .....	9
<b>3. ADVISING STUDENTS: ICF MODEL</b> .....	<b>10</b>
DELINEATION OF TERMINOLOGY .....	10
ICF-MODEL.....	10
<b>4. RENEWED ALLOCATION OF DUTIES</b> .....	<b>12</b>
STUDENTS (AND PROSPECTIVE STUDENTS) .....	12
STUDY ADVISORS (PRIMARY POINT OF CONTACT).....	12
CENTRAL SUPPORT: SECONDARY POINT OF CONTACT.....	13
CURRICULUM ORGANIZATION .....	13
RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ENHANCING THE ALLOCATION OF DUTIES .....	14
<b>5. THE PROFESSIONALIZATION OF STAFF AND THE ADVISORY PROCESS</b> .....	<b>17</b>
<b>6. INSTRUCTION AND INFORMATION PROVISION</b> .....	<b>18</b>
WEBSITE MENUS AND COMMUNICATION SUPPORT .....	18
TRANSITION FROM PRE-UNIVERSITY EDUCATION TO UNIVERSITY EDUCATION.....	18
COMMUNICATION FLOWS TO STUDENT GROUPS.....	18
STUDY ADVISORS AND THE SSC – A HIGHER PROFILE AND GREATER ACCESSIBILITY .....	19
<b>7. INCLUSIVE EDUCATION</b> .....	<b>21</b>
INTRODUCTION: UNIVERSITY OF GRONINGEN FRAMEWORK.....	21
PROMOTING MORE INCLUSIVE EDUCATION.....	21
<b>8. ACCESSIBILITY</b> .....	<b>24</b>
<b>9. EMPOWERMENT: EMPOWERMENT</b> .....	<b>26</b>
RAISING AWARENESS .....	26
EMPLOYABILITY .....	26
<b>10. EVALUATION AND MONITORING</b> .....	<b>28</b>
<b>APPENDIX 1: THEMATIC OVERVIEW OF RECOMMENDATIONS AND IMPLEMENTATION</b> .....	<b>29</b>
<b>APPENDIX 2: CONSULTATION AND ASSESSMENT</b> .....	<b>32</b>
<b>APPENDIX 3: SWOT ANALYSIS</b> .....	<b>33</b>
<b>APPENDIX 4: ANALYSES OF THE 2017 NSE</b> .....	<b>35</b>
<b>APPENDIX 5: DIAGRAM OF ICF-MODEL</b> .....	<b>37</b>

## Summary

### Background

The current University of Groningen policy plan for students with a performance disability dates back to 2004. The UG has a number of specific reasons to set up new policy. Student surveys show a decrease in satisfaction of students and a need for changes in policy and especially in information provision. Due to developments in diagnostic methods, the target group has changed. Attention for psychological pressure on students and stress has made the subject more visible. The growth and internationalization of the UG student population calls for evaluation of current procedures. At the same time, the social and financial position of students with a performance disability has become more vulnerable over the last 10 years. Furthermore, the Dutch government has ratified the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, and the governmental institutional audit of 2019 includes policy regarding students with a functionality disability as a performance indicator. Concurrently, the UG 2015-2020 strategic plan and its strategic goal Inclusion provide possibilities and momentum for implementation of new policy.

### Procedure

In order to identify the Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats regarding current policy, a SWOT analysis was used after consulting (experience) experts and among other things the UN treaty, scientific research, existing policy documents and results from the Dutch National Student Survey. Recommendations for new policy have been formulated based on the SWOT analysis and in collaboration with stakeholders. The policy plan has been developed in close cooperation with the UG Advisory Committee for Students with a Performance Disability (ACF) in every stage.

### Goals

The following goals have been pursued with this new policy plan:

- to improve support to students by the UG.
- to meet formal and desired requirements.
- to describe and clarify (the view of the UG on) responsibilities and allocation of tasks of both students and staff.
- to formulate a framework for monitoring and quality indicators.

### Recommendations

Based on the background and the SWOT analysis of existing policy, the main recommendations are:

- to adopt the ICF model for advising students.
- to strengthen the role of the Student Service Centre as a centre of expertise.
- to standardize and digitalize procedures if possible.
- to improve communication and information procedures.
- to further professionalize staff members.
- to stimulate accessibility and inclusion.

## Introduction

The goal of students at the University of Groningen is to pursue a successful student career and to obtain a degree certificate that will give them access to the labour market. A student career is not restricted to education alone, it also includes the University's social environment. There are obstacles along the path for each and every student. The introduction of the student loan system and the Binding (Negative) Study Advice (BSA) has made this path narrower, and students now bear more personal responsibility for any delays involved. The path has also become more crowded, as student numbers have grown. Students with a performance disability, who were already in a vulnerable position, have been impacted even more severely by this reduced freedom of action. While the University of Groningen's current student policy provides guidelines and structure, developments within the university and elsewhere have prompted the authorities to draw up a new plan. Developments in society have shaped a new context, one that calls for a greater focus on international students and on developments in medical diagnostics, for example. In addition, measures to implement the University of Groningen's strategic goal of inclusivity need to be expanded, as do efforts to implement the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. In drafting this new plan, the University of Groningen wants to smooth the paths of students with a performance disability. At the same time, it aims to introduce upgrades that will enable students to study without restrictions.

Any policy for students with a performance disability involves various dilemmas. It must find a balance between customized options and procedural uniformity, between providing the maximum possible support for individual students and the efficient use of time by staff, between the services provided by the institution and the areas for which student themselves are responsible. This policy plan sets out guidelines for greater clarity, while the policy recommendations are designed to achieve balance. This does not conclude any debate about the responsibilities of students and those of the institution. However, the positive outcomes of providing effective support for students with a performance disability are clear: preventing problems (including study-related issues) instead of trying to fix them afterwards, mitigating study-related stress and study delays, improving the feasibility of the curriculum, greater satisfaction, and lower drop-out rates.

Section 1 of this policy plan describes the context of the background to – and the justification of – this evaluation of current policy and of the role played by the University of Groningen. This is followed, in Section 2, by a description of the target group and the objectives. Section 3 gives details of the introduction of a new consultation model (the International Classification of Functioning, Disability and Health, or ICF). Section 4 spells out a renewed allocation of duties between students and University of Groningen staff. The section concludes with various recommendations for improvement. Sections 5 to 9 describe the bottlenecks that have been identified (and the corresponding recommendations) on a theme by theme basis. The concerns, recommendations and implementation steps are summarized at the end of each section. Section 10, which concludes this policy plan, puts forward an evaluation and monitoring procedure.

## 1. Context – background and accountability

### *The role of the University of Groningen*

#### **Core responsibilities**

As an institution for university education, the University of Groningen's core responsibilities are:

- monitoring the learning outcomes of course units within the curriculum;
- the academic development of students;
- preparing students for the labour market.

These core responsibilities delineate the university's duties and obligations. The University of Groningen's formal responsibility is to provide students with an academic (university-level) education, within a guaranteed quality framework, to prepare them for the labour market and for their role in society. Here, the term 'academic' means that students are able to master and apply academic skills independently, with initiative and with an academic attitude. The phrase 'quality framework' means that students are individually tested within a controlled training system to determine whether they have achieved all of their degree programme's learning outcomes. There is an inherent tension here between quality assurance and the teaching adjustments provided for students. 'Preparation for the labour market' means that any students who have been awarded a degree certificate are able to function independently in a work environment. These core responsibilities illustrate the minimum goals to be safeguarded by the University of Groningen, as an institution for university education.

The University of Groningen has a moral and social obligation to make education accessible. Students with a performance disability are a vulnerable and diverse group. They can use – and can expect – a helping hand from the University of Groningen. In 2004, a policy plan was drafted specifically for students with a performance disability. This plan set out objectives for improving the position of these students, guidelines for the allocation of duties to staff, and proposals for procedures.<sup>1</sup> A key factor underpinning the evaluation of current policy is the need for more specific, time-bound recommendations, objectives, and evaluation structures. In response to the 2004 policy plan, the Advisory Committee for Students with a Performance Disability (ACF) was established. This advisory committee serves the University Committee for Education (UCO). The ACF advises on the University of Groningen's policy with regard to students with a performance disability.<sup>2</sup> The ACF was involved in every phase of the development of the 2018 policy plan.

As a public institution, the University of Groningen is, to a certain extent, responsible for providing care to students. The University of Groningen is not tasked with providing long-term healthcare. In this context, the University of Groningen focuses on identifying problems among students, providing support within the curriculum, and short-term interventions with referral to care providers where there is a need for long-term care. In offering support, the University of Groningen is guided by its core responsibilities. This means that students with a performance disability that can be established by means of a medical diagnosis or medical certificate must, within reason, receive the support they need to follow the teaching programme. This may include provisions such as extra time during examinations and assistance in applying for funds in the event of a study delay. The advice given by study advisors and student counsellors about provisions is given individually, wherever possible. The aim is to offer customized solutions. Commonly used disability-provision combinations are standardized wherever

---

<sup>1</sup> *Performance disability? Position strengthened! University of Groningen's policy plan for students with a performance disability* (2004). Various evaluations and policy recommendations have since been carried out – such as an Institutional Action Plan (2006 and 2009), a survey among University of Groningen staff (2008), and a Degree Programme Feasibility Guideline for students with a Performance Disability (2010) – but not in the form of a policy plan.

<sup>2</sup> The ACF consists of staff members who, in the course of their work, engage with students with a performance disability, students from the target group, and a student nominated by the University Council. The student counsellor with a focus on students with a performance disability, the Confidential Advisor, and the student member of the Presidium of the University Council act as observers. The tasks of the Committee's official secretariat are performed by the Office of the University's Education and Students Department.

possible. At the same time, by the end of their degree programme, students must have met all of their learning outcomes and should be able to enter the labour market armed with a degree certificate. The learning outcomes and associated academic development and skills must be developed within the curriculum, and monitored by the degree programme's Board of Examiners.

### **The University of Groningen's Strategic Plan**

A comprehensive evaluation of the policy provides an opportunity to involve students with a performance disability in the University of Groningen's 2015-2020 Strategic Plan. This Strategic Plan's most relevant goals are inclusion, employability and teaching innovation, with the associated educational themes of active learning, social inclusion, research-driven education, internationalization, and preparation for the labour market.

### **Institutional accreditation**

Since 2011, the accessibility and feasibility of the curriculum for students with a performance disability has been included as an assessment criterion in the accreditation framework for institutions of higher education. Accordingly, policy regarding students with a performance disability was one of the key performance indicators in the University of Groningen's 2019 institutional accreditation.

### **Extra layer of support associated with teaching**

One of the University of Groningen's core responsibilities is to provide students with the necessary support for following course units and sitting examinations. In addition to support for teaching, the University of Groningen offers extra support in the form of courses given by the Student Service Centre (SSC). This support is above and beyond support for the curriculum and quality assurance (the assessment system for degree programmes). Accordingly, it is outside the standard support programme that is funded from tuition fees. This is why this layer is characterised as 'extra', as students may occasionally be asked to make a personal financial contribution. The additional support offered by the University of Groningen includes the following services:

- Student Service Centre (SSC) – training courses such as planning skills and mindfulness;
- student community support – subsidizing study associations and student associations;
- Training courses provided by the Educational Support and Innovation department (ESI) – such as computer courses;
- Language Centre – language courses and an online Academic Skills portal;
- Career Services – internships and workshops.

## ***Societal developments***

### **Impacts of BSA and the student loan system**

The combined impact of the introduction of the student loan system in 2015, the abolition of the basic grant, and the introduction of the Binding (Negative) Study Advice (BSA) has placed extra pressure on students with a performance disability. The first year of a Bachelor's degree programme is already stressful enough, as students transition from secondary education to university education (combined with a new phase of life and an unfamiliar social environment). A performance disability appears to adversely impact the academic performance of University of Groningen students in the propaedeutic phase, despite the provisions that have been made available.<sup>3</sup> In addition, students with a performance disability have longer average loan periods, so they are exposed to greater financial risks. Additional factors in this regard are a higher total student debt due to study delays, later entry into the labour market (and, in many cases, only part-time work), and less opportunity to repay debts. These risks can cause students to drop out of their degree programme, to skip advanced programmes, or to avoid university education entirely. This contravenes the University of Groningen's obligation to provide education, nor is it in keeping with the university's goals of inclusion and talent development.

### **The introduction of Appropriate education**

The Dutch Appropriate Education Act for primary and secondary education was passed in 2012. By this

---

<sup>3</sup> Master's thesis in the Theory of Education; K. Bosman, entitled *'Moet het nadeel nog groter gemaakt worden?' Een onderzoek naar de invloed van een functiebeperking op studieprestaties van propedeusestudenten aan de Rijksuniversiteit Groningen ('Why create even more obstacles?' A study into the impact of a performance disability on the academic performance of first-year students at the University of Groningen (2014))*.

means, the government wants to ensure that pupils have a suitable learning environment, and that the number of pupils in special education is kept as small as possible. At the very least, schools must deliver basic provisions, such as assistance for dyslexic pupils and extra supervision for those with behavioural disorders. The introduction of appropriate education has helped more students with a performance disability to progress from secondary education to higher education. Pupils have become accustomed to provisions that, in many cases, are not available in higher education. The new policy was prompted by changed expectations among students and by the growth (in absolute terms) in the number of students with a performance disability.

### **Diagnostic shift**

The meaning of the term ‘performance disability’ has changed since the 2004 policy plan was drafted. Healthcare professionals have indicated that there has been an increase in the medicalization and pathologization of abnormalities. Individuals with dyslexia, for example, are being diagnosed at an earlier stage, often while they are still in primary school. The margin of normal behaviour has narrowed, especially with regard to psychological problems. This has led to a situation in which the assessment of medical certificates and the number (and type) of disabilities have become less transparent. This is not limited to study advisors and student counsellors. It also applies to the lecturers and to the students themselves. At the same time, a system of diagnostic and classification models has been set up within the healthcare system. This can be used to organize support by the University of Groningen, and to better structure, individualize and monitor the advisory process. This is specified in greater detail in Section 3.

