

STUDENT CHARTER: SUMMARY

Student Charter

University of Groningen
University-wide regulations for Academic year 2006-2007

CONTENTS

FOREWORD

ABBREVIATIONS USED IN THE REGULATIONS

DEFINITIONS

INTRODUCTION

- General
- Applicability
- The importance of the Student Charter
- Don't take things for granted!
- More information and keeping up-to-date
- Information relating to the university as a whole
- Information relating to the faculties
- Lodging an appeal or complaint
- Complaints

CENTRAL ADMINISTRATION

STUDENT REGULATIONS: SUMMARY

- 1 Introduction
- 2 The Bachelor/Master structure
- 3 Eligibility and admission requirements
- 4 Enrolment
- 5 Programmes
- 6 Examinations
- 7 Teaching and Examination Regulations (OER)
- 8 Financial assistance for students
- 9 Participation in decision-making
- 10 House rules and sanctions
- 11 Legal rights

STUDENT CHARTER: STATUTORY PROVISIONS (including overview of appendices)

ADDRESSES

<http://www.rug.nl/studenten/>

Foreword

This Student Charter for academic year 2006-2007 provides an overview of the rights and obligations of both students and the university. It functions as a guide for critical and confident students, and contains all the rules that we expect each other to comply with.

The University of Groningen (RUG) aims to accommodate, support and guide students in the academic world as much as possible.

It is in your own interest to read and use this information. This Student Charter will introduce you to the variety of products, facilities and services offered by the university. It also points out your rights and obligations and what the university expects of its students.

The university is in its turn responsible for offering high-quality academic training, complete and balanced study programmes and good teaching and student facilities. Students have the right to call the university to account in these matters.

This Student Charter also contains information about university institutions that may help you if you have questions or problems.

The year 2002 saw the introduction of the Bachelor's and Master's degree structure in higher education. This structure has improved the international recognizability of Dutch institutions for higher education. Please consult the relevant Teaching and Examination Regulations (OER) or contact the study advisors of the relevant faculties for details about the Bachelor's and Master's programmes and the old *doctoraal* programmes.

Dr S.K. Kuipers
President of the Board of the University

ABBREVIATIONS USED IN THE REGULATIONS

ABJZ	<i>Algemeen Bestuurlijke en Juridische Zaken</i> : Corporate Administrative and Legal Affairs
BaMa	Bachelor's and Master's degree structure
CBE	<i>College van Beroep voor de Examens</i> : Board of Appeal for the Examinations
CBHO	<i>College van Beroep voor het Hoger Onderwijs</i> : Higher Education Appeals Tribunal
CSA	<i>Centrale Studenten Administratie</i> : Central Student Administration
CSB	<i>Centrale Studenten Balie</i> : Student Service Centre
CvB	<i>College van Bestuur</i> : Board of the University
ECTS	European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System
GSb	<i>Groninger Studentenbond</i> : a student union at the University of Groningen
HBO	<i>Hoger Beroeps Onderwijs</i> : Higher Professional Education
IBG	<i>Informatie Beheer Groep</i> (the national student records office)
ISD	International Service Desk
OER	<i>Onderwijs- en Examenregeling</i> : Teaching and Examination Regulations
ROB	<i>Regeling financiële ondersteuning studenten in bèta-opleidingen</i> : regulations concerning financial assistance for students of the sciences
RUG	<i>Rijksuniversiteit Groningen</i> : University of Groningen
SIAGD	<i>(Seksuele) intimidatie, agressie, geweld en discriminatie</i> : (harassment, sexual harassment and aggressive, violent or discriminatory behaviour)
SO	<i>Studie Ondersteuning</i> : Centre for Study Support and Academic Skills
SOG	<i>Studenten Organisatie Groningen</i> : a student union at the University of Groningen
UAF	<i>Stichting voor Vluchteling-Studenten UAF</i> : University Assistance Fund for refugee students
UCLO	<i>Universitair Centrum voor de Lerarenopleiding</i> : University Centre for Teacher Training
UFC	<i>Universitaire Fondsen Commissie</i> : a committee which assess applications for financial assistance
UK	<i>Universiteitskrant</i> : the university newspaper
UMCG	University Medical Center Groningen
U-raad	<i>Universiteitsraad</i> : University Council
VOS	<i>Vooruitstrevend Overleg Studenten</i> : a student union at the University of Groningen
VWO	<i>Vorbereidend Wetenschappelijk Onderwijs</i> : pre-university education
WBP	<i>Wet bescherming persoonsgegevens</i> : Personal Data Protection Act
WHW	<i>Wet op het hoger onderwijs en wetenschappelijk onderzoek</i> : Higher Education and Research Act
WO	<i>Wetenschappelijk Onderwijs</i> : university education
WSF	<i>Wet studiefinanciering 2000</i> : Student Finance Act 2000

DEFINITIONS

Below are a number of definitions:

A **student** is a person who has paid all the statutory fees required by the University of Groningen and is enrolled in an officially recognized course (full-time, part-time or dual). A student has the right to follow modules and to take exams relating to the programme he or she is enrolled in.

