



rijksuniversiteit
 groningen

University of Groningen Graduation Fund Regulations 2010-2021

Part A Financial support for students who incur study delay due to extraordinary circumstances

Introduction

Article 2a of the Higher Education and Research Act (WHW) relates to the Graduation Fund (*Profileringfondsen*) and contains regulations concerning financial support for students who incur study delay due to extraordinary circumstances.

These Regulations apply to requests for the 2020-2021 academic year.

The Board of the University approved the regulations set out below concerning the granting of financial support on the basis of these legal regulations after approval by the University Council on 27 August 2020.

See also:

www.rug.nl/studievertraging. This page provides more information about these regulations, as well as a link to the request form.

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Chapter 1. General provisions
Article 1. Definitions

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| Academic year: | A period of time that starts on 1 September and ends on 31 August of the following year. |
| Act: | Higher Education and Research Act (WHW: <i>Wet op het Hoger Onderwijs en Wetenschappelijk onderzoek</i>). |
| BA: | The nominal duration of a Bachelor's degree programme. |
| Board of the University: | The Board of the University of Groningen. |
| CLRS: | Central Portal for the Legal Protection of Student Rights. |
| Degree programme: | A Bachelor's or Master's degree programme. |
| DUO: | The Dutch Education Executive Agency (<i>Dienst Uitvoering Onderwijs</i>). |
| Higher education: | Education provided at research universities (WO) and universities of applied sciences (HBO). |
| MA: | The nominal duration of a Master's degree programme. |
| Nominal student workload | In accordance with Article 7.4 of the Higher Education and Research Act (WHW), the nominal student workload is 60 ECTS credit points per academic year. |
| Performance-related grant: | Article 5.1 WSF 2000: a travel allowance, possibly with the addition of a supplementary grant and bonus for a single-parent family. The performance-related grant is awarded by DUO for the combined nominal duration of the Bachelor's and Master's degree programmes. The travel allowance is awarded for the combined nominal duration of the Bachelor's and Master's degree programmes, plus one extra year. |
| Statutory tuition fees: | The tuition fees as referred to in WHW Art. 7.45 for registration as a student, set by the Minister. |
| Student counsellor: | Contact person for students who have study progress problems. |
| Student finance: | A performance-related grant and the student loan that students receive during the nominal duration of their degree programme, followed by a three-year loan period, in accordance with the WSF 2000. |
| Student: | A person who has paid tuition fees and is registered at the University of Groningen, with all the rights connected to registration as set out in WHW Article 7.34. |
| Study advisor: | The person appointed by the faculty to inform , advise and guide students in their study planning and progress, as well as in their choice of degree programme. |
| The UG: | University of Groningen. |

UFC (University Funds Committee): A committee installed by the Board of the University which advises the Board with regard to decisions made on the basis of these Regulations.

Wet studievoorschot hoger onderwijs: Higher Education Student Loan Act. The amendment to legislation including the WSF 2000, following the introduction of a new student finance system: the student loan.

WSF 2000: Student Finance Act 2000 (*Wet studiefinanciering*).

All other terms used in these regulations will have the meaning that the Act ascribes to them.

Article 2. Conditions for financial support

The University of Groningen provides financial support from the Graduation Fund (*Profileringsfonds*) to students who have incurred study delay due to exceptional circumstances, and who:

- are enrolled as full-time students in a degree programme and have not yet gained their degree
- have paid the relevant statutory tuition fees to the University of Groningen
- are or were entitled to a performance-related grant for the degree programme on the basis of the WSF 2000.

Article 3. Extraordinary circumstances

Extraordinary circumstances include:

- a. illness of the requester
- b. pregnancy and childbirth
- c. physical, sensory or other functional impairments
- d. extraordinary family circumstances
- e. an insufficiently feasible degree programme
- f. a student's degree programme not being reaccredited while the student has not yet gained their degree
- g. the provision of informal care by the requester.