### **Increasing incidence of (and focus on) psychological problems**

A survey conducted by the GfK research agency and commissioned by Interpolis showed that approximately 20 percent of the more than 1,000 young people questioned indicated that they suffered from psychological problems.<sup>4</sup> Furthermore, according to the National Student Welfare Network’s Student Welfare Action Plan, social developments and government choices with regard to care and education appear to play a part in ‘pressure to perform, in the growing incidence of burnout problems, in the adverse impact of social media on young people’s self image and the associated Fear of Missing Out (FOMO), and students’ increased use of concentration-enhancing drugs such as amphetamines and Ritalin (even by those who do not suffer from ADD or ADHD)’. The Student Welfare Action Plan has proposed five cornerstones for improvement: 1) awareness, 2) bonding and a safe academic climate, 3) prevention and early identification, 4) professionalization of lecturers and student supervisors, 5) available assistance and psychosocial interventions.<sup>5</sup> These cornerstones are also reflected in this policy plan.

The conclusions reached by GfK and the National Student Welfare Network are subject to various caveats. There are doubts about the validity of the survey. For instance, the survey is based on self-reporting rather than on the analysis of more objective medical diagnostic data and medical certificates. The results mainly reflect students’ experiences and complaints. The figures from the 2017 National Student Survey (NSE) do underscore the trend of a growing proportion of psychological problems.<sup>6</sup> Moreover, the satisfaction score of University of Groningen students with psychological complaints such as depression, psychosis, or a burnout is significantly lower than that of students with no psychological problems, with an emphasis on the student workload.<sup>7</sup> The SSC’s Psychological Counselling Service is also seeing a growth in the number of stress-related complaints, which is often associated with perfectionism, fear of failure, or procrastination. This often peaks at moments of transition, such as the transition from a Bachelor’s programme to a Master’s programme (when students have to write theses and the like).

---

<sup>4</sup> <https://www.rtlnieuws.nl/gezondheid/bijna-een-op-de-vijf-jongeren-kampt-met-ernstige-mentale-klachten>.

<sup>5</sup> National Student Welfare Network, *Student Welfare Action Plan* (2018).

<sup>6</sup> Among those University of Groningen students who indicated that they have a performance disability, for the first time “psychological problems” (this was “Dyslexia”) was the most common disability cited in the 2017 NSE. See also Appendix 4: Analysis of NSE scores.

<sup>7</sup> Research conclusions by R. van Zaane, a sociology student and intern at the University of Groningen.

While there is increasing student demand for support and information, few of these cases are substantiated with a medical certificate (or one that is verifiable, at any rate). Those students who are experiencing acute problems should seek help without delay, either from University of Groningen staff or from the standard healthcare system. In this connection, the University of Groningen is responsible for providing information and for reducing waiting times for appointments with the Psychological Counselling Service.

### **International students**

The number of international students at the University of Groningen is growing, and this is reflected by the number of international students with a performance disability. These individuals are a risk group

– international students often experience extra financial pressures (because they usually do not fall under the Dutch student loan system or the healthcare system), as well as a pressure to perform (family-based and culture-based). Conversely, some international students have higher expectations of the support that the University of Groningen is either able or willing to provide. Due to the Dutch funding systems for healthcare and education, it is difficult to provide extra support for international students. For example, while Dutch students can sometimes get access to a sign-language interpreter through the Employee Insurance Agency (UWV), this provision is not always available to international students. Expectation management and information provision are of key importance to international students and to the University of Groningen itself. The University of Groningen is increasingly becoming an international university, with a growing number of international students, both in relative and absolute terms. This represents a major change with regard to the current policy, as drafted in 2004.

### ***Student satisfaction***

The NSE (the largest survey among students in higher education) serves as a key indicator of problems.<sup>8</sup> The NSE scores for the survey group specifically for students with a performance disability, disorder, or illness facilitate comparisons with other Dutch institutions and between individual faculties at the University of Groningen. Annual trends provide a general indication of satisfaction. In recent years, the University of Groningen has fallen in the rankings, compared to other institutions. NSE scores are also used to indicate problems in specific groups of students, subjects, and degree programmes. The NSE is a key indicator of students' experiences and their level of satisfaction (or dissatisfaction, as the case may be). The NSE results for 2017 show that University of Groningen students are least satisfied with information provision, intake, and supervision (also compared to other institutions).<sup>9</sup>

### ***Legal context***

The University of Groningen has a legal obligation with regard to students with a performance disability. The Constitution (Article 23, paragraphs 1 and 2) states that everyone is free to receive an education. The Higher Education and Research Act (Article 7.13, paragraph 2, m) stipulates that degree programmes must specify (in their Teaching and Examination Regulations (OER)) 'the way in which students with a physical or sensory disability are given a reasonable opportunity to take examinations'. The Equal Treatment (Disability and Chronic Illness) Act states that there must be no discrimination regarding students with a performance disability. The Equal Treatment (Disability and Chronic Illness) Act also requires institutions of higher education to progressively ensure general accessibility for individuals with a disability or chronic illness, unless this creates a disproportionate burden. This principle of disproportionality or reasonableness is not clearly defined – the interests of the student and the impact of the adjustments on the educational institution must be weighed up. The University of Groningen is endeavouring to take prudent and customized steps in this direction, on an individual basis. The assessment takes place in consultations between the student and the study advisor/student counsellor/Board of Examiners, where the student has the option of lodging an appeal.

### **UN Convention**

<sup>8</sup> In 2018, more than 270,000 students at Dutch institutions of higher education completed the survey. Source and more information: <https://www.studiekeuze123.nl/nse>.

<sup>9</sup> See Appendix 4: Analyses of the 2017 NSE.

In addition to the above legislation for Dutch higher education, the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (which was ratified by the Netherlands in 2016) applies.<sup>10</sup> This convention creates a policy framework for institutions of higher education, which is aimed at enabling individuals with disabilities to participate equally in society. The UN Convention applies to all types of disabilities that can restrict people's participation in society. Specifically with regard to education (Article 24), the Convention calls for safeguards to ensure that the education system is inclusive at all levels and that reasonable adjustments can be made for individuals with disabilities to enable them to receive education without discrimination and on an equal basis with others. To make the Convention valid, the Dutch government has passed two laws, one to approve the Convention and one to implement the Convention through an amendment to the Equal Treatment (Disability and Chronic Illness) Act. In an Implementation Plan (March 2017), the government defines the joint approach to be taken by the Dutch State and by administrative partners. Existing legislation and regulations form the starting point for each thematic field. The objective is to strengthen the application of existing rules and guidelines. With regard to the area of education, Dutch legislation remains valid – the obligations associated with education are set out in the Higher Education and Research Act. In keeping with the UN Convention, the Dutch government is working on a Digital Accessibility Decree to implement the EU Directive for accessibility of websites and mobile applications, which came into effect in 2016.<sup>11</sup>

The Netherlands Institute for Human Rights monitors the implementation of the UN Convention in the Netherlands. It has concluded that the higher education sector is already focusing on making education more inclusive and on supporting students with a performance disability.<sup>12</sup> At the same time, according to the Netherlands Institute for Human Rights, there are still many general challenges in higher education, such as:

- lecturers do not always recognize a student's disabilities, and do not know how to proceed;
- while student counsellors have explored the issue of support, other staff have done too little in this regard;
- institutions and lecturers are unsure about the scope they have to adapt tests and examinations;
- staff sometimes have doubts about the diagnoses.

In summary, within the legal context, the University of Groningen must draw up a plan that specifies its policy with regard to students with a performance disability. The University of Groningen must, within reason, afford all students equal opportunities or equal treatment. The meaning of 'within reason' must be tested on a case-by-case basis, once the requisite adjustments and/or provisions have been identified. The UN Convention also calls for inclusive education to be guaranteed and promoted, which is in line with the University of Groningen's strategic goals for 2015-2020. The Netherlands Institute for Human Rights has identified various general challenges in Dutch higher education. These challenges and recommendations are also evaluated in this policy plan and, where possible, reformulated into recommendations.

---

<sup>10</sup> <https://www.rijksoverheid.nl/binaries/rijksoverheid/documenten/brochures/2016/12/23/vn-verdrag-inzake-de-rechten-van-personen-met-een-handicap/>

<sup>11</sup> <https://www.digitoegankelijk.nl/beleid/wet-en-regelgeving/vanaf-2018-besluit-digitale-toegankelijkheid>

<sup>12</sup> Netherlands Institute for Human Rights, *UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities in the Netherlands 2017. Annual report on compliance with the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities in the Netherlands* (December 2017).

## 2. Target group and objectives

### *Target group*

This policy plan is primarily, and at the very least, relevant to:

- students (or prospective students) with a performance disability;
- University of Groningen staff who may have to deal with students with a performance disability, such as student counsellors, study advisors, lecturers, the Psychological Counselling Service, members of the Board of Examiners, support services staff, administrators, Office of the Confidential Advisor, et cetera.

### **Size of the target group – students with a performance disability**

According to the government, at least 15% of all Dutch people have one or more disabilities.<sup>13</sup> There is a wide range of disabilities: visual and hearing disabilities, diabetes, ADHD (or ADD), chronic muscle diseases, addictions, being confined to a wheelchair, dyslexia, autism, et cetera. How large is the group of students with a performance disability in higher education? In its 2017 annual report, the Centre for Higher Education Information stated that, in the context of the 2017 NSE, more than 39,000 respondents (14%) out of a total 280,000 students indicated that they have one or more performance disabilities. The percentage of students who indicate that they have one or more disabilities is highest in the Bachelor's programmes at universities of applied sciences (16.3%) and lowest in the Master's programmes at traditional universities (9.7%). The results of the NSE indicate that these percentages have been increasing slightly for many years, at both universities of applied sciences and traditional universities.<sup>14</sup>

While these figures are indicative, they are based solely on students' statements and not on established medical diagnoses or medical certificates. Based on the NSE percentage, it is not possible to determine how many of these students actually want support from the University of Groningen. Not every student with a performance disability requires provisions. The University of Groningen does not keep a record of which students have a performance disability. Accordingly, the University of Groningen is not aware of the exact numbers of students per type of disability. However, the experiences of student counsellors, lecturers, and study advisors indicate that the number of students with a performance disability at the University of Groningen has grown since the 2004 policy plan. They also see a shift towards more international students with a performance disability, dyslexics, and students with psychological problems. Based on the above, the percentage of University of Groningen students with a performance disability is probably around 10% of the entire student population.

### **Practical aspects of the target group – students with a performance disability**

In practice, some students at the University of Groningen indicate that their ability to follow the teaching programme is impacted by a disability (in general, the student must supply a formal medical diagnosis or medical certificate to back up their claim) and request support in this connection. In addition, account must be taken of students with a chronic disability, with a sporadic or temporary disability, with a disability that only arose during the student's studies, and with a disability that varies in intensity. Any University of Groningen student can request advice from study advisors and student counsellors concerning options for provisions within the curriculum and for additional support through SSC training courses, for example.

### *Method*

The Advisory Committee for Students with a Performance Disability (ACF) continuously evaluates

<sup>13</sup> <https://www.rijksoverheid.nl/onderwerpen/rechten-van-mensen-met-een-handicap>.

<sup>14</sup> Centre for Higher Education Information, annual report entitled "Studeren met een Functiebeperking 2017 ("Studying with a Performance Disability 2017") commissioned by the 'Handicap + Studie' centre of expertise.

current University of Groningen policy with regard to students with a performance disability. In 2017, as part of the preparations for a new plan, the ACF identified various bottlenecks in the current policy. A project plan has now been drawn up, which is partly based on these bottlenecks. Sources consulted regarding additional indicators include experts (or lay experts), the UN Convention, scientific studies, and the results of the NSE (see Appendix 2: Sources). Based on a SWOT analysis (see Appendix 3), the key bottlenecks have now been identified and policy recommendations have been formulated. The Advisory Committee for Students with a Performance Disability was consulted at every phase during the development of the policy plan.

### *Policy plan objectives*

---

The following objectives were formulated from the background to the policy plan, from indications and associated policy recommendations, from the assessment, and from source consultations:

<b>Background</b>	<b>Objective</b>
-Ambiguity regarding diagnostic categories and changes in the diagnostic criteria for disorders (or functional disorders) -Changes in the composition of the target group and an increase in its size	-Standardization of intake, supervision, and recommendations regarding support via ICF
Student satisfaction and indications from University of Groningen staff	-Describing and clarifying the allocation of duties and guidelines concerning responsibilities
-Internationalization of the student population -Student satisfaction	-Streamlining information provision, with an extra focus on international students -Linking students' expectations to the available options at the University of Groningen
Student satisfaction about teaching and support	-The professionalization of staff and structuring cooperation -Enhancing the SSC's role and profile (and those of its offerings)
The UN Convention and the University of Groningen's Strategic Plan	Promoting inclusive education
Outdated nature of the current policy plan (2004) and Institutional Assessment	Set frameworks for the planning period and evaluation procedures

### 3. Advising students: ICF model

#### *Delineation of terminology*

Terms such as disability, performance disability, disorder, and chronic illness are often used interchangeably. The same goes for disability and impairment. The differences in meaning between these terms are, nevertheless, of great importance. A disorder is the absence of – or deviation from – a psychological, physiological, or anatomical structure or functionality (such as a visual impairment). A disorder can lead to a performance disability – reduction or loss of the ability to perform an activity (such as not being able to read a text during an examination). Suffering from a disorder does not automatically impact a student’s ability to follow a teaching programme. For the sake of consistency, this policy plan uses the term “performance disability”. “Provisions” refers to the support given to students by the University of Groningen (such as extra time during examinations). The term ‘medical certificate’ refers to a medical (or paramedical) certificate or to a medical diagnosis.