Students who follow a dual or part-time programme are not entitled to a grant.

Statutory fees (*wettelijk collegegeld*) are set by law. All students who are under the age of 30 at the start of the academic year must pay statutory fees. Students must also be a national of a country within the European Economic Area, or otherwise be eligible to receive a government grant from IBG. An exception to this rule applies to persons recognized by the UAF as student refugees; these students also pay the statutory fees. The tuition fees for academic year 2006-2007 have been set at **€1,519**.

Students who are not eligible for the statutory tuition fees must pay the **university fees** (*instellingscollegegeld*).

University fees for academic year 2006-2007 have been set at the following amounts:

Full-time students: **€1,997**.

Part-time students: **€1,135**.

Dual course students (combining study and work experience): **€1,135**.

Differentiated fees apply to students who are not nationals of a country that is signatory to the Agreement on the European Economic Area (EEA), except UAF-recognized refugees, and who wish to enrol for a Bachelor's or Master's degree programme.

Please contact the Central Student Administration or go to our website for more information.

An **extraneus** is a person who has paid all the **exam fees** required by the University of Groningen and is enrolled as an external student in an officially recognized programme. An *extraneus* only has the right to sit exams relating to the programme he or she is enrolled in. Exam fees for academic year 2006-2007 have been set at **€1,135**. An *extraneus* is not eligible for a student grant. The *extraneus* can deregister after finishing the programme, but examination fees will not be reimbursed.

ECTS: European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System

A Europe-wide system used to express the required workload for a programme of study in credits.

This system makes international evaluation of programmes easier. The nominal study load is 60 ECTS credits per year.

OER: Teaching and Examination Regulations

Every programme has its own specific OER containing the entry requirements and the content of the programme.

An **exam** is a test of the knowledge, understanding and skills of examinees, as well as an assessment of the results of any research.

INTRODUCTION

General

This Student Charter provides an overview of the rights and obligations of both students and the university. It is based on national legislation, particularly the Higher Education and Research Act (WHW), supplemented by regulations that are specific to the University of Groningen. The Charter has been divided into two sections. The main section describes the rights and obligations that apply to the university as a whole. The rest describes the rights and obligations that apply to specific programmes and which differ from one programme to another, as well as from one faculty to another.

Validity

The Student Charter applies to academic year 2006-2007 and is based on the Higher Education and Research Act (WHW).

The importance of the Student Charter

You are expected to be familiar with the contents of the Student Charter.

Some of these regulations may not be as hard and fast as they sound. Rules and regulations are by definition general in character, and their applicability in concrete situations and individual instances is not always a predictable and straightforward matter. It should also be realized that any governing body implements its own policies to a certain extent. Moreover, rules and regulations are never static but always subject to revision. Students who have enrolled for the first time this year may find that the regulations that apply to them are different to those for students who have re-enrolled.

Make sure you are provided with the right information by your faculty and/or the Student Service Centre and read the Student Charter carefully! Not complying with the rules in the Charter may affect your rights, for example the right to financial support from the Graduation Fund.

Don't take things for granted!

Is there anything you want to know? Do you think a mistake has been made? Is there something you want to complain about? Do you want to challenge a decision? Don't take what others say for granted; you may well find that the Student Charter contradicts their claims. Make sure you know what is in the Charter, and consult the sources of information mentioned below. They will also tell you where to lodge a complaint, a notice of objection or a letter of appeal.

More information and keeping up-to-date

All students will be notified when the definitive Charter becomes available. You can obtain a free copy from the CSB or access it via the RUG website: www.rug.nl/studenten.

All regulations that apply to the RUG, as well as any changes made during the year, will be published in the UK (*Universiteitskrant*) or on the RUG website (central rules that apply to the university as a whole), or through your faculty (rules that apply to your programme or faculty in particular). You are expected to take note of all rules and regulations that apply to the RUG, your programme or your faculty.

Information relating to the university as a whole

Each of the sources of information mentioned below has its own website. <http://www.rug.nl/studenten/>

The UK (Universiteitskrant): supplements and university notices

The Board of the University publishes details of its new regulations and official guidelines in the UK's supplements and in the notices section of the paper. Consult these also for information on new statutory fees and changes to the Graduation Regulations (*Afstudeerregeling*).

Central Student Administration (CSA)

This agency handles enrolment, tuition fees and deregistration during the academic year.

CSA provides students who have paid their fees and enrolled as students at the University of Groningen with student cards. The student administration of each faculty sends CSA details relating to the progress of your studies (your credits). CSA then sends this on to the Informatie Beheer Groep (IBG) for decisions about whether to continue study grants (*tempobeurs*: progress-related grants; not applicable to foreign students).

You will receive a student card after you have paid your fees and submitted your registration form.