Article 4. Duration of support

1. In addition to the provisions of Article 2, on the basis of these Regulations students will be entitled to financial support for study delay incurred during the Bachelor's phase for one additional year calculated from the first year of registration in Higher Education (BA + 1).
2. In addition to the provisions of Article 2, on the basis of these Regulations students will be entitled to financial support for study delay incurred during the Master's phase for one additional year calculated from the first year of registration on the Master's degree programme (MA + 1). This is based on the duration of the Master's programme in which the student is enrolled in the period to which the request relates.

Chapter 2. Study delay due to force majeure

Article 5. Reporting study delay

1. A student must immediately report to their study advisor as soon as it becomes clear that the exceptional circumstance will last more than a month (resulting in a study delay of 5 ECTS credit points or more) to discuss how the study delay can be limited as much as possible.
2. After the initial report to the study advisor, the student must also contact the student counsellor immediately if the study delay increases during the academic year to more than 15 ECTS credit points.
3. If the study advisor refers the student to a student counsellor, the student must make an appointment with the student counsellor as soon as possible but no later than four

- weeks after reporting to the study advisor.
4. The study advisor or student counsellor will complete a digital registration form on the basis of the study delay circumstances. This form also includes the agreements made. The student must tick this digital form for approval via the website.
 5. Students who are unable to report to the study advisor and/or the student counsellor themselves must appoint someone to do this for them.
 6. Students must follow the advice of the study advisor and/or student counsellor and make every effort to minimize the study delay.

Article 6. Reporting obligation for functional impairments

In the event of expected study delay due to a functional impairment or chronic illness, the student must report in accordance with the provisions of Article 5.

Article 7. Extending student finance

1. In the event that the study delay is caused by a temporary or structural functional impairment or chronic illness, the student may in certain cases request an extension of the performance-related grant from DUO with the support from the student counsellor. The study delay upon which such a request is based must have been reported to the student counsellor in accordance with Article 5 of these Regulations.
2. The student who is granted an extension of a performance-related grant from DUO, or who is supported by the student counsellor in their request for extension of the performance-related grant, cannot receive financial support from the Graduation Fund for that period. This also includes a student who chooses not to submit a request with DUO.
3. The performance-related grant received from DUO is extended by 12 months. If a student has been granted an extension of the performance-related grant in a particular academic year and once again incurs a study delay in the following academic years due to special circumstances, the student will only be re-eligible for financial support from the Graduation Fund if the study delay that qualifies for support exceeds in total the 12 months covered by the extension of the performance-related grant.

Article 8. Determining the extent of the study delay

1. The link between the extraordinary circumstance as referred to in Article 3 and the nominal student workload of 60 ECTS credit points will be taken into consideration when deciding on the extent of the study delay. Thus the number of months of study delay caused by an extraordinary circumstance can normally only be calculated at the end of the period BA+1 or MA+1.
2. Financial support is only granted per full month.
3. No financial support will be granted for study delays of less than one month (less than 5 ECTS credit points).

Article 9. Amount of financial support

Financial support is related to the extent of the study delay and amounts to € 300.69 per month, plus any supplementary grants and bonuses that the student received in the last month of the academic year in which the extraordinary circumstances occurred or in the last month of the period of the performance-related grant.

Article 10. Request for provisional granting of financial support

1. The request can be submitted between 1 September and 31 January following the academic year during which the extraordinary circumstance occurred.
2. Students must request financial support using the digital request form on the website: www.rug.nl/studievertraging.
3. Students must upload the documentary evidence via de website, and must then fill in the digital request form in accordance with Article 10.2.
4. Students can check the status of the request at any time via the website.
5. Requests submitted on or after 1 February of the year after the academic year in which

- the extraordinary circumstance occurred will not be processed.
6. If the request is incomplete, the student will be granted four weeks to complete the request. If the request is not completed within this period, it will not be processed further. The student will be notified of this.
 7. The Board of the University will make a decision with regard to the request after consultation with the UFC. This will take place as soon as possible but within a maximum of eight weeks of receipt of the completed request.
 8. The decision will be:
 - a. either the provisional granting of financial support, or
 - b. rejection of the request, or
 - c. non-consideration of the request because it was submitted after the deadline, or
 - d. non-consideration of the request because the request was incomplete and the missing information was not provided before the deadline.
 9. The decision, and the reasons for it, will be communicated to the student in writing.