#### *ICF model*

##### **Description of the model**

In essence, support provided by the University of Groningen (or identifying the type of support needed) must be a conclusion based on a medical diagnosis or medical certificate concerning a disability that impacts the student’s ability to follow the teaching programme. By actively involving students in the advisory process, the University of Groningen is able to offer more coherent and effective support. At the University of Groningen, the process of advising students already takes place on an individual basis. As yet, however, this does not make use of a structured, standard framework. This can lead to differences in the advisory process and in the way in which provisions are allocated. That, in turn, can lead to ambiguity for both students and staff. For this reason, it is recommended that the International Classification of Functioning, Disability and Health (ICF model) be adopted by study advisors, the Psychological Counselling Service, and student counsellors as the standard model when they are called upon to give advice to students.

The ICF, which was developed by the World Health Organization (WHO), is a medical and social framework that many countries use to define disorders. It is a standardized classification or categorization of human functioning that is not based solely on the disorder itself. In the model, functioning or participation are assessed in terms of various neutrally worded factors, after which conclusions are drawn from diagnoses. The ICF defines three fields of human disability: 1) the organism, i.e. functional and anatomical, 2) activities and 3) social context. The model can be used to distinguish between various functional levels:

- functions/capabilities;
- activities/skills;
- social participation;
- perceptions of wellbeing.

The ICF can be used to identify interactions between external factors and a student’s personal factors, disabilities, and participation problems. The ICF is a discussion-based model that, in consultation with the student, generates an overview of where, and in what way, the latter is disabled (see also Appendix 5 for a diagrammatic representation).

##### **Intended effect**

Advising students in compliance with the ICF model is in keeping with an inclusive and personal intake process. At the same time, it enables the University of Groningen to provide more coherent advice. The ICF offers a standard framework for defining disabilities. This, in turn, facilitates communication between student counsellors, study advisors, the Psychological Counselling Service, and the students themselves (and, possibly, with the standard healthcare system). In addition, the ICF is an instrument that encourages students to engage in reflection (or self-reflection) – students are expressly involved in the process of seeking the right kind of support. The ICF model is internationally recognized, and is already being used in the healthcare system. It is relatively easy to

set up – training courses for study advisors, student counsellors, and the Psychological Counselling Service can pave the way for a smooth introduction.

### **Period for which provisions are allocated**

The ICF provides tools for advising on the allocation of temporary provisions and procedures, as an incentive to work towards solutions. In the event of temporary disabilities, the provision should, where possible, be aimed at creating solutions in a time-bound period, with the option of tweaking a provision where possible. This requires an interview with the student, and is only possible if the disability in question is (or might be) of a temporary nature. In the case of chronic disabilities, provisions are generally allocated for the entire period of the student's studies.

### **Advice based on medical diagnoses/certificates**

An assessable medical certificate is an absolute precondition for the use of the ICF model. Accordingly, medical diagnoses or certificates provide a basis for the advice given (and for the allocation of provisions) by the University of Groningen. In the case of psychiatric disorders in particular, medical certificates have become much more complex and complicated. Thus, in the case of psychiatric disorders, it is recommended that the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM-5) be used as a classification system for the assessment of medical certificates. The University of Groningen is determined to be as scrupulous as possible when conducting such assessments. If they are in any doubt about the assessment of a medical diagnosis or medical certificate, study advisors should refer students to the student counsellors, who have considerable collective expertise and experience in assessing medical certificates. If necessary, student counsellors can obtain further advice from the University of Groningen's occupational physician, from the Psychological Counselling Service, or from a health service psychologist. If there is no medical certificate or diagnosis (for example, if a student develops complaints during their degree programme), the study advisor or student counsellor will advise them on how best to proceed, which may involve referring them to an institution that can provide diagnosis or treatment.

Any medical certificates in languages other than Dutch must be of practical use, and verifiably authentic for University of Groningen staff. International medical certificates are valid, provided that they are legible and that they are drawn up in accordance with DSM-5, for example. If necessary, the University of Groningen's Language Centre can translate medical certificates, however the costs involved will be charged to the student in question.

<b>Indication/point for improvement</b>	<b>Recommendation/goal</b>	<b>Implementation</b>	<b>Priority</b>
Advising students not in accordance with a standard framework	-Use the ICF model -One of the ESI's workshops for a smooth introduction (one morning/afternoon)	-Study advisors, student counsellors, the Psychological Counselling Service, Boards of Examiners -ESI + occupational physician	High
Provisions neither adaptive nor time-bound	Add time taken to allocate provision to recommendations	Study advisors, student counsellors, Psychological Counselling Service, Boards of Examiners	Medium
Ambiguity regarding medical certificates	Recommendations are generally based on medical diagnoses and medical certificates (possibly translated), DSM-5 for psychological problems	Study advisors, student counsellors, Psychological Counselling Service (perhaps also the occupational physician)	Medium

## 4. Renewed allocation of duties

Students feel that there is insufficient supervision. As a result, they often don't know where they need to go or what options are available to them at the University of Groningen. University of Groningen staff also indicate that the allocation of responsibilities is sometimes unclear. Accordingly, this section sets out a new allocation of duties for both staff and students, followed by recommendations on how to provide more effective support. Recommendations for professionalization are discussed in the next section.

### *Students (and prospective students)*

#### **Notification**

It is the responsibility of students themselves to notify the authorities about their performance disability, to provide supporting evidence, and to seek support from the University of Groningen. This can be done via Studielink before and/or during the degree programme, by making an appointment with the study advisor of the student's degree programme (at the faculty) or with a student counsellor from the SSC (the main University of Groningen organization). Students with medically diagnosed disabilities must hand in their medical certificate personally. The burden of proof in such cases lies with the student. If there is no medical diagnosis or medical certificate – for instance if a student develops problems during their degree programme, or if it is not possible to provide support (within reason), the study advisor or student counsellor will advise on the steps to be taken and may refer the student to a diagnostic institution or healthcare provider or to the Municipality, for example.

#### **Personally supervised transfer from secondary school**

At the University of Groningen, prospective students find themselves in unfamiliar surroundings. Here, the allocation of duties and the available options are very different from those that they were used to at secondary school. Students have to take on more responsibility. Thus, the University of Groningen urges prospective students to make an appointment as soon as possible and to seek advice. If they wish, they can do so before starting their degree programme. At secondary school, there are often short lines of communication with teachers who can offer practical support. The parents or supervisors of students with a performance disability are welcome to accompany the prospective student to an initial meeting with the study advisor or student counsellors, for the purpose of obtaining information. This reinforces personally supervised transfers, and helps to clarify expectations and the available options for all those involved. Current legislation and regulations with regard to the sharing of information mean that the University of Groningen is not permitted to communicate information about a student to anyone except the student in question. Accordingly, the student's parents or supervisors will not receive any personal details about the student from the University of Groningen.

#### **Submitting a request**

Following a meeting with the study advisor or student counsellor, a *recommendation* will be made. Based on the recommendation made by the study advisor or student counsellor, students will personally submit a formal request to their degree programme's Board of Examiners that the special provision be allocated, unless otherwise agreed and recorded in writing.

### *Study advisors (primary point of contact)*

The degree programme's study advisor is the primary point of contact for students who are seeking support. Each degree programme has one or more study advisors, and individual study advisors can be linked to several different degree programmes. Study advisors can provide expert advice in response to questions about the degree programme and scheduling. They perform a faculty-based and degree-programme-based coaching role for students. Wherever possible, the study advisor is the student's regular contact. Study advisors actively make appointments with students, following official notification of the performance disability in question. They also play a part in indicating problems. This role is based on Progress, the system used to monitor the academic performance of University of Groningen students. Any students who experience study delays in excess of 15 ECTS credit points will be contacted by a study advisor, who will refer them to the student counsellors. This is in connection with the student's possible entitlement to the Graduation Fund Scheme. Students may be exempted from the BSA, due to personal

or special circumstances. The study advisor advises students about the standard provisions. In the event of complex problems, the study advisor will refer the student to the SSC regarding potential financial arrangements and for the assessment of (or doubts concerning) medical certificates. Study advisors are prohibited from taking on a dual role as study advisor and member of the Board of Examiners. At most, study advisors can serve on a Board of Examiners in an advisory capacity, or they may be authorized to allocate provisions, but they are not permitted to serve as members or as administrative secretaries. This is to enable them to conduct independent, confidential interviews with students.

### ***Central support: Secondary point of contact***

#### **Student Service Centre – team of experts**

The SSC makes up the central University of Groningen team of experts that provides advice on student support.

#### **Student counsellors**

Student counsellors operate independently of degree programmes, assess complex medical certificates, and provide information to students (and in response to requests from study advisors) about extra provisions, funds, and other financial arrangements. For instance, they can also help students to access additional forms of government support (DUO (Dienst Uitvoering Onderwijs; the Education Executive Agency), the Municipality, or the UWV). Based on a one-on-one interview with the student, the student counsellor will make recommendations regarding the provisions that can be allocated. Student counsellors only offer recommendations, they do not decide on the actual allocation of provisions. Unless agreed otherwise in writing, students must personally submit a request for the provision (accompanied by the recommendation) to the Board of Examiners, and report this to the study advisor. As well as providing information to first-year students and to counsellors at secondary schools, the student counsellors can present training courses for University of Groningen staff. In addition, student counsellors provide support for ‘study buddies’ (senior students from the same degree programme who provide guidance to students with a performance disability).

#### **Psychological Counselling Service**

The Psychological Counselling Service offers short-term treatment, i.e. a limited number of sessions. If, once a diagnosis has been reached, it emerges that the problem is too complex (or too specialized in nature) to be treated by the Psychological Counselling Service in no more than five sessions, then the student in question will be referred to specialists at other institutions. Such students are then referred, via their GP, to the mental healthcare services or to independent practices. The Psychological Counselling Service does not draw up medical certificates, as its role is restricted to treatment alone. The Psychological Counselling Service also provides training courses for study advisors on how to recognize psychiatric disorders. It is also involved in setting up training courses for lecturers on (and investigations into) dealing with autism. In addition, it is involved in the ‘Study Buddy’ project, it provides peer support to study advisors, and offers advice in emergencies.

#### **SSC trainers**

The trainers provide supportive workshops and training courses for students, PhD students and staff, on topics such as the prevention of burnouts, dealing with study-related stress, fear of failure, procrastination, and academic skills. This package is in the context of the ‘support layer’, outside the regular curriculum. Accordingly, students may sometimes be asked to make a personal contribution to fund the courses (or course development), and as a way of encouraging them to attend.

#### **Office of the Confidential Advisor**

Students can consult the Office of the Confidential Advisor if they have been affected by undesirable conduct or subjected to unequal treatment. The Netherlands has rules that prohibit discrimination on the basis of religion, philosophy of life, political opinion, race, gender, nationality, heterosexuality or homosexuality, marital status, working hours, disability or chronic illness, and age at work. Undesirable conduct involves comments and professional attitudes (or, sometimes, even about the absence of these) that others perceive to be undesirable and humiliating. Sexual harassment, bullying (including ignoring and excluding people), aggression, violence, and discrimination are all forms of undesirable conduct. The Confidential Advisor can be consulted confidentially. This advisor is not bound to a specific faculty,

is independent and has access to all the necessary information.

### *Curriculum organization*

**Lecturers and mentors (student mentors/tutors) One role of lecturers and mentors such as student mentors and tutors is to indicate the existence of problems at the University of Groningen. They are the key actors in indicating problems with** After

all, most of the direct contact with students takes place during – or in association with – teaching activities. Students with an existing disability should be placed ‘front and centre’ as much as possible. Before the start of the degree programme, they should be given instruction and information by the University of Groningen and in the course of consultations with study advisors and/or student counsellors. Students who are temporarily impacted by a disability (such as a broken bone), or those who are suspected of having a performance disability, should be referred by lecturers and mentors to the SSC study advisor as soon as possible. In the context of the BSA, extra intensive study progress supervision is provided for first-year Bachelor’s students. Here, student mentors and tutors support lecturers and study advisors, so they need to be able to communicate effectively with one another. This coordination must be discussed afresh every year, for each degree programme.

### **Boards of Examiners**

Boards of Examiners are legally obliged to monitor the learning outcomes of degree programmes. In addition, they are required to decide, at degree programme level, on provisions related to examinations (customized mode of assessment and duration of examinations, such as providing extra time during examinations). In accordance with the Higher Education and Research Act, every degree programme has a Board of Examiners. This body is responsible for determining, in an objective manner, whether individual students satisfy the conditions set out in the Teaching and Examination Regulations (OER) with regard to the knowledge, understanding and skills required to gain a degree in that degree programme. It does so on the basis of the ‘Manual for Boards of Examiners’ and the ‘Model Rules and Regulations for Boards of Examiners’ The provisions recommended for students by student counsellors are assessed by Boards of Examiners. A written record is kept of any decisions concerning provisions, which are communicated to the student. If their application is rejected, students have the option to lodge an appeal with the Board of Appeal for Examinations. If a recommendation is adopted and the provision allocated, then the student is entitled to that provision and it must actually be implemented. If their application is rejected, it is recommended that the student in question be invited to attend an interview with the Board of Examiners. Members of the Board of Examiners are appointed by the Faculty Board on the basis of their expertise in the field of the relevant degree programme or cluster of degree programmes. Members of the Board of Examiners take training courses and participate in peer support programmes to keep their expertise up to standard.

### **Director of the Teaching Institute**

If additional and/or customized staffing is required to provide adapted teaching, the faculty’s Director of the Teaching Institute will decide on this matter.

### **Faculty Board**

The Faculty Board appoints the members of the Board of Examiners and takes any decisions involving major modifications to buildings or teaching adaptations, in accordance with the principle of reasonableness. The first question is whether the requested provisions are available at the Faculty, which can be determined via the Health, Safety & Environment coordinator for example. If that is not the case, then the SSC and the Accessibility Working Group will determine whether a provision is available elsewhere in the University or whether arrangements can be made to provide it. If no such provision is available, the study advisor and the student will submit a reasoned request to the Faculty Board, which will then reach a decision.