Contact the Student Service Centre immediately if you have not received your student card!

Centrale Studenten Balie: Student Service Centre

If your studies are not going as well as you would like, and you have discussed your problem with your study advisor, the CSB may be able to help. The CSB can help you to find your way through the maze of regulations, particularly **registration and deregistration, graduation, tuition fees, study delay**, with all the financial repercussions this entails, and may be able to suggest **alternative study options**. The CSB also has information about possibilities for students with a performance disability. The CSB can help you if you wish to follow modules or do particular subjects abroad or elsewhere in the Netherlands. If you have almost finished your studies, the CSB can help get you started on your career.

Student counsellors.

Students with complex or personal problems are advised to contact the student counsellors. They provide confidential counselling and objective advice, and will respect your privacy. They are also able to advise you on how to lodge an appeal or complaint.

Please note: You must first report a delay in your studies to your Study Advisor, the so-called 'first report,' to ensure you qualify for financial assistance from the Graduation Fund (see chapter 8).

The Study Advisor will direct you to a student counsellor if your delay is or will be more than 10 ECTS credits. You will have to make an appointment with a student counsellor for a follow-up report yourself.

If during the academic year the delay becomes more than 10 ECTS after the first report to the Study Advisor, you must contact a student counsellor immediately, even if you have not been told to by the Study Advisor.

You must follow the advice of and the agreements made with the Study Advisor and the student counsellor or you will not be eligible for financial support from the Graduation Fund.

International Service Desk (ISD)

The International Service Desk (ISD) is part of the Office for International Relations (*Bureau Internationale Samenwerking*, or BIS). It provides information to foreign students, prospective students and foreign researchers, specifically with regard to study, doing a PhD, and temporary residence at the University of Groningen for research or other purposes.

The ISD also assists foreign guests staying in Groningen or those responsible for their stay with any queries they may have about issues such as regulations relating to foreigners, study advice, medical care, finance, accommodation, and facilities and official organizations within the city. The ISD also organizes and co-ordinates a number of introductory and social activities jointly with organizations

such as Wings, the Global Club and the Foreign Guest Club. In some cases, ISD is solely responsible for looking after foreign guests – if, for example, they have been invited to Groningen as guests of the Board of the University, or have come to the University of Groningen within the framework of a joint project with a developing country. The ISD can direct people with requests for detailed specific information to the appropriate contact persons within or outside the university. The ISD can also provide information if you are experiencing problems concerning your residence permit.

Information relating to the faculties

Sources in general

The annual study guide is a good source of information. Noticeboards, the UK, the Internet and so on should be regularly consulted.

Teaching and Examination Regulations (OER)

Every programme has regulations concerning the programme and its examinations: the *OER*. Your faculty's Education Office will have a copy of the regulations that you can consult, but they are also in your study guide.

The faculty Education Offices

Apart from the OER, your faculty Education Office can provide information relating to exam enrolment, registering of exam results and credits, requirements relating to procedural order, timetables and student records.

The Programme Directors and Curriculum Co-ordinators

Every faculty has at least one Programme Director. He or she is responsible for ensuring that the teaching and examination regulations are adhered to. Some programmes and faculties also have a Curriculum Co-ordinator. He or she is another person you can approach if you have any queries relating to your programme.

Study Advisor

The Study Advisor's job is to provide information, advice and counselling concerning planning your study programme, your subjects and so on. He or she is in contact with other central and faculty offices, and if necessary will be able to refer you on.

If your studies are delayed due to special circumstances, and if the delay is expected to amount to more than 4 weeks (5-6 ECTS credits), you must report this to your Study Advisor immediately if you want to be eligible for financial assistance from the Graduation Fund (chapter 8). The Study Advisor will direct you to a student counsellor if your delay is or will be more than 10 ECTS credits. You will have to make an appointment with a student counsellor for a follow-up report yourself. If during the academic year the delay becomes more than 10 ECTS after the first report to the Study Advisor, you must contact a student counsellor immediately, even if you have not been told to by the Study Advisor.

Board of Examiners

Issues relating to examinations and final assessments should be addressed to the Board of Examiners. This board has the task of organizing and co-ordinating examinations at the faculty or programme level. Consult your study guide for further information.

Curriculum Committee (Opleidingscommissie)

Issues relating to your programme should be addressed to the Curriculum Committee. This committee has an important role in designing and evaluating the programmes. Half of the board is made up of students and half of staff members.

Lodging an appeal or complaint

You have the right to appeal against decisions made on the basis of the regulations. The following are the appropriate official channels:

- the Board of the University (CvB): for matters relating to that part of the Student Charter that deals with regulations applicable to the university as a whole
- Higher Education Appeals Tribunal (CBHO): for matters that have already been the subject of an appeal that the Board of the University has ruled on, against whose decision you wish to appeal
- Examination Appeals Board (CBE): for matters relating to that part of the Student Charter that deals with faculty regulations

An overview of procedures related to lodging an appeal is available from the CSB (for example the brochure *Bezwaar en Beroep*). Please contact the CSB for general questions concerning this matter; for specific questions please contact the office of Corporate Administrative and Legal Affairs (ABJZ). Both websites also contain a lot of information.