Article 11. Request for definitive granting of financial support

1. A request for definitive approval of provisionally granted financial support may be submitted:
 - a. for study delay incurred in the period BA + 1: one month before until no more than six months after the end of the period BA + 1, and for study delay incurred in the period MA + 1: one month before no more than six months after the end of the period MA + 1, or
 - b. one month before until no more than six months after termination of registration.
2. The decision will be:
 - a. either the definitive granting of financial support, or
 - b. rejection of the request, or
 - c. non-consideration of the request because it was submitted after the deadline, or
 - d. non-consideration of the request because the request was incomplete and the missing information was not provided before the deadline.
3. The amount of financial support corresponds to the actual study delay incurred. This will be determined on the basis of the previously provisional granting of financial support from the Graduation Fund and/or the allocation of an additional year of performance-related grant from DUO, in combination with the most recently certified printout of the study results.
4. The decision, and the reasons for it, will be communicated to the student in writing.

Article 12. Documentary evidence

The following documents must be submitted with requests for financial support:

- a. If the request is based on circumstances referred to in Articles 3.a and 3.b, a declaration from a specialist (e.g. a physician or psychologist) specifying the period during which the circumstances occurred, or, in the case of a request for definitive granting of provisional support, the statement of provisional approval issued previously.
- b. In the event of a structural functional impairment or chronic illness as referred to in Article 3.c, a declaration by a specialist must be presented stating that there is a structural functional impairment or chronic illness. This declaration only has to be submitted once.
- c. If the request is based on extraordinary family circumstances as referred to in Article 3.d, written proof of the extraordinary family circumstances.
- d. If the request is based on the provision of informal care as referred to in Article 3.g, written proof of the provision of informal care.
- e. If the request is based on grounds as referred to in Article 3.1.e, a declaration from the faculty.
- f. If the request is based on loss of accreditation for the degree programme as referred to in Article 3.1.f, written proof and an explanation to support the request.

- g. A notification from DUO stating the amount of the grant in the last month of the academic year during which the extraordinary circumstances occurred. If the student has received a supplementary grant in this last month, they must also submit a notification from DUO to that effect.
- h. The most recent printout of the student's study results, in chronological order. This must be a certified printout from the Student Administration Office (i.e. not the student's own printout from Progress WWW).

Chapter 3. Transitional and final provisions

Article 13. Lodging an objection

Students may lodge an appeal against a decision taken by or on behalf of the Board of the University on the grounds of these Regulations within six weeks of the date of the decision with the Central Portal for the Legal Protection of Student Rights (CLRS) via the website www.rug.nl/clrs or P.O. Box 72, 9700 AB Groningen.

Article 14. Concurrence

In the event that study delay within the meaning of these Regulations coincides with membership of a consultative body or board/committee, or with top-level sport activities as determined in the University of Groningen Graduation Fund Regulations 2020-2021, Part C, the specified term for these activities will be taken into consideration when determining the extent of the study delay. The maximum number of months of financial support per academic year is twelve.

Article 15. Hardship clause

In some cases a request for financial support may be granted if rejection would result in a situation of unfairness of overriding nature.

Article 16. Deviation from the regulations

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

Article 17. Date of commencement

These Regulations will take effect on 1 September 2020 and shall apply to requests relating to a study delay incurred in the 2020-2021 academic year.

Article 18. Citation and publication of these regulations

1. These regulations may be cited as: 'University of Groningen Graduation Fund Regulations 2020-2021', possibly supplemented by 'Part A: Financial support for students who incur study delay due to force majeure.'
2. These regulations have been sent to the faculty boards for reference, are published on www.rug.nl and are included as an appendix in the Students' Charter.

Groningen, 14 July 2020

the Board of the University