### **Educational institutes and programme coordinators**

Educational institutes and programme coordinators ensure that students actually receive the provisions they have been allocated. At the University of Groningen, this process is managed at departmental level, so the way in which it is organized may vary from one department to another. If provisions are to be delivered effectively, it is vital for educational institutes and programme coordinators to be informed, at the earliest opportunity, about any provisions that have been allocated. They, in turn, must pass this on

to lecturers and/or examination invigilators as soon as possible. This will enable the latter to make better allowance for such students when teaching and holding examinations.

### *Recommendations for enhancing the allocation of duties*

#### **Enhancing the role of the SSC**

The SSC already serves as the University of Groningen's central disability office, due to the pool of expertise available among its student counsellors, and to the additional range of workshops and training courses that it provides for students. The profile of the SSC in general and of this role in particular need to be enhanced, in cooperation with the Communication Office. The SSC is particularly busy in the run-up to the start of the academic year and during examination periods. According to the students, it takes too long to get an appointment with a student counsellor; some students sit their first examinations just a few weeks after the start of the academic year, at which time they need to make use of provisions. At the start of an academic year, dyslexia certificates are assessed within the central organization wherever possible, by the student counsellors. The Psychological Counselling Service encounters the greatest pressure, as a vulnerable group of domestic and international students seeks their help. In 2018, their waiting times grew to as much as six weeks. At the same time, there is reason to boost the SSC's profile. After all, the policy plan's recommendations on enhancing the role of the SSC and the growing number of psychological problems are expected to increase the SSC's workload. It is, therefore, recommended that:

1. at the request of the SSC, Boards of Examiners should be flexible with regard to the allocation of interim provisions during examination periods early in the academic year;
2. the permanent staff of student counsellors and Psychological Counselling Service staff should be expanded and that support provided by student assistants before the start of each academic year should be facilitated;
3. the Communication Office should be allowed to offer more support to the SSC.

#### **Standardizing the processing of medical certificates – dyslexia pilot project**

Study advisors and student counsellors spend a great deal of time assessing dyslexia certificates. It is recommended that efforts be made to mitigate this workload by standardizing and computerizing the advisory process with regard to commonly used provisions (and the processing of such provisions) wherever possible. The greatest gains can be made by means of a pilot project designed to process dyslexia certificates. An online application form setting out a list of the requirements to be met by dyslexia certificates would save a lot of time. The completed forms should be sent to the student counsellors for assessment, and saved in a secure facility. University of Groningen experts can assist the SSC in the work of drawing up guidelines and assessing reports. Procedural proposal:

- if a dyslexia certificate is approved, a written recommendation must be sent to the student. The student must then take this to their study advisor and/or Board of Examiners, unless otherwise agreed;
- if a dyslexia certificate is rejected, the student has the option of contacting the SSC for any additional information or for the purpose of supplying additional information;
- if the computerized process proves to be effective, it should be expanded to include other performance disabilities.

#### **Publishing a flowchart and details of the allocation of duties at the website**

Students and staff are not always clear about the allocation of duties with regard to providing support for students with a performance disability. They feel that the information provided at the website, about the steps to be taken by students, is also unclear. In the interests of clear and sustained communication, it is recommended that a flow chart, details of the allocation of duties, and an FAQ section be published on the University of Groningen website, and on the faculty pages as well. This should be actively disseminated to students and University of Groningen staff.

#### **Improve the indication of problems by teaching staff**

Lecturers, programme working group supervisors, tutors and mentors indicate problems and provide support, which makes it less likely that students will drop out. Effective communication with the study advisors is essential here. This can be enhanced by including details of the University of Groningen's policy and organization regarding students with a performance disability in the lecturer's manuals and

instructions provided by the faculties. Further training for lecturers, by means of the SSC's training courses, can help them to recognize students' problems. The intended effect is twofold – it helps lecturers to adapt their teaching such that they are better able to instruct students, while also helping to ensure that students obtain the right support at the earliest possible stage. SSC training courses are intended to encourage people to indicate problems, both in the curriculum and elsewhere (for a more detailed recommendation on this matter, see the next section entitled 'Professionalization').

**Establish the Board of Examiners' authorization to allocate a provision** Boards of Examiners are authorized to rule that the study advisor (or another person acting on their behalf) has the authority to sign documents to allocate certain provisions. Currently, however, this is often not clearly established. Boards of Examiners must provide a written and time-bound mandate for a list of exemptions. This accelerates the practical allocation of provisions within the rules governing provisions that were drawn up by Boards of Examiners and within the existing functional frameworks used by faculties and degree programmes.

### **Exploring the potential of student files and the standardization of the Progress system**

It is both undesirable and impractical to gather and store personal details about the performance disabilities of every single student. For this reason, details of the type of performance disability involved are not recorded by the University of Groningen. Study advisors and student counsellors do record details of appointments, notes, and provisions. However, that is not always the case, nor are the details set down in clear-cut terms – study advisors use ProgressWWW and/or ProgressNET, while student counsellors use STUF. Details of every University of Groningen staff member involved and the types of provisions concerned, as well as documents such as written recommendations, are recorded in a standardized module within Progress. This presents an opportunity to improve the communication between study advisors, student counsellors, and Boards of Examiners, and to create electronic student files. It means that students have to navigate their way through fewer service points, which speeds up the allocation of provisions. The use of Progress to record details of provisions more coherently provides a greater understanding of the numbers involved. The University of Groningen can use this to collect data on the provisions allocated, to indicate any bottlenecks, and to analyse trends. To this end, in cooperation with a new working group (that has yet to be set up) Progress should develop a module that offers the choice of a limited number of provisions. It should also offer the option of secure pages (secured with individual personnel rights) for staff members' personal notes. In line with privacy legislation, a reliable delineation of data and a strictly functional rights structure are required.

### **Portfolio managers / disability officers**

Internal communication at the University of Groningen needs to be fostered and higher profile points of contact need to be created. This will result in a quantum leap in the effectiveness of knowledge sharing and practical implementation. Faculty portfolio managers or disability officers can serve as inter-faculty network nodes (for student counsellors, for example) and as intra-faculty points of contact for students, lecturers, and study advisors. Given the emphasis on the practical implementation of provisions in their job descriptions, the staff of faculty education-support departments are the logical choice for such faculty positions. A consultation structure and digital community can be created for the purpose of sharing knowledge and best practices among disability officers, student counsellors with performance disability portfolios, and ESI staff who are members of the examination expertise team.

<b>Indication/point for improvement</b>	<b>Recommendation/goal</b>	<b>Implementation</b>	<b>Priority</b>
-Lack of clarity concerning the SSC's profile and role -Peak workload for the SSC and waiting lists for the Psychological Counselling Service	-Expand the staffing levels of student counsellors, the Psychological Counselling Service, and student assistants during periods of peak demand -Flexibility in granting interim provisions at the start of the academic year -Support by means of a communication plan	-Office - Boards of Examiners -COMM	High

Time-consuming processing of medical certificates	Standardizing and digitizing assessments, dyslexia pilot project	SSC + COMM	High
Ambiguity regarding allocation of duties	Publishing a flowchart, FAQ, and details of the allocation of duties at the website	SSC + COMM	Medium
Indicating problems in the area of teaching	Incorporating details of policy and the policymaking organization in lecturer's manuals and procedures	Faculties	Medium
The allocation of provisions is cumbersome	Authorization to allocate, unless recorded in writing and in a time-bound form	Boards of Examiners	Medium
Sluggish internal communication and a weak grasp of the extent of bottlenecks	Explore the potential of the student file + module (standardized) in Progress	Working group + Progress	Medium
Faculty differences, lack of knowledge sharing, expertise, and profile of support	Establish faculty disability officers with a digital community	Faculties + SSC	Medium

## 5. The professionalization of staff and the advisory process

### Competence Development for Study Advisors project (COSA)

There is no training programme for study advisors. That does not promote clarity: students encounter differences between one faculty and another, and the same goes for the advice offered by study advisors. In July 2014, the Board of the University approved a proposal for the Competence Development for Study Advisors project (COSA). Based on this proposal, a pilot project was launched in January 2015. Here, a group of study advisors proceeded to identify individual professional qualities (basic competences and elective competences) in the field of study advice, based on a portfolio. These included conducting advisory and counselling interviews, and giving advice about teaching and training.

1. By making participation in COSA mandatory for study advisors, the University of Groningen can take a major step towards the professionalization of support for students with a performance disability, by enhancing this process and making it more coherent.
2. A competence module that focuses specifically on students with a performance disability (regulations concerning these individuals and on how to deal with them) represents a valuable addition to COSA's basic competences.

### Lecturer training, both as part of the University Teaching Qualification (UTQ) and as a separate module

The University of Groningen offers a wide range of courses for the professional development of lecturers. However, there is no specific support for teaching processes involving students with a performance disability (modes of assessment and inclusive education, indicating problems and referring students to study advisors and to the SSC). The SSC can cooperate with the ESI to develop such a course for lecturers. This course can be offered as a separate module and it can be included in the University Teaching Qualification (UTQ) as an elective. The UTQ is a certificate of didactic competence for university lecturers. University of Groningen lecturers must satisfy the following four quality requirements in order to be awarded the UTQ: 1) developing (redeveloping) teaching, 2) teaching and supervising students, 3) examining and assessing, and 4) evaluating. All of these quality requirements oblige lecturers to take a different approach when dealing with students with a performance disability. However, this is not specifically reflected in the criteria for obtaining a UTQ.

### An English language course and intercultural skills for Psychological Counselling

**Service staff** The Psychological Counselling Service feels that the number of students (particularly international students) with psychological problems has grown. Advising and treating international students is a complex matter, due to the cultural differences and backgrounds involved. Students from different backgrounds sometimes have specific complaints and types. Giving Psychological Counselling Service staff extra assistance in developing their

English language proficiency and intercultural competences would improve the support for international students still further. Customized training courses in English and intercultural skills is a recommended option here, as these will help Psychological Counselling Service staff to treat and, where necessary, refer students.

### **Training modules for mentors, student mentors, and tutors**

Mentors, student mentors, and tutors play a key part in programme working groups – indicating problems among students and referring students to the right form of support. A mandatory training course would enhance and professionalize their ability to indicate problems.

<b>Indication/point for improvement</b>	<b>Recommendation/goal</b>	<b>Implementation</b>	<b>Priority</b>
Lack of a standard basic training course for study advisors	Mandatory COSA with the addition of a module for students with a performance disability	SSC + ESI	Medium
Potential enhancement of inclusive education and of lecturers' role in indicating problems	Set up a training module for students with a performance disability (separate and as a UTQ elective)	SSC + ESI	Medium
Increase in number of international students with psychological problems	English language + intercultural training course competences for the Psychological Counselling Service.	Language Centre and/or external training institute specializing in psychiatry (such as the Regional Institutions for Continuing Education and Training (RINO))	Medium
The role of tutors and mentors in indicating problems	Mandatory training course	SSC or Faculty-based	Medium

## **6. Instruction and information provision**

### *Website menus and communication support*

The University of Groningen's website is a key source of information for students. Relevant details are disseminated across a number of locations, featuring separate menus for the SSC, study advisors, and faculty provisions. The external and internal websites differ in this regard. Any relevant details posted on the private intranet for University of Groningen students (the student portal) must also be available on the external website. In this way they should be accessible to prospective students and to anyone else who is looking for information. International students must have a direct link to the web menu for students with a performance disability. The appointment system/intake form must be immediately visible at the SSC's website and in the web menu for students with a performance disability. These details should be interconnected and more coherently edited. It is recommended that the website be renewed by the SSC, in cooperation with the Communication Office. The editing of disseminated information should subsequently be entrusted to the SSC, as a centre of expertise.

### *Transition from pre-university education to university education*

#### **Strengthen the secondary school network**

The sooner that students (and prospective students) are able to find their way around the University of Groningen's organization, the better they can be supported. There is further scope for engaging with prospective students, as well as with supervisors, school counsellors, and parents. The Pre-University Academy network and Communication/Education Information can be used to visit additional large-scale, general information sessions in the provinces of Groningen, Drenthe and Friesland (possibly in the context of other forms of information provision). This also results in expectation management among prospective students, parents and supervisors.

#### **The advisory role of study advisors and student counsellors in matching**

If a student meets the University of Groningen's entry requirements and those of their degree programme, the university has a legal obligation to treat all students equally. This is formulated in both the Higher Education and Research Act (Art. 7.13, paragraph 2 m) and in the Equal Treatment (Disability and Chronic Illness) Act. When admitting individuals to a degree programme, the University of Groningen does not discriminate on the basis of disability. However, it is often the case that the information provided to students does not include details of a degree programme's learning outcomes. This can lead to situations in which, even though they have met the entry requirements, it proves to be impossible for students to achieve the learning outcomes. Students can be more effectively advised about feasibility if they are consulted at an early stage, and given information about support options and the potential problems that may arise in different phases of the degree programme. When matching students with a University of Groningen degree programme, they should ideally be informed (as soon as possible) about the option of making an appointment with a study advisor and/or student counsellor. In addition, it should be emphasized that the University of Groningen's advice is not binding and that it is confidential. This advice certainly does not constitute a rejection of the student's application for admission.