Complaints

If a situation arises that you feel strongly enough about to lodge a complaint even though there has not been any clear breach of regulations, the following are the appropriate official channels to use:

At the faculty level

If you have a complaint relating to your own situation, your first port of call should be the study advisor. If necessary, you will then be referred on, possibly to someone who is specialized in dealing with that type of complaint. The faculties and various subject areas have complaints procedures of their own.

Student counsellors

If your complaint is such that it is not appropriate to use the faculty or course complaint facilities, the Student Counsellors should be approached. As confidential persons, they also fulfil the role of ombudsmen.

The RUG's confidential counsellor

Complaints about sexual harassment and aggressive, violent or discriminatory behaviour should be addressed to the committee that has been set up to deal with such complaints. Before you do so, however, you can discuss the matter with the RUG's confidential counsellor. The contact address is listed below under Central Administration.

Complaints office of the inspectors for confidential matters

Indications of discrimination, intolerance, fundamentalism, radicalization, extremism, etc. can also be reported to this complaints office. The inspector for confidential matters can help you find the most appropriate way of dealing with these issues.

Health, Safety and Environment Service

Complaints about health, safety and the working environment should initially be addressed to the health and safety co-ordinator of your faculty, or to the main health and safety office.

The RUG has two *main regulations for complaints*:

- General Regulations concerning Complaints (Algemene Klachtenregeling);
- Regulations concerning Complaints about harassment, sexual harassment and aggressive, violent or discriminatory behaviour (Klachtenregeling SIAGD).

CENTRAL ADMINISTRATION

The university departments mentioned below each have their own website. You can access them via the University of Groningen homepage at <http://www.rug.nl/studenten>.

Student Service Centre (CSB)/CSA front office/Student Counsellors

Visiting address: Uurwerkersgang 10
Postal address: P.O. Box 72, 9700 AB Groningen, The Netherlands
Telephone no.: (050) 363 80 66
E-mail: stag@rug.nl

Open: Monday to Friday 10 a.m. – 4 p.m.

The CSB provides information and advice to students and prospective students relating to registration and deregistration, choice of programme, study progress, study and work experience opportunities both within the Netherlands and abroad, and looking for work after graduation. The CSB also provides information about financial regulations. Appointments with student counsellors are made through the CSB.

Central Student Administration (CSA)

Postal address: P.O. Box 72, 9700 AB Groningen, The Netherlands
Telephone no.: (050) 363 8004
E-mail: csa@rug.nl

This office is in charge of the enrolment and registration of ordinary students, *extraneus* students, and PhD students.

It passes this data on to the faculties, the university and other official channels.

International Service Desk (ISD)

Visiting address: Broerstraat 5
Postal address: P.O. Box 72, 9700 AB Groningen, The Netherlands
Telephone no.: (050) 363 81 81
E-mail: isd@rug.nl

Open: Monday to Friday 10 a.m. – 4 p.m. (check for alternative opening hours during vacation periods)

This service desk provides information to all foreign guests of the University of Groningen (in particular students and guest lecturers) and those responsible for their well-being about matters such as regulations relating to foreigners, accommodation, insurance, banking facilities and medical care, as well as general information relating to studying and studying for a PhD at the University of Groningen. The ISD also organizes regular introductory and social activities for foreign guests.

Student psychologists

Visiting address: Oude Kijk in 't Jatstraat 41/41A
Postal address: P.O. Box 72, 9700 AB Groningen, The Netherlands
Telephone no.: (050) 363 55 44
E-mail: studenten.psychologen@rug.nl

Open: Mon/Tues/Thurs/Fri 9 a.m. – 12.30 p.m. and 1.30 – 4.45 p.m., Wed 10.45 a.m. – 12.30 p.m. and 1.30 – 4.45 p.m.

The student psychologists offer counselling for study-related matters (if, for example, you are having difficulty concentrating, cannot cope with exam nerves, or are not sure you have made the right choices) or have personal problems (relationships with parents, difficulty establishing contacts with others, and so on). You can either obtain individual help, or attend sessions with others (for example assertiveness training or group therapy). All services are free.

Study Support (SO)

Visiting address: Broerstraat 5
Academiegebouw Tower (2nd floor)
Postal address: P.O. Box 72, 9700 AB Groningen, The Netherlands
Telephone no.: (050) 363 55 48
E-mail: y.m.robert@rug.nl

Open: Monday to Friday 8.30 a.m. – 5 p.m.

This office organizes courses and training sessions dealing with study skills (studying effectively, accelerated learning skills and writing your thesis), general skills (giving a lecture/talk or discussion techniques) and finding a job after you have graduated (including applying for a position and job interview skills).

Mediator

Visiting address: Visserstraat 49
Postal address: Visserstraat 49, 9712 CT Groningen
Telephone no.: (050) 363 54 35
E-mail: j.m.dam@rug.nl

Open: Monday to Friday 9 a.m. – 5 p.m.

If you are being harassed or experiencing aggressive, violent or intimidating behaviour, consult the RUG Mediator.

Health and Safety Office (AMD)

Visiting address: Visserstraat 47
Postal address: Visserstraat 47, 9712 CT Groningen
Telephone no.: (050) 363 5551
E-mail: amd@rug.nl

Open: Monday to Friday 8.30 a.m. – 5 p.m.

The Health and Safety Office gives advice and co-ordinates activities in the area of health, safety and the work environment. The AMD has been authorized by the Board of the University to monitor health and safety and to fulfil specific functions with regard to working conditions.

Office of Corporate Administrative and Legal Affairs (ABJZ)

Postal address: P.O. Box 72, 9700 AB Groningen, The Netherlands
Telephone no.: (050) 363 54 40
E-mail: abjz@rug.nl

Open: Monday to Friday 9 a.m. – 5 p.m.

ABJZ provides information relating to appeals that have been lodged with the Board of the University or the Board of Appeal for the Examinations (CBE).

They can also inform you about the various rules that apply within the university.

University Funds Committee (UFC)

Postal address: P.O. Box 72, 9700 AB Groningen, The Netherlands
E-mail: ufc@rug.nl

The UFC advises the Board of the University concerning applications for financial assistance under the Graduation Fund regulations. Documentary evidence to go with your (digital) request for financial support should also be submitted to this office.

Complaints Committee for harassment, sexual harassment and aggressive, violent or discriminatory behaviour

Postal address: Antwoordnummer 172, 9700 VB Groningen

You can submit complaints based on the Complaints Regulation concerning harassment, sexual harassment and aggressive, violent or discriminatory behaviour (Klachtenregeling SIAGD) to this committee.

Complaints office of the inspectors for confidential matters

Telephone : 0900-1113111 (during office hours; local rate)

Indications of discrimination, intolerance, fundamentalism, radicalization, extremism, etc. can be reported to this complaints office. The inspector for confidential matters is the contact person for these issues and can help you find the most appropriate way of dealing with them.

Other facilities

- University Sports Centre, Blauwborgje 4, tel. (050) 363 80 63;
- ACLO Student Sport Foundation, Blauwborgje 4, tel. (050) 363 4641, www.aclosport.nl
- USVA *Cultureel Jongeren*centrum (student cultural centre), Munnekeholm 10, tel. (050) 363 4670, www.usva.nl
- GSP *Groninger Studenten*pastoraat (student pastorate), Kraneweg 33, tel. (050) 312 9926, www.gspweb.nl
- KEI *Kommissie Eerstejaars* Introductie (arranges social activities during the introductory week for first-year students), St. Walburgstraat 22, tel. (050) 363 8090, www.keiweek.nl
- GSb Student Support, St. Walburgstraat 22, tel. (050) 3187898, e-mail steunpunt@groningerstudentenbond.nl;
- SOG Student Legal Office, St. Walburgstraat 22, tel. (050) 363 46 79, e-mail rechtsbureau@studentenorganisatie.nl.
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Further information about these and other central facilities for students can be found on the Internet: <http://www.rug.nl>.

Student representatives

Student interests are represented by the following student groups:

- VOS in the U-raad (*Vooruitstrevend Overleg Studenten*: progressive student committee), tel. (050) 363 46 75, www.vosfractie.nl
- SOG in the U-raad (*Studenten Organisatie Groningen*: student organization), tel. (050)363 46 79, www.studentenorganisatie.nl)
- GSb (*Groninger Studentenbond*: Groningen student union), tel. (050)363 46 75, www.groningerstudentenbond.nl
- SOG (*Studenten Organisatie Groningen*: student organization), tel. (050)363 46 79, www.studentenorganisatie.nl)

Visiting address and postal address for all these organizations: Sint Walburgstraat 22, 9712 HX Groningen.

Board of the University (CvB)

Postal address: P.O. Box 72, 9700 AB Groningen, The Netherlands

Telephone no.: (050) 363 52 85

The Board of the University is the main governing body of the University of Groningen. It also handles appeals relating to that part of the Student Charter that deals with matters affecting the university as a whole.

University Council (U-raad)

Postal address: P.O. Box 72, 9700 AB Groningen, The Netherlands

Telephone no.: (050) 363 85 35

The University Council is the University of Groningen's central representative body. Its representatives are elected from among the staff and students.

www.rug.nl/uraad/

e-mail: b.h.pier@rug.nl

STUDENT CHARTER: SUMMARY

1. INTRODUCTION

University-wide regulations and programme-related regulations

The main points of the *university-wide regulations* in the Student Charter are listed below. They deal with general matters concerning the university as a whole, such as admissions, registration and protection of rights. The Student Charter also contains *programme-related regulations*, covering matters such as exams and credits. You can consult the programme-related section at the faculty Education Offices and in the faculty Study Guides.