### *Communication flows to student groups*

#### **International students**

International students with a performance disability are confronted by problems on two fronts. They find themselves in a new cultural environment, one that places performance disabilities in a different context than before. This may mean that their disability is accepted to a greater or even lesser degree than was the case in their home country and that it is labelled differently. Given that the number of international students at the University of Groningen is expected to increase, this group will continue to grow. International students are exposed to the greatest risk of problems when they are working on their thesis. This is due to the combination of pressure to perform and impending deadlines. Expectancy management helps to better accommodate and prepare these students, both by involving student counsellors at an earlier stage in registrations and by improving information provision. Providing information to international students and engaging with them pose extra problems. Furthermore, this group is subject to specific rights and regulations. Accordingly, these students will require an customized flow of communication from the SSC, supported by the Information Services department. Actively approach the group of Studielink applicants

When using Studielink to register for a degree programme, students can indicate that they have a performance disability and that they wish to receive additional information. A link to information at the University of Groningen website is attached to this question. These students expect additional information, but they are not always actively approached by the University of Groningen. Hence the recommendation that all these students should be:

- actively alerted, once again, to the existence of relevant information at the University of Groningen website. This should be done as soon as possible, rather than waiting until all registrations have been completed;
- actively invited to an information evening (by student counsellors);
- actively sent an invitation (by study advisors) to make a personal appointment, should the student so desire, as a way of mitigating potential barriers.

#### **More broad-based information provision – difference between chronic and temporary**

The start of a degree programme is a key moment in terms of information provision. The drawback, however, is that students are bombarded with large amounts of information all once. In the later Bachelor's phase, when the degree programme increasingly involves research assignments, collaborative assignments, and independent work, many problems arise or become more prominent. In these situations, students often do not know who to turn to for support. Students with a chronic performance disability benefit from extra supervision in the prospective study phase. Students who encounter problems during their degree programme, but who are not yet making use of any provisions, benefit from information that is easier to find and from accessible and active support at a later point in time. It is recommended that the SSC, in cooperation with the Communication Office, should draw up a general step-by-step plan for more active information provision throughout the entire study period. That could be managed centrally, via the student administration and the Student Portal, but also via the faculties.

### Information provision about psychological problems and stress

Students are increasingly demanding support for – and information about – psychological problems and stress. Granting students access to central information via the public website helps them (and prospective students) to find answers to questions – and to obtain assistance – more rapidly. It also enables them to locate the right people at the University of Groningen, in the event of a problem.

### Study advisors and the SSC – a higher profile and greater accessibility

Students indicate that the points of contact at the University of Groningen (study advisors and student counsellors) and support from the SSC are not always easy to find. Students don't know where they can get answers to their questions, and when. They also encounter barriers when seeking help. Study advisors usually attend introductory meetings for first-year students, but they are less prominent later on in the study period. It is recommended that study advisors and student counsellors be given a more distinct profile, and that the appointment system be made more accessible. One way in which this can be done is to bring study advisors and student counsellors into contact with working groups, mentor groups or learning communities, by means of small-scale meetings, depending on the organizational structure of the degree programmes.

Students feel that the supporting courses provided by the SSC should be given a more prominent profile. These courses are important for all students, not only those with a performance disability. The range of courses can be added to a “student support” menu under “student facilities”. These can also be more actively promoted, both at the external website and via the Student Portal. Various University of Groningen provisions or government subsidies are available to students with a performance disability, via the Graduation Fund Scheme. The SSC's can provide advice and expertise on these funding schemes. Students are required to meet with a student counsellor before any provisions can be allocated to them. Raising the profile of the SSC will make it easier for students to locate the financial provisions that the University of Groningen uses to provide support (such as extending loans by one year, extending additional grants by one year, extending the public transport student travel pass by one year, extending tuition fee credit by one year, a one-off discount of €1240 upon completion of a degree programme, and an additional contribution by the Municipality).

Indication/point for improvement	Recommendation/goal	Implementation	Priority
Information at the website is not sufficiently prominent	The University of Groningen's website will be renewed by COMM, then edited by the SSC	SSC + COMM	High
Prospective students' expectations are not in line with the support available from the University of Groningen	Expand information provision to secondary schools via the Pre-University Academy and Comm	SSC	Low
Learning outcomes are not taken into account when admitting students to degree programmes	Non-binding advice from study advisors and, possibly, from student counsellors	Information Services + Admissions Boards + study advisors + student counsellors	Low
There is insufficient engagement with international students	Separate communication flow for international students	Information Services + SSC + study advisors	Medium
Incomplete engagement with Studielink group	Issue invitations more actively: SSC for general information and study advisors for appointments	Information Services, SSC, study advisors	Medium
Information provision: difference between chronic and temporary	Communication template for distributed information provision	SSC + COMM	Low

Increased demand for support for those suffering from psychological problems and stress	Clarify central information and contacts via public website	SSC + COMM	Low
Profile and accessibility of contacts and additional support	Study advisors and the SSC (and its offerings) should have a higher profile and should be more easily accessible	Study advisors + SSC + COMM	Low

## 7. Inclusive education

### *Introduction: University of Groningen framework*

Since 2012, appropriate education has been a feature of secondary education. While schools have a duty of care in this regard, they themselves are responsible for the content and organization of education. To this end, secondary schools are funded by the government. No such scheme or funding is available in higher education. Nevertheless, the Netherlands Institute for Human Rights has advised the Dutch government to make higher education more inclusive by increasing accessibility, not only to buildings, but also to information, communication, and modes of instruction. This is in line with the University of Groningen's aim, as set out in its 2015-2020 Strategic Plan, to 'realize a stimulating, inclusive academic community in which students, PhD candidates and staff can develop their talents in cooperation with others and with the support of management and the organization'. For the University of Groningen, the envisaged framework for inclusive education can be summarized into three stages:<sup>15</sup>

1. **promote broad-based, inclusive forms of education.** Broad-based modes of instruction (such as Universal Design for Learning) that embrace the performance of as many students as possible, reduce the need for extra provisions. The principle with inclusive modes of instruction is to transfer information in different ways and to engage with students in different ways. This principle does seem to demand more time from lecturers. Teaching projects such as Learning communities and Flipped classroom provide options for more flexible and active modes of instruction.
2. **offering reasonable provisions in the educational environment.** Provisions are customized, and are recommended on an individual basis. At the University of Groningen, this will be achieved by means of personal sessions with students, involving student counsellors and study advisors. This approach will be reinforced and made more coherent by the introduction of the ICF model.
3. **an extra layer of support.** The University of Groningen has a range of support services and activities, such as academic skills courses and planning workshops at the SSC. These can be publicized more effectively.

Efforts to indicate problems and consult sources have generated a number of opportunities for promoting inclusivity. These opportunities are discussed in the next section.

### *Promoting more inclusive education*

#### **Flexibility of modes of assessment and study planning**

Boards of Examiners have the legal authority to monitor, define, and assess degree programmes' learning outcomes and modes of assessment. They are completely independent in this regard (by law, via the Higher Education and Research Act). Students feel that there is a degree of inflexibility in the adaptation of modes of assessment and study planning. This could be due to the need to complete one

---

<sup>15</sup> The support for students with ADHD and ASD (Autism Spectrum Disorder) provides some practical examples of how the three stages can be further specified. For students with ADHD, the associated problems impact their study skills and planning skills. For these students, it can be very helpful if they are informed about the schedule in good time. In students with ASD, their problems are concentrated around social skills and collaborative assignments. These problems soon become apparent in traditional modes of instruction and modes of assessment, but less so in activating modes of instruction. Based on: Dorien Jansen, *ADHD and ASD in Higher Education. Selecting and implementing effective reasonable accommodations*, Leuven (2017), p. 213-218.

course unit before starting another, for example. Students who are compelled to adopt a different pace of study benefit from a more flexible approach designed to prevent any study delays (or further delays). Moreover, course units' learning outcomes do not always correspond to the mode of assessment, while a different mode of assessment can help students with a performance disability. The learning outcomes of a Statistics course unit do not necessarily include an SPSS practical, but they do involve an understanding of statistical analysis methods. Where possible, input from student counsellors in training courses for members of the Board of Examiners and peer support groups can help to raise awareness among members of the Board of Examiners concerning the impact of different modes of assessment, as a way of adding an extra dimension to inclusive education. However, responsibility for the design of modes of assessment continues to reside with the Boards of Examiners.

---

### **Engaging with University of Groningen teaching projects**

Inclusion and diversity in students (or their backgrounds) adds to the value of teaching at the University of Groningen. Students who have the opportunity to study in a broad-based learning community acquire competences with regard to cooperation in mixed groups. Active and flexible modes of instruction provide opportunities for more inclusive education. There could be a greater focus on a range of University of Groningen teaching projects along these lines. The Learning Communities teaching project focuses on teaching collaborating groups of students for an extended period of time. Reflection on group functions and profiles means that there is also a focus on different talents. These days, Learning Communities are often either “in or out” – each community is created for a certain period of time. This curriculum organization has little scope for students with a higher risk of study delays or those with a different study pace, such as students with a performance disability. It is recommended that more attention be devoted to this issue. The Flipped classroom teaching project triggers the adoption of more active modes of instruction and cooperation. For some groups of students with a performance disability, this mode of instruction is more in keeping with their talents and learning modes.

### **Digitization of teaching (and of educational materials)**

The digitization of teaching (and of educational materials) gives students more scope for adopting different learning modes. After all, efficient digitization makes teaching independent of place and time. In many cases, students already have the hardware (e.g. laptops) and software (e.g. screen-reading software) needed to access digital environments. Accordingly, the University of Groningen is committed to making its own network and online teaching accessible to the personal computers of students and staff (*bring your own device*). Students can obtain assistance with their own computers and software from the Center for Information Technology (CIT)/ESI, however some have said that they have problems accessing this facility. Lecturers can access a great deal of information about digitization via the ESI, but even they are not always aware of the existence of this resource. It is recommended that steps be taken to encourage the digitization of teaching (and of teaching materials). As yet, the Nestor secure electronic learning and teaching environment is not being used for the widespread recording and digitized dissemination of lectures. The situation could be improved by making the availability of this option more widely known among lecturers. The individual faculties innovate and develop online teaching through e-learning tenders, in cooperation with CIT/ESI. Reports on these tenders can be grouped together and examined in detail to see if they contain any effective solutions for students with a performance disability. The profile and prominence of the CIT/ESI (and, thus, support for students and lecturers), can be enhanced by making it easier for people to locate the information at the website and by actively making its existence more widely known.

### **Computer-based testing**

The ESI's Computer-Based Testing Service supports the preparation, administration and aftercare of computer-based tests. Steps to encourage the use of computer-based testing make it easier to offer students a range of different modes of assessment and, by this means, to deliver more inclusive education. However, this also has its own problems, such as the legibility of screens for the visually impaired and taking tests in concentration rooms. Various faculties have carried out pilot projects in cooperation with the ESI. Here, tests were carried out on-site (at the faculty) at the same time as examinations were being held in the Aletta Jacobs Hall. This creates more options for providing

customized support to students. Time slots are a problem here, however, because it is more difficult to conduct simultaneous testing at the faculty when examinations take place in the evenings or at the weekend (the buildings are closed at these times or no staff members are available to act as supervisors). Another pilot project involves site-independent testing, such as that used for top athletes. In some cases, this can be an option for students with a performance disability as well. Provisions must be allocated in customized form, after consultation between the student and the study advisor/student counsellor and the ESI's examination expertise team. One general recommendation is that successful solutions and pilot projects should be shared. The faculties (or their educational institutes and programme coordinators) can contact the ESI for practical support with regard to testing. Study advisors and student counsellors can obtain information about examination options to enhance the advice they provide to students. Solutions and problems can be shared via a central digital platform operated by the ESI. This will make it possible to share solutions more effectively, while offering an overview of any bottlenecks and of the requisite amounts of materials and equipment. Due to the specific – and sometimes temporary – needs of students, it is recommended that the provisions be customized. The requisite software is often expensive. One way to cut costs is to use a pool of accounts and licences (for screen-reading software and speech-recognition software, for example) on specific University of Groningen laptops. This is subject to the condition that there is an opportunity to check the usability of the software, together with the student in question. Another condition is that the student must have an opportunity to try out the software before using it in an actual examination. In addition, it is sometimes possible to obtain a reimbursement or contribution from the UWV. A student counsellor can advise the student on such matters. Accordingly, this scheme must be discussed in detail by the student, the student counsellor, and the ESI. The laptops should be made available on request, and funded from central University resources for the procurement, expansion, and maintenance of technical provisions. It is recommended that the laptops at Zernike and those in the city centre be localized.

<b>Indication/point for improvement</b>	<b>Recommendation/goal</b>	<b>Implementation</b>	<b>Priority</b>
Inflexibility of modes of assessment and study schedules	Involve student counsellors in the training courses for members of the Board of Examiners	SSC + Boards of Examiners	Low
Engaging teaching projects with more inclusive education	Greater focus on Learning Communities and Flipped classroom	COMM + ESI	Medium
CIT/ESI provide support for students does not have a sufficiently high profile	Higher profile for CIT/ESI at the website	COMM	Low
The digitization of lectures makes teaching more accessible	Alerting lecturers to the option of recording lectures via ESI	Lecturers, on request	Low
The outcomes of current e-learning projects vary widely	Analysing and sharing best practices for students with a performance disability via a digital platform	ESI	Low
Encouraging computer-based testing (or modes thereof) among lecturers	Raising the profile of the ESI's Computer-Based Testing Service and sharing best practices via a digital platform	ESI + COMM	Medium
Purchasing licences and hardware for testing is very expensive	Pool software on laptops for general use	ESI + Demand managers	Low

## 8. Accessibility

### Accessibility Working Group

Students' accessibility problems are not limited to University of Groningen buildings, as they encounter the same issues on public transport and on the public highway. Access to University of Groningen buildings is changing, due to renovation work. It may also be impeded by various external factors. For instance, many of these structures are listed buildings. Moreover, decision-making authority in such cases does not always lie with the University of Groningen. That is the case with the Broerplein, which is situated between the University Library and the Academy Building. The University of Groningen is consulting the Municipality, with a view to making these symbolic main buildings accessible. Any figurative and literal limitations should be eliminated wherever possible. A working group was set up in 2017 to address these matters. Part of its brief was to assess the accessibility of University of Groningen buildings for people with disabilities that affect mobility, vision or hearing. Once that assessment is complete, the working group will draw up general accessibility guidelines for students, staff, and visitors. The aim is to support the working group by establishing a public contact point for inaccessible buildings and areas (or jammed doors, for example). One consequence of the assessment is that a central budget must be made available for adapting buildings in accordance with the guidelines. The Accessibility Working Group's duties overlap with other recommendations and goals contained in the policy plan: if the goals and allocation of responsibilities were to be aligned, that would strengthen both plans.