Validity

The Student Charter applies to academic year 2006-2007 and is based on the Higher Education and Research Act (WHW).

Publication

A CD-ROM containing the Student Charter will be sent to the home addresses of students who register for a degree programme at the University of Groningen for the first time. All other students will receive a letter informing them where they can consult the Student Charter. It is also available on the Internet.

2. THE BACHELOR/MASTER STRUCTURE

General

All programmes are divided into a Bachelor's phase and Master's phase. Bachelor's degree programmes include the propaedeutic phase. After the Bachelor's phase, students must choose what they want to do next.

First-year students and the Bachelor/Master structure

All first-year students will fall under the Bachelor/Master structure.

Senior students and the Bachelor/Master structure

If you enrolled prior to academic year 2002-2003, you will retain your right (at least for a reasonable period of time) to take your exams under the old system.

Most of the *doctoraal* programmes will be phased out by 31 August 2007.

You will find more information in the OER.

If you want to change to the Bachelor/Master system, however, please consult the OER, your Study Advisor and/or the RUG website to find out what the possibilities are.

You cannot change back once you have made the change to the Bachelor/Master system.

The propaedeutic phase and the Bachelor's degree (the first three years)

The propaedeutic phase (the first year of study) will remain as it is. Its purpose is to provide introductory lectures and to give students a chance to select the areas they would like to specialize in. As with the previous system, in the Bachelor/Master structure the year will conclude with the propaedeutic exam. The Bachelor's degree programme will introduce you to academic research and indicate possible course directions or other studies. In all study areas, the Bachelor's programmes last for three years and end with the conferral of a Bachelor's degree that will grant access to at least one Master's degree programme.

The Master's degree (a further one, two or three years)

A Bachelor's degree will qualify you for a Master's degree programme at the University of Groningen or another institution within the Netherlands or abroad. It is also a qualification that you can use to enter the job market – you can always decide to take a Master's degree at a later stage. A Master's degree takes at least one year to complete, up to a maximum of three years.

Semesters

The Bachelor's and Master's programmes are divided into semesters. The first semester ends in February. This semester system fits in better with how the academic year is divided up in the rest of Europe.

Information

Information relating specifically to the Bachelor/Master structure is contained in the OER, which is included in the study guides. You can also obtain further information from the study advisors and the faculties.

Any new information will appear on the RUG website and in the UK (*Universiteitskrant*).

3. ELIGIBILITY AND ADMISSION REQUIREMENTS

Educational requirements

An applicant for a university Bachelor's degree programme must have one of the following:

- a VWO diploma with the relevant profile, a HBO diploma, or proof that the HBO propaedeutic phase has been successfully completed
- a foreign certificate that is considered to be equivalent (by the Minister or the Board of the University) to a VWO diploma
- a *colloquium doctum* (a declaration that the applicant meets the entrance standard though has no certificate).

VWO diploma: subject profile

Some study programmes require a certain background knowledge in terms of subjects; others do not. If some areas of your knowledge are inadequate, you may be allowed to follow the programme as long as you can demonstrate that you will have caught up by the time you enrol or else during the propaedeutic phase. You will find further information in the OER.

N.B. Additional entry requirements apply if you have an 'old' VWO diploma without a profile. Consult the relevant OER and the website of the Informatie Beheer Groep (IBG).

Knowledge of the Dutch language

If you have a foreign certificate, you may have to demonstrate that you have sufficient knowledge of Dutch to follow the programme. This applies particularly to admission to examinations, but sometimes to university education in general. You will find further information in the OER. The Admissions Office or the Board of Examiners will decide upon this.

Quotas

Entry to programmes in medicine and dentistry is subject to quotas (a ballot system). You will only be admitted if you can show proof of having been allotted a place by the Informatie Beheer Groep (IBG). The IO/IB and Psychology programmes will also use quotas for academic year 2006-2007. Please consult the IBG website for further information about quotas and ballot procedures.

Teacher Training course

Courses providing training to teach at all levels of secondary school (the grade one teaching qualification) are provided by UOCG (Centre for Academic Learning and Teaching), Landleven 1, 9747 AD Groningen, tel. (050) 363 2000.

4. ENROLMENT

The student card issued by CSA serves as your proof of enrolment. You will need to show this card to access the various facilities the university provides. You cannot take modules or sit exams without a student card.

Your registration must be completed before 1 September of the current academic year. This means that the request for registration must be submitted and the tuition fees must be paid before this date.

If you are not sent a student card, please contact the CSB: maybe your enrolment is not in order!

Registration at the RUG not only gives you certain rights, but also confers a number of obligations.

Rights

As a student enrolled at the University of Groningen, you have the right to:

- acquire academic knowledge and skills via good teaching and supervision by suitably qualified lecturers
- demonstrate your progress via examinations and final assessments
- show that you have reached the required standard of education
- use educational facilities such as libraries, laboratories and computer facilities
- access student facilities, such as assistance if you are experiencing difficulties in your studies, guidance from the student advisors, and sports facilities
- have a say in matters that affect you as student via your right to vote or be elected to the university council and the faculty councils or the O&O Council (UMCG).

Obligations

As a student you not only have rights but also the obligation to:

- maintain a workable, safe and pleasant study environment for yourself and for others by complying with safety regulations and house and behaviour rules
- take the initiative to familiarize yourself with matters that may affect your programme, such as the Student Charter
- follow modules when these have been made compulsory by the faculty (consult your study guide), such as practicals
- ensure that you register for the exams in time.

Extraneus

As an *extraneus* student, you only have the right to sit exams and to use the educational facilities. You are not allowed to follow modules. Like part-time students, *extraneus* students are not entitled to student grants under the 2000 Student Finance Act (WSF).

Extraneus students are not entitled to reimbursement of examination fees.

Statutory fees and examination fees

An ordinary student pays statutory fees while an *extraneus* student only pays examination fees. The amount of fees payable as well as the conditions for refunds or reduction of fees are set by the RUG Implementation Regulations.

These Implementation Regulations are available for perusal at each faculty's Education Office and the CSB. They are also on the RUG website.

Anyone who follows a study programme without paying fees may be liable for payment of damages to the university. All exam results will be annulled and the court may impose a fine. Needless to say, you are not eligible for a student grant if you are not registered.

5. PROGRAMMES

Full-time, part-time and dual programmes

University programmes are either full-time, part-time or dual. Consult the OER for further information.

Students have the following rights specifically related to education at the RUG.

The right to quality education

As a student, you have the right to make a written evaluation of your study programme. Independent inspectors (the so-called *visitatiecommissies*) also assess the quality of the programmes. These assessments are open to public scrutiny. The faculty may alter its policies if the assessments warrant this. All programmes are accredited by the NVAO and this will be stated on your degree certificate.

The right to a balanced study load

Your study programme must be such that you can reasonably be expected to make the required progress. The Curriculum Committee sees to this. If making the required progress in your programme appears not to be feasible, you may be eligible for financial support from the *Afstudeerfonds* on condition that you report the delay immediately to your Study Advisor (see Chapter 8). The study programme is evaluated annually by the Curriculum Committee which includes students.

The right to a programme of study that meets objective standards

The annual amount of time that it takes to follow a programme of study is expressed by the European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System (ECTS) as 60 ECTS credits. One ECTS credit is equivalent to 28 hours of study. Within the Bachelor/Master system, a Bachelor's degree programme will require you to earn 180 ECTS credits, including the propaedeutic phase. Master's degree programmes will require you to earn a maximum of 60 ECTS credits, with some exceptions. Below are the exceptions for academic year 2006-2007:

- 180 ECTS: Master's degree in Pharmacy
- 120 ECTS: Master's degree in Philosophy (for specific areas)
- 120 ECTS: Master's degree in Engineering
- 120 ECTS: Master's degree in Science
- 120 ECTS: Master's degree in Teacher-training (grade one teaching qualification for all levels of secondary education)
- 120 ECTS: Research Master's degree programmes.

The old graduate system required you to earn 168 credits over four years, with a few exceptions:

- 252 credits: a Medical or Pharmacy programme
- 210 credits: Dentistry, Philosophy (for specific areas) and Engineering
- 210 credits: the five-year Science programme.

The right to affordable education

National legislation restricts the fees payable to the University of Groningen to statutory fees (*collegegeld*) or examination fees for *extraneus* students. The Board of the University imposes other fees, such as university expenses and expenses for educational tours, under separate legislation (*Regeling Prijsbeleid Studiekosten*). The study guide indicates what these other fees are for each new academic year. The website will also provide information. A brochure entitled 'Studeren, wat kost het?' is available from the CSB (in Dutch).

Each faculty board is required to ensure timely notification of costs and contributions towards them. If the costs of study exceed the ceiling amount stated in the policy on study costs (*Regeling Prijsbeleid Studiekosten*), you can request reimbursement of half of the extra expenditure from the Faculty Board on the basis of receipts submitted as proof.

The right to assistance while you are studying

Students have a right to help (from a student advisor or student counsellor, for example) if they are experiencing difficulties. Students experiencing problems associated with, for example, a handicap that restricts their functioning, a chronic illness or dyslexia are entitled to additional assistance if required. Students from other countries are also entitled to specific assistance. Please contact your Study Advisor for more information.

The right to adapted education

Students with a functional disability, a chronic illness, dyslexia or other physical or mental performance disability have the right to receive education in a form which compensates for this. Please ask your study advisor or the CSB for more information about adapted exams. The study guide also contains information about this matter.

The right to have your complaints taken seriously

Depending on their nature, complaints may be handled by any one of several contact persons.