### Digital Information Accessibility Act

In December 2016, the EU's Web Accessibility Directive entered into force.<sup>16</sup> The Directive requires Member States to ensure that the digital channels used by public sector organizations are accessible. This legislation applies not only to government websites but also to those of educational institutions, such as the University of Groningen. The four principles of accessibility are perceptibility, operability, understandability, and robustness. The Directive must be implemented in national law no later than 23 September 2018. The obligation of accessibility initially applies to websites, mobile applications (apps), intranets and extranets that go live (or are substantially modified) after the new rules come into effect. The government is working on an Order in Council Accessibility of Government (Temporary Provisions) Decree. The Order in Council will eventually be linked to the Digital Government Act. The Decree stipulates that government agencies' websites and mobile apps must comply with the Decree with regard to the following dates:

- All new content on websites, as of 23 September 2018;
- On 23 September 2019, for websites published from 23 September 2018;
- On 23 September 2020, for websites published before 23 September 2018;
- On 23 June 2021, for mobile applications.

It is recommended that a working group be set up, consisting of lawyers, the Accessibility Working Group (members thereof), the SSC, and communication staff. The working group will be tasked with 1) identifying the requirements of the above legislation, 2) seeking cooperation within the Association of Universities in the Netherlands (VSNU), and 3) making changes.

### Availability of computer-based testing in the Aletta Jacobs Hall

Students who have been allocated certain provisions cannot always access them in the Aletta Jacobs Hall. For instance, while the Aletta Jacobs Hall does have a separate, low-stimulus room, this is unsuitable for examinations involving extra provisions. This is because groups of students cannot use this room together, the room does not have any windows (which means that claustrophobic students cannot take exams here), and it is unsuitable for computer-based examinations. There are problems in the examination hall itself. These arise due to a combination of software compatibility and a secure test environment in Nestor. This creates problems for those faculties that are at an advanced stage in digitizing their examinations. One option is to build spacious booths (that are both wheelchair accessible and soundproof) in the examination hall, and to equip them with the means to conduct computer-based

---

<sup>16</sup> <https://www.digitoegankelijk.nl/beleid/wet-en-regelgeving/vanaf-2018-besluit-digitale-toegankelijkheid>

tests, provisions can be offered in a more consolidated and sustainable manner. Based on the expected increase in the number of computer-based tests and required spaces, it is recommended that computer-based testing be included as a particular point for special attention during the renovation of the Aletta Jacobs Hall; it is also recommended that the SSC and the ESI's examination expertise team be included in the advisory process.

Due to the planned examination slots in the evenings and weekends, there is pressure to implement examination-related provisions. The faculties currently resolve many problems by conducting simultaneous examinations within the faculty, using adapted spaces and forms of testing. However, this is not possible on Friday evenings and during the weekends, when buildings are closed. Many students with a performance disability are entitled to adapted examinations, such as examinations with an adapted font or paper format, or examinations in a low-stimulus environment. The most common provision for students with a performance disability involves granting them an additional half-an-hour to complete an examination. Accordingly, examiners are advised to allow for extra examination time when scheduling examinations, to avoid any overlap between successive groups.

### **Label in Timetable Offices' software**

Lecturers, educational institutes and programme coordinators stress that they can use more support when dealing with last-minute room changes or when looking for suitable classrooms for students with a performance disability. It is, therefore, recommended that those rooms that are accessible to students with a performance disability (via checks) be labelled as such in Timetable Offices' room registration software. This quickly shows which rooms are suitable, also for one-off bookings or 'emergency bookings'.

<b>Indication/point for improvement</b>	<b>Recommendation/goal</b>	<b>Implementation</b>	<b>Priority</b>
The University of Groningen's buildings and spaces are not universally accessible	-Consultation with the Municipality about the accessibility of the University Library and the Academy Building -Free up budget for the implementation of Accessibility Working Group guidelines	Accessibility Working Group	Medium
Lack of a central contact point for reporting accessibility problems	Contact point for reporting problems to the Accessibility Working Group via an online form.	COMM	Medium
European legislation on digital accessibility	Set up a Digital Accessibility working group	General Administrative and Legal Affairs (ABJZ) + COMM ESI + Accessibility Working Group	Medium
Allocated provisions impracticable in Aletta Jacobs Hall	Consult SSC + ESI during renovation, with computer-based testing as a point for special attention	Property and Investment Projects (VGI)	Low
Overlap resulting from the 'extra time' provision in the Aletta Jacobs Hall due to examination slots	Extra examination time only at the end	Boards of Examiners	Low
Lack of information about the accessibility of rooms	Addition of label in room registration system	Timetable Offices	Low

## 9. Empowerment

### *Raising awareness*

Students with a performance disability and/or with existing or developing complaints may encounter prejudice and a lack of understanding from their fellow students, lecturers, and other staff. The University of Groningen aspires to be an inclusive university. In this regard, its basic premise is that institutional awareness, an open attitude, and facilitating discussions about diversity will help to mould the institution and its teaching. If the University of Groningen were to raise awareness of the impact of problems and give greater prominence to information provision, this would promote a feeling of safety among the students and help them to seek support. This can be more actively encouraged:

1. Study advisors, the Psychological Counselling Service, and student counsellors have indicated that a growing group of students are reporting instances of stress and psychological problems. Given the increased societal focus on depression and study-related stress (within the University of Groningen too), it is important to take mental health and wellbeing seriously. To this end, efforts should be made to raise awareness about the SSC's range of courses (such as 'Overcome your fear of failure', 'Live life to the full', 'Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction').
2. All students (and prospective students) who are seeking support at the University of Groningen (including top student athletes) should be able to find the necessary information. 'Performance disability' is not a widely known term (or search term). Dyslexic students tend to search for 'dyslexia', rather than 'performance disabilities'. Accordingly, it is recommended that information about performance disabilities be communicated more widely (and externally) in the context of 'student support'.
3. Inclusion has a strong social component, in terms of enabling people to engage with their peers. To increase awareness within the student community, it is recommended that student organizations be incentivized to hold activities that are related to performance disabilities and *mental health* and to raise awareness, by means of a grant via the Central Executive Board for Student Organizations (CUOS).

### *Employability*

Students with a performance disability have longer average loan periods, so they are exposed to greater financial risks. Other factors in this regard are a higher student debt due to study delays, later entry into the labour market (and, in many cases, only part-time work), and less opportunity to repay debts. The University of Groningen can provide personally supervised transfers to the labour market for students with a performance disability. This is comparable to the personally supervised transfers provided to prospective students when they register.

### **Engaging with the ITA project (Inclusion Accessibility for People with Occupational Disabilities)**

On 1 January 2015, the Participation Act entered into force in the Netherlands. Its aim is to improve employment opportunities for people with poor job prospects. The University of Groningen has been tasked with creating a certain number of jobs per year. Some of the University of Groningen's students with a performance disability fall within this scheme. To this end, the Participation Act (2015-2020) Implementation Project was launched. The frameworks of the Participation Act are constantly changing, as a result this project's formal frameworks have already been largely discarded. The Participation Act (2015-2020) Implementation Project provides for the reimbursement for student assistant positions for students with a performance disability. This improves opportunities for extracurricular activities, support in finding job opportunities, and the chances of finding a job after graduation. Implementation of the ITA project overlaps with the other recommendations and goals set out in the policy plan for students with a performance disability: if the goals and allocation of responsibilities were to be aligned, that would strengthen both plans.

### **Career Services**

Career Services is the central University of Groningen service point for student career support. Some students with a performance disability indicate that they have problems in finding Career Services,

others feel that the general range of options is not relevant to them. However, Career Services offers seminars/training courses such as 'Applying for a Job with a Performance Disability' to answer questions from students with a performance disability about their transition from education to the labour market. How do you differentiate between job vacancies that you really should apply for and those that you should skip? Should you mention your disability in your covering letter or CV? How should you communicate about your disability during the job interview? What opportunities and options are available on the labour market, and how should you make use of them? It is recommended that steps be taken to make people more aware of the range of services offered by Career Services, specifically for students with a performance disability, and to coordinate this with the ITA project.

Indication/point for improvement	Recommendation/goal	Implementation	Priority
Increase in perceived stress, <i>mental health</i> and <i>wellbeing</i>	Higher profile for the SSC's range of courses	SSC + COMM	Low
Raising awareness among students and staff	Expanding communication under the banner of 'student support'	SSC + COMM	Low
Engaging with peers	Incentive grant for student organizations	CUOS	Low
Employability and extracurricular options	Coordinating student assistant positions with the ITA project	Office, ITA Project leader	Low
Profile of Career Services	Inclusion of Career Services in information provision	Career Services + COMM	Low

## 10. Evaluation and monitoring

### Planning period

The policy for students with a performance disability is not currently subject to regular evaluations. It is recommended that the frequency of evaluation (as well as the planning period) should follow the cadence of institutional accreditation – an extensive evaluation every 6 years, with a midterm after 3 years. This would involve an interim evaluation in 2021 and a new policy plan in 2024. This periodicity creates the option of coordinating with the University of Groningen's renewed strategic plans. These evaluations must be carried out by the Office of the University's Strategy Department of Education & Research, in close cooperation with the Advisory Committee for Students with a Performance Disability (ACF).

### Quality monitoring: mid-term 2021 performance indicators

How can it be shown that the policy plan's objectives have been achieved? Performance indicators are currently being drawn up for this purpose. They will be assessed in the 2021 mid-term evaluation of the policy plan. The annual NSE evaluations among students facilitate benchmarking with other institutions in the Netherlands, indicate annual trends, and can be used to identify specific problems at faculties and in degree programmes. This can be supplemented with an analysis of provisions from Progress, provided that the input of information is standardized by student counsellors and study advisors.

Source	Performance	Indicator
NSE: disability theme score	Instruction and information provision	Increase in score
NSE: disability theme score	Assistance at the start of the degree programme	Increase in score
NSE: disability theme score	Special supervision during the degree programme	Increase in score
NSE: disability theme score	Faculty scores	At least a 3.0
NSE: disability theme score	University of Groningen average	At least 3.5 and ranking in the top three classic universities
Progress: use of provisions*	Study progress	Decline in drop-out rates Decline in study delays
ESI: Registrations for COSA	Participation in COSA by study advisors	80% participation

*\*These are not only students with a performance disability, but also top athletes and students with a committee grant, for example.*

### **Implementation plan**

A list of the action points arising from the recommendations must be drawn up, as a way of monitoring the implementation of the plans. Accordingly, an implementation plan should be prepared and monitored (together with the performance indicators) by the Office of the University's Strategy Department of Education & Research (SER), in close collaboration with the relevant stakeholders and in consultation with the Advisory Committee for Students with a Performance Disability.

### **Enhance the role of the Advisory Committee for Students with a Performance Disability (ACF)**

The role of the ACF can be strengthened by continued involvement in the implementation plan, and by raising the profile of the ACF as a point of contact for students and staff at the University of Groningen. Thus, it is recommended that the ACF:

- be involved in the implementation of the policy plan;
- have an annual advisory report submitted to the Board of the University, which should be forwarded to faculty boards, the student community, and University of Groningen staff;
- converting relevant developments within the University of Groningen and society at large into policy recommendations.

<b>Indication/point for improvement</b>	<b>Recommendation/goal</b>	<b>Implementation</b>	<b>Priority</b>
Frequency of policy review and implementation distributed across the University of Groningen	-Planning period of six years, with mid-term evaluations -Draw up implementation plan	Office SER + stakeholders + ACF	Medium
-Enhance the ACF's role and profile	Annual advisory report to the Board of the University, for distribution throughout the University of Groningen	ACF	Low

## Appendix 1: Thematic overview of recommendations and implementation

Indication/point for improvement	Recommendation/goal	Implementation by	Priority	Cost framework
Advising students: ICF model				
Advising students not in accordance with a standard framework	-Use the ICF model -ESI range of workshops for a smooth introduction (one morning/afternoon)	-Study advisors, student counsellors, the Psychological Counselling Service, Boards of Examiners -ESI + occupational physician	High	ESI workshop
Provisions neither adaptive nor time-bound	Add time taken to allocate provision to recommendations	Study advisors + student counsellors, the Psychological Counselling Service, Boards of Examiners	Medium	-
Ambiguity regarding medical certificates	Advice generally based on medical diagnoses and medical certificates (possibly translated), DSM-5 for psychological problems	Study advisors + student counsellors, Psychological Counselling Service (perhaps also the occupational physician)	Medium	-
Renewed allocation of duties				
-Lack of clarity concerning the SSC's profile and role -Peak workload for the SSC and waiting lists for the Psychological Counselling Service	-Expand the staffing levels of student counsellors, the Psychological Counselling Service, and student assistants during periods of peak demand -Flexibility in granting interim provisions at the start of the academic year -Support by means of a communication plan	-Office -Boards of Examiners -COMM	High	Formal increase in FTE: 1.0 student counsellor, 2.0 psychologist), on-call student assistant
Time-consuming processing of medical certificates	Standardizing and digitizing assessments, dyslexia pilot project	SSC + COMM	High	-
Ambiguity regarding allocation of duties	Publishing a flowchart, FAQ, and details of the allocation of duties at the website	SSC + COMM	Medium	-
Indicating problems in the area of teaching	Incorporating details of policy and the policymaking organization in	Faculties	Medium	-

2018 policy plan: studying with a performance

	lecturer's manuals and procedures			
The allocation of provisions is cumbersome	Authorization to allocate, provided that it is recorded in writing and on a time-bound basis	Boards of Examiners	Medium	-
Sluggish internal communication and a weak grasp of bottlenecks (or of their extent)	Explore the potential of the student file + module (standardized) in Progress	Working group + Progress	Medium	Budgeting for projects Progress of ZWGG (No friction, no shine!) programme
Faculty differences, lack of knowledge sharing, too little pooling of expertise, and profile of support	Establish faculty disability officers with a digital community	Faculties + SSC + COMM	Medium	-
Professionalization of staff				

Lack of a standard basic training course for study advisors	Mandatory COSA training course, with the addition of a module for students with a performance disability	SSC + ESI	Medium	training budget, faculty
Potential enhancement of inclusive education and of lecturers' role in indicating problems	Set up a 'students with a performance disability' training module (separate and as a UTQ elective)	SSC + ESI	Medium	development costs
Increase in number of international students with psychological problems	English language + intercultural competences training courses for the Psychological Counselling Service.	Language Centre and/or external training institute specializing in psychiatry (such as RINO)	Medium	training course within Language and Culture Policy (LCP)
The role of tutors and mentors in indicating problems	Mandatory training course	SSC or Faculty-based	Medium	training budget, faculty
Instruction and information provision				
Information at the website is not sufficiently prominent	The University of Groningen's website will be renewed by COMM, then edited by the SSC	SSC + COMM	High	-
Prospective students' expectations are not in line with the support available from the University of Groningen	Expand information provision to secondary schools via the Pre-University Academy and Comm	SSC	Low	-
Learning outcomes are not taken into account when admitting students to degree programmes	Non-binding advice from study advisors and, possibly, from student counsellors	Student Information and Administration Office (SIA) + Admissions Boards + study advisors + student counsellors	Low	-
There is insufficient engagement with international students	Separate communication flow for international students	Information Services, SSC, study advisors	Medium	-

2018 policy plan: studying with a performance

Incomplete engagement with Studielink group	Issue invitations more actively: SSC for general information and study advisors for appointments	Information Services + SSC + study advisors	Medium	-
Information provision: difference between chronic and temporary	Communication template for distributed information provision	COMM + SSC	Low	-
Increased demand for support for those suffering from psychological problems and stress	Clarify central information and contacts via public website	COMM + SSC	Low	-
Profile and accessibility of contacts and extra support	Study advisors and the SSC (and its offerings) should have a higher profile and should be more easily accessible	Study advisors + SSC + COMM	Low	-
<b>Inclusive education</b>				
Inflexibility of modes of assessment and study schedules	Involve student counsellors in the training courses for members of the Board of Examiners	SSC + Boards of Examiners	Low	-
Engaging teaching projects with more inclusive education	Greater focus on Learning Communities and Flipped classroom	COMM + ESI	Medium	-
CIT/ESI support does not have a sufficiently high profile for students	Higher profile for CIT/ESI at the website	COMM	Low	-
The digitization of lectures makes teaching more accessible	Alerting lecturers to the option of recording lectures via ESI	ESI + COMM	Low	On request, faculty
<b>Accessibility</b>				
The outcomes of current e-learning projects vary widely	Analysing and sharing best practices for students with a performance disability via a digital platform	ESI	Low	-
Encouraging computer-based testing (or modes thereof) among lecturers	Raising the profile of the ESI's Computer-Based Testing Service and sharing best practices via a digital platform	ESI + COMM	Medium	-
Purchasing licences and hardware for testing is very expensive	Pool software on ESI laptops for general use	ESI + Demand managers	Low	University of Groningen-wide software fund
<b>Accessibility</b>				
The University of Groningen's buildings and spaces are not universally accessible	-Consultation with the Municipality about the accessibility of the University Library and the Academy Building Free up budget for the implementation of Accessibility Working Group guidelines	Accessibility Working Group	Medium	VGI budgeting

2018 policy plan: studying with a performance

Lack of a central contact point for reporting accessibility problems	Contact point for reporting problems to the Accessibility Working Group via an online form.	COMM	Medium	-
European legislation on digital accessibility	Set up a Digital Accessibility working group	ABJZ + COMM + ESI + Accessibility Working Group	Medium	-
Allocated provisions impracticable in Aletta Jacobs Hall	Consult SSC + ESI during renovation, with computer-based testing as a point for special attention	Property and Investment Projects (VGI)	Low	-
Overlap resulting from the 'extra time' provision in the Aletta Jacobs Hall due to examination slots	Extra examination time only at the end	Boards of Examiners	Low	-
Lack of information about the accessibility of rooms	Addition of label in room registration system	Timetable Offices	Low	Software amendment
<b>Empowerment</b>				
Increase in perceived stress, <i>mental health and wellbeing</i>	Higher profile for the SSC's range of courses	SSC + COMM	Low	-
Raising awareness among students and staff	Expanding communication under the banner of 'student support'	SSC + COMM	Low	-
Engaging with peers	Incentive grant for student organizations	CUOS	Low	Existing CUOS grants
Employability and extracurricular options	Coordinating student assistant positions with the Participation Act project	Office, ITA Project leader	Low	Project Participation Act
Profile of Career Services	Inclusion of Career Services in information provision	Career Services + COMM	Low	-
<b>Evaluation and monitoring</b>				
Frequency of policy review and implementation distributed across the University of Groningen	-Planning period of six years, with mid-term evaluations -Draw up implementation plan	Office SER + stakeholders + ACF	Medium	-
-Enhance the ACF's role and profile	Annual advisory report to the Board of the University, to be distributed throughout the University of Groningen	ACF	Low	-

## Appendix 2. consultation and assessment

Subject	Group consulted	Form of consultation
Documents		
Legal context	UN Convention, Higher Education and Research Act, EU's Web Accessibility Directive	
Inclusive education	D. Jansen, ADHD and ASD in Higher Education. Selecting and implementing effective reasonable accommodations	
Student satisfaction	R. van Zaane, report on Sociology Master's thesis and internship	
Inclusive education	K. Bosman, Master's thesis in Theory of Education	
indications and trends in student satisfaction	Annual NSE results and Centre for Higher Education Information User Tests	
Study-related stress, pressure to perform, student welfare	Student Welfare Action Plan (2018)	
Students		
indicating + advising on bottlenecks	Students with a performance disability	1-on-1 meetings (Arts, Law, Science & Engineering (FSE), Faculty of Theology and Religious Studies (FGG), Faculty of Behavioural and Social Sciences (GMW), University Medical Center Groningen (UMCG), University College Groningen (UCG)), SSC information sessions, e-mails after call from the University newspaper (UK) and University Council group Lijst Calimero, Advisory Committee for Students with a Performance Disability (ACF)
indications and trends in student satisfaction	NSE: theme group – students with a performance disability	NSE up to 2017
indicating + advising on bottlenecks	Student representation (University Council group Lijst Calimero, Student Organization Groningen (SOG), student assessors)	1-on-1 meetings student councillors, e-mails after call from the University Council group Lijst Calimero & SOG network + Calimero study of dyslexia, meeting of student assessors
indicating + advising on bottlenecks	The parents of students with a performance disability	consultation with Parent Platform for Compliant Education
indicating + advising on bottlenecks for international students	International students with a performance disability	NSE, study advisors (Law + Faculty of Economics and Business (FEB) + GMW), Psychological Counselling Service
Staff and experts (or external experts)		
indicating + advising on bottlenecks	Study advisors	Groningen Study Advisors Council (GOS), 1-on-1 meetings (GMW, FEB, Law, Arts, FSE, UMCG), ACF
indicating + advising on bottlenecks	Educational institutions/teaching support	1-on-1 meetings Arts, GMW
indicating + advising on bottlenecks	Boards of Examiners, BSA Committees	1-on-1 meetings Law, UMCG
indicating + advising on bottlenecks for lecturers	Lecturers, teaching assistants/invigilators	1-on-1 meetings GMW, UMCG

2018 policy plan: studying with a performance

indicating + advising on bottlenecks	Psychological Counselling Service	1-on-1 meeting SSC, ACF
indicating + advising on bottlenecks	Student counsellors	1-on-1 meetings + work meetings student counsellors SSC, ACF
indicating + advising on bottlenecks regarding medical developments and diagnosis	Occupational physician	1-on-1 meeting Health, Safety and Sustainability (AMD), ACF
Participation Act and inclusion	University of Groningen, ITA Project leader	1-on-1 meeting AMD
UN Convention, OER, Equal Treatment (Disability and Chronic Illness) Act	Lawyers, centres of expertise, and partnerships	1-on-1 meetings ABJZ, SSC, e-mails VSNU, 'Handicap + Studie' conference
ICF / medical context	University of Groningen medical experts	1-on-1 meetings head of neuropsychology, AMD occupational physician, ACF
Indicating+advising on bottlenecks / inclusion	Handicap + Studie centre of expertise	Conference, newsletters, Centre for Higher Education Information (CHOI) 2016+2018 annual report
Theory of Education context / inclusion	Assistant Professor inclusive/appropriate education GMW	1-on-1 meeting

### Appendix 3: SWOT analysis

Internal/Positive, Strengths: keep/profile	Internal/Negative Weaknesses: solve/improve
<p><b>Allocation of duties</b>                      *NSE: the attitudes of staff/lecturers and fellow students are generally more positive than the average for traditional universities, especially in the smaller degree programmes and faculties                      *Tutors/mentors available as an easily accessible point of contact, in a potential screening role, and as a way of reducing the peak workloads of study advisors</p> <p><b>Evaluation</b>                      *NSE: offers the option of an annual evaluation among a large group of students, plus an insight into trends and differences between faculties.                      *System Progress can be used to track the registration of allocated provisions</p> <p><b>Cooperation/peer support</b>                      *Peer support and professionalization of student counsellors&gt;study advisors&gt;lecturers can be expanded by including the performance disability component in Competence Development for Study Advisors (COSA) and the University Teaching Qualification (UTQ)                      *Existing peer support structures enhance cooperation (GOS, professionalization of study advisors + mentors by SSC at the request of the faculties)                      *Option of electronic, shareable student file via Progress                      *Financial arrangements and provisions are already available to students</p> <p><b>Teaching/accessibility</b>                      *Faculty pilot projects (Arts: computer-based testing) and policy reviews (GMW, Law) demonstrate practical feasibility                      *The SSC's range of courses are accessible to everyone                      *NSE: digital accessibility of degree programmes is rated as above average for traditional universities                      *NSE: the suitability of classrooms and the University Library is rated as above average for traditional universities, and all faculties had a higher rating in 2016 than they did in 2015                      *The allocation of standard provisions (extra time + separate space) is running smoothly, according to the study advisors                      *Online forms can be expanded and standardized.</p>	<p><b>Allocation of duties</b>                      *The allocation of responsibilities and internal communication are sometimes unclear – the students cannot find their way (especially during the 1st year), but it has a key role due to the initial action (possession of a written recommendation)                      *Policy implementation differs from one faculty to another, from one degree programme to another, from one study advisor to another, and even from one course unit to another. Students often find that they have to explain their situation over and over again                      *Study advisors with multiple roles – make decisions on behalf of the Board of Examiners                      *When a provision is rejected by a faculty's Board of Examiners, the reasons behind this decision are not always explained to the student in question</p> <p><b>Support for staff</b>                      *The professionalization of study advisors is not centrally organized – there is no University of Groningen-wide regular evaluation/monitoring of policy implementation, which leads to policy inconsistency</p> <p><b>Evaluation</b>                      *Little awareness of the numbers and study progress of students, due to privacy considerations.</p> <p><b>Teaching/accessibility</b>                      *Not all classrooms have provisions for physical disabilities or for testing (or computer-based testing)                      *Examination time: extra time prior to the examination is disadvantageous to students. Extra examination time is now per examination, but some examinations can last much longer than others                      *Unclear policy for transfer students and selection procedures                      *The accessibility of some buildings is very poor indeed (University Library, Academy, Main Administration Building, Van Swinderenhuis, USVA student culture centre) while in other cases it is inadequate (SSC, Law, Uurwerkersgang). This makes it difficult for study associations, for example, to access them (one limitation here is that many of these buildings are listed, so modifications are expensive)                      *The University of Groningen's website does not have a barrier-free quality label                      *Not all buildings are equipped with visual alarms for the deaf                      *Psychological Counselling Service waiting times are growing                      *Aletta Jacobs Hall – there are no rooms for separate and/or computer-based testing                      *Room shortages at the University of Groningen are leading to non-standard examination slots and difficulty in allocating provisions                      *Learning communities for students 'in or out' – if their study pace is too slow, a student will often be asked to leave</p>

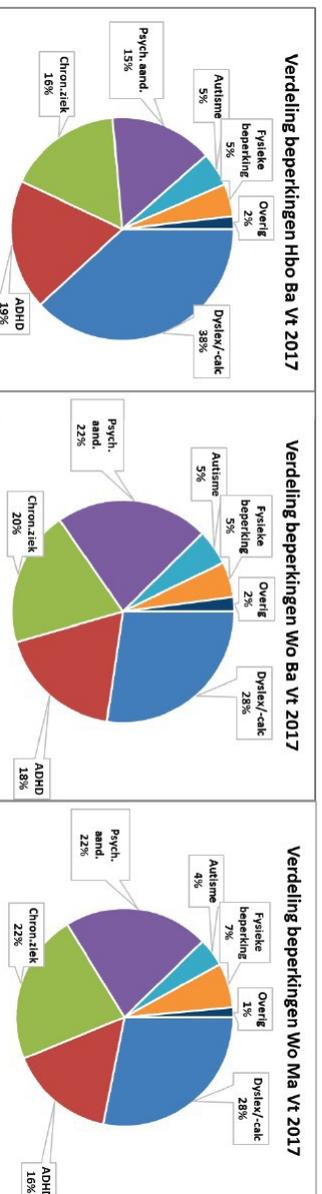
	<p><b>Social inclusion and employability</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>*There are no arrangements/incentives for participation in extracurricular activities</li><li>*NSE: students feel that Boards of Examiners provide little guidance and show little flexibility regarding delays/modified degree programmes (mandatory sequence of course units)</li><li>*Study buddies and SSC courses involve extra costs for students (SSC – no show should ideally be limited)</li><li>*'Performance disability' sounds very negative</li><li>*Students feel that too little information is provided about stress and psychological problems</li></ul>
--	--

<p><b>Inclusion and employability</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>*Potential engagement with the Participation Act project (the University of Groningen must expand FTE for staff with a performance disability)</li> <li>*Flipped Classroom and Learning Communities offer group work with a reflection component, and focus on utilizing and dealing with different individual talents (inclusion)</li> </ul> <p><b>Information provision</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>*The University of Groningen website already features a general menu structure</li> <li>*Student portal and Staff portal available</li> <li>*Admission offices could work more closely with SSC</li> </ul>	<p><b>Information provision</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>*NSE: relevant scores lower than the average for traditional universities</li> <li>*Few students are familiar with the SSC (and its range of courses)</li> <li>*In some cases there is no separate information flow regarding the differences between chronic and temporary, plus later Bachelor's phase/start of Master's programme</li> <li>*Information flow to international students has been insufficiently adapted to this group</li> <li>*There is no flow chart (allocation of roles + timeline + organizational structure)</li> <li>*Even when details of a student's performance disability are recorded in Studielink, the individual in question is not always actively approached by study advisors</li> </ul>
<p><b>External/Positive, Opportunities: develop</b></p>	<p><b>External/Negative, Threats: meet/prevent/defend</b></p>

<p><b>Teaching/accessibility</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>*The International Classification of Functioning, Disability and Health (ICF) is available as a tried and tested communications tool/advisory model that is also widely used in healthcare</li> </ul> <p><b>Information provision</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>*Secondary schools accessible through the Pre-University Academy network.</li> <li>*Examples from other universities available (information provision based on a tree structure, and an overview of provisions per faculty)</li> <li>*SSC could play a part in matching/information provision</li> </ul> <p><b>Mode of instruction and inclusion</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>*Potential audit by Handicap + Studie</li> <li>*Computer-based testing from home makes testing easier</li> <li>*Camera surveillance during examinations generates costs savings in terms of invigilators</li> <li>*The digitization of lectures (possibly only via Nestor) increases the accessibility of lectures</li> <li>*Increase the flexibility of degree programmes by paying per ECTS credit point for the teaching provided – more flexible planning (University of Amsterdam pilot project)</li> <li>*3 core goals of Wheel &amp; Deal (Wheel and Deal): empowerment, easing the pressure, and guidance</li> </ul>	<p><b>General</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>*UN Convention + Equal Treatment (Disability and Chronic Illness) Act + 2019 institutional audit influence framework</li> <li>*Growth in the number of international students, with their own particular problems – intercultural differences, higher incidence of complaints and more severe complaints, health insurance, unusable international medical certificates</li> <li>*NSE score: theme group score fell from 2016 to 2017</li> </ul> <p><b>Support for staff</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>*Increase in perceived workload among lecturers, student counsellors, and study advisors. Growth in the number of students with a performance disability (specifically dyslexia, international and psychological) leads to more extreme peaks.</li> <li>*Increase in perceived psychological problems (anxiety, perfectionism, depression, fear of failure, procrastination) makes the SSC’s task of identifying the requisite provisions much more complex (more customization) and leads to the improper use of provisions and care (e.g. Ritalin pills for undiagnosed individuals)</li> <li>*The SSC sometimes finds it difficult to assess the quality of medical certificates/diagnoses,</li> <li>*Medical certificates issued by SSC’s Psychological Counselling Service are not ideal, given that body’s dual role of diagnosis and advocacy</li> </ul> <p><b>Evaluation</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>*Privacy legislation precludes the standard/mandatory registration of students with a performance disability</li> </ul> <p><b>Social inclusion and employability</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>*Students suffer higher levels of study-related stress</li> <li>*Introduction of BSA (ECTS credit point requirement) has reduced the scope for an adapted programme/study pace and has increased the student workload</li> <li>*The introduction of the student loan system has doubly impacted the financial position of students with a performance disability (higher student debt and extra penalties for study delays)</li> <li>*For students with a performance disability, engaging with the labour market is more difficult + and takes place later than average</li> <li>*International students may conceal their performance disabilities, fearing that these will be a barrier to admission</li> </ul>
---	---

### Appendix 4: Analyses of the 2017 NSE

From the annual report entitled ‘Studeren met een functiebeperking 2017’ (‘Studying with a performance disability 2017’)



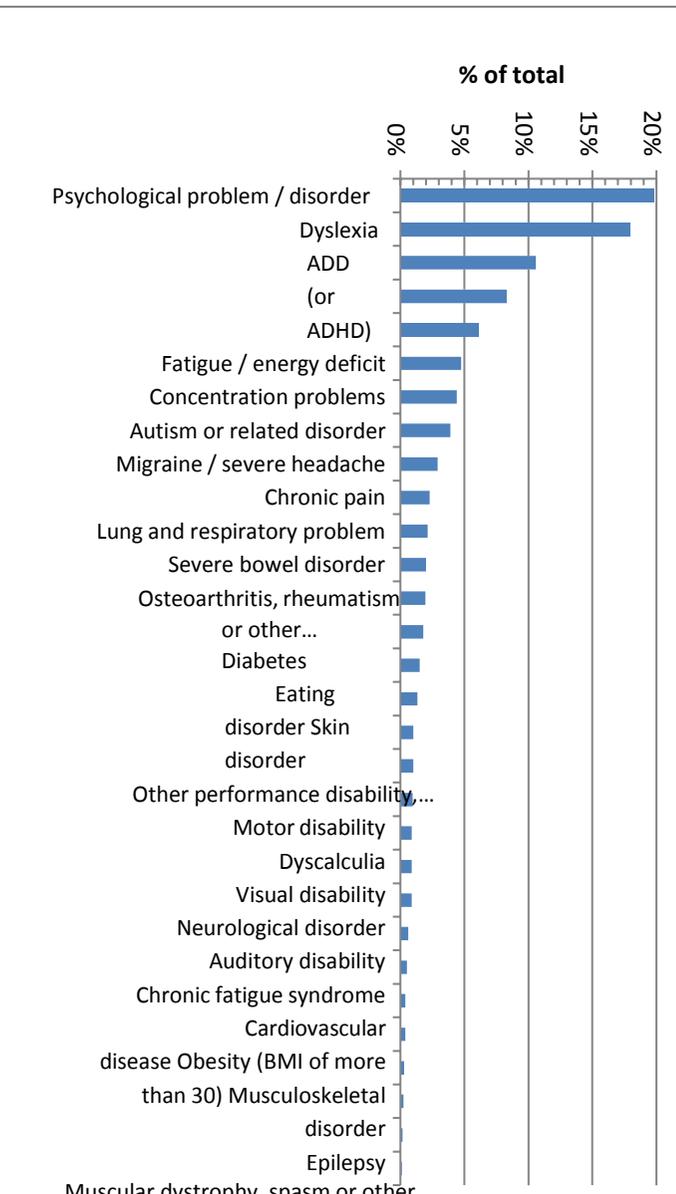
Oordelen Sfb 2017 per universiteit: bachelors voltijd										
	Noot	N Steekproef	Voorlichting	Intake	Aanpass onderwijs	Docenten 'be grip'	Docenten 'kennis'	Begeleiding	Totaalscore	Rangnr 2016
Wageningen University	243	6,59	6,78	7,25	7,59	7,01	6,93	7,02	1	1
Universiteit Twente	232	6,73	6,87	6,83	7,12	6,80	6,73	6,85	3	3
Open Universiteit	66	6,79	6,46	7,09	7,39	6,67	6,32	6,79	nw	2
Radboud Universiteit	452	6,06	6,46	6,83	6,96	6,55	6,55	6,57	2	2
TU Eindhoven	278	6,25	6,47	6,69	6,90	6,60	6,36	6,54	5	5
TU Delft	202	6,21	6,22	6,64	6,77	6,38	6,51	6,46	4	4
Tilburg University	374	6,34	6,35	6,42	6,66	6,39	6,11	6,38	7	7
Universiteit Maastricht	202	6,12	6,16	6,52	6,75	6,24	6,29	6,35	8	8
Universiteit Leiden	699	6,12	6,16	6,52	6,75	6,24	6,29	6,35	8	8
Universiteit Utrecht	770	5,96	6,14	6,43	6,78	6,33	6,20	6,29	9	9
RU Groningen	538	5,95	6,11	6,42	6,79	6,31	6,13	6,28	6	6
VU Amsterdam	420	5,83	6,08	6,25	6,58	6,25	6,01	6,17	12	12
Universiteit Leiden	318	5,80	6,00	6,40	6,41	6,27	6,08	6,15	10	10
Universiteit Maastricht	280	6,02	5,97	6,21	6,58	6,17	5,94	6,15	11	11
Erasmus Universiteit	494	5,61	5,78	5,97	6,46	6,06	5,72	5,83	13	13
VU Amsterdam	602	6,18	6,45	6,74	6,34	6,19	6,32	6,32	13	13
Landelijk gemiddelde wo		6,02	6,18	6,45	6,74	6,34	6,19	6,32		
GROEN = oordeel duidelijk boven / ORANJE = oordeel duidelijk onder landelijk gemiddelde © CHIQ 2017										
[1] Bij deze instelling betreft het deeltijdstudenten										

Oordelen Sfb 2017 per universiteit: masters voltijd										
	Noot	N Steekproef	Voorlichting	Intake	Aanpass onderwijs	Docenten 'be grip'	Docenten 'kennis'	Begeleiding	Totaalscore	vgl 2016
TU Eindhoven	96	6,27	6,55	6,75	7,22	6,90	6,62	6,72	2	2
Wageningen University	179	6,53	6,36	7,00	7,53	6,79	6,46	6,71	1	1
Open Universiteit	45	6,24	6,31	6,99	7,32	6,88	6,29	6,67	nw	1
Universiteit Twente	106	6,34	6,68	6,69	7,17	6,65	6,35	6,65	4	4
TU Delft	223	6,48	6,38	6,51	6,84	6,45	6,36	6,51	5	5
Tilburg University	65	6,48	6,43	6,82	6,66	6,38	6,27	6,51	3	3
Universiteit Maastricht	125	6,07	6,47	6,41	6,81	6,60	6,52	6,48	10	10
Universiteit Maastricht	209	6,12	6,16	6,56	6,92	6,52	6,22	6,42	9	9
VU Amsterdam	194	5,95	6,25	6,43	7,01	6,51	6,24	6,40	6	6
Universiteit Utrecht	246	5,90	5,97	6,45	6,88	6,39	6,07	6,28	7	7
RU Groningen	247	5,88	5,90	6,28	6,75	6,23	5,91	6,16	8	8
Universiteit Leiden	346	5,53	5,63	6,26	6,73	6,30	5,78	6,04	12	12
Universiteit Utrecht	196	5,41	5,46	5,87	6,78	6,27	5,74	5,92	13	13
VU Amsterdam	123	5,61	5,74	6,02	6,35	5,97	5,63	5,89	11	11
Erasmus Universiteit	123	5,61	5,74	6,02	6,35	5,97	5,63	5,89	11	11
Landelijk gemiddelde wo		5,94	6,04	6,39	6,85	6,41	6,09	6,29		
GROEN = oordeel duidelijk boven / ORANJE = oordeel duidelijk onder landelijk gemiddelde © CHIQ 2017										
[1] Bij deze instelling betreft het deeltijdstudenten										

### Analyses of NSF figures about the

Proportion of types of performance disability at the



<b>NSE scores for the University of Groningen from the performance disability theme group (marking scale 1–5)</b>								
NSE question	2017	2016	2015	2014	2013	2012	2011	2010
The extent to which the buildings used by your degree programme or institution are suited to people with your particular disability	4.05	3.77	3.70	3.77	3.53	3.76	3.79	3.72
The extent to which fellow students understand your situation	3.75	3.73	3.77	3.70	3.64	3.80	3.70	3.70
The extent to which lecturers and other staff understand your situation	3.54	3.56	3.52	3.57	3.32	3.58	3.47	3.46
The available resources and facilities, inasmuch as you need them	-	3.26	3.23	3.34	3.18	3.56	3.48	3.36
The teaching adjustments offered by your degree programme	3.27	3.24	3.17	3.39	3.13	3.41	3.33	3.13
Instruction and information provision about studying with a handicap or disability during your degree programme	2.96	3.11	3.08	3.22	3.16	3.32	3.20	3.10
The assistance provided by your degree programme to students with your particular disability at the start of their course of study	3.05	3.16	3.11	3.23	3.05	3.35	3.25	3.09
The extent to which the lecturers and other staff are sufficiently well informed	3.19	3.25	3.21	3.27	3.13	3.28	3.24	3.15
The special guidance that you are given during your degree programme.	3.06	3.32	3.27	3.42	3.18	3.23	3.18	3.03
The digital accessibility of a degree programme or institution (new)	3.82	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
The assessment adjustments offered by your degree programme (new)	3.44	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Disability theme score*	3.22	3.34	3.29	3.42	3.26	3.46	3.39	3.29
Number of respondents*	809	649	496	277	446	318	367	466
Average of all NSE questions	3.41	3.38	3.34	3.43	3.26	3.48	3.40	3.30
<i>*Range of questions concerning information, assistance, adjustments to teaching and testing, understanding by lecturers and other staff, knowledge possessed by lecturers and other staff, guidance.</i>								

## Appendix 5: diagram of ICF model

# Interaction of Concepts: ICF 2001