- At the faculty level: by a faculty or study advisor

- At a more general level: by the confidential counsellor, the student counsellor or the Health and Safety Office (depending on the nature of the complaints)

The right to be informed about the progress of your studies (for students with a ‘Tempo’ grant)

You will be sent written notification of the number of credits that you have earned in academic year 2005-2006 by 1 November 2006. This is with reference to your ‘Tempo’ grant. See section 8 for more information about study progress norms and the ‘Tempo’ grant.

Study progress and performance-related grants

Due to government legislation, the number of credits earned in one academic year no longer has an effect on the government grants for students who receive a grant for the first time on or after 1 September 2004 (this only applies to Dutch students). The loans for these students will be converted into grants if they graduate within 10 years. This means that the grant for the first 12 months will no longer be converted separately. The CSB and IBG can provide more information about this subject.

6. EXAMINATIONS

Examination

Every module (subject) is examined separately. The Board of Examiners regulations apply to all of these exams.

Final assessment

You are considered to have successfully completed the programme or part of a programme if you have passed the required exams. The Board of Examiners sets the rules for the exams. These rules can be found in the relevant OER. The Board of Examiners makes passing the final assessment dependent on further conditions being fulfilled.

Evidence of having passed an exam

For each examination that you pass the examiners will issue a note to this effect. If you have two or more of these notes, you can request the Board of Examiners to issue a statement listing your exam passes. A certificate is issued for every final assessment you pass. A Diploma Supplement, which contains an overview of the programme content, modules followed and the results achieved, is added to your degree certificate.

Propaedeutic phase

The propaedeutic exam is an integral part of both the Bachelor’s degree (180 ECTS credits) and the old system (a minimum of 168 credits). A propaedeutic certificate is issued after a student has successfully completed all propaedeutic modules.

Fixed study programmes

The OER establishes what exams have to be passed to finish your study programme. However, you can design your own study programme as long as it is approved by the Board of Examiners. The OER is included in the study guide.

Recognition of foreign qualifications by the RUG

If you have attended secondary school abroad, you will be required to demonstrate that you have sufficient command of the Dutch language to follow a university degree here. The conditions are in the OER.

A right to adapted exams

Students with a functional disability, a chronic illness, dyslexia or other physical or mental performance disability have the right to take exams in a form which compensates for this. Please ask your study advisor or the CSB for more information about adapted exams. The study guide also contains information about this subject.

7. TEACHING AND EXAMINATION REGULATIONS (OER)

The OER

Every study programme has its own OER, drawn up by the Faculty Board and incorporating recommendations from the faculty Curriculum Committees. The Curriculum Committees also assess the regulations and how they are implemented.

Matters covered by the OER

Matters covered by the OER are defined by the Higher Education and Research Act (WHW). They include the design of the programmes and entry requirements.

8. FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE FOR STUDENTS WHO ARE ELIGIBLE FOR IBG GRANTS (THIS SECTION DOES NOT APPLY TO FOREIGN STUDENTS)

Graduation Fund (Afstudeerfonds)

If circumstances beyond your control affect your progress during your degree, you may be eligible for financial assistance from the Graduation Fund. The conditions are set out in the regulations pertaining to the fund (Afstudeerfondsregeling).

You must also meet the following criteria.

If you suffer study delay due to circumstances beyond your control, and if the delay is expected to amount to more than 4 weeks, you must report this immediately to your study advisor (the so-called 'first report'). If the delay will last more than 2 months, you must make an appointment as soon as possible with a student counsellor. You must follow the advice given by the student counsellor to be eligible for the Graduation Fund.

The following may constitute grounds for financial assistance:

- illness
- pregnancy
- physical, sensory or other limitations
- family circumstances
- lack of a programme of study that meets objective standards
- loss of accreditation of the programme you are enrolled in
- exceptional circumstances on the basis of the hardship clause: any other circumstances, if rejection of a request for financial support would lead to unfairness of overriding nature

Other exceptional circumstances include:

- membership of a curriculum committee
- membership of a consultative body
- committee membership if included in the Graduation Fund Regulations
- sporting activities at a top level

More information about the conditions for financial support from the Graduation Fund can be found in the relevant regulations.

IMPORTANT INFORMATION FOR STUDENTS WITH IBG STUDENT GRANTS:

- 1. Make sure you discuss any change in your study situation (such as study delays or a change of programme) with a study advisor or student counsellor immediately. *When in doubt, ask.***
- 2. If you incur a study delay of more than 4 weeks you should always register this with your study advisor immediately, as you may be eligible for financial support from the Graduation Fund. The study advisor will direct you to a student counsellor if your delay is or will be more than two months. You will have to make an appointment with a student counsellor for a follow-up report yourself. Note that the Graduation Fund counts in academic years, and that a study delay continuing into the next academic year must be registered again. Credits are sometimes granted in**

a certain academic year, even though you did part of the work in previous years (e.g. partial examinations, parts of your thesis). If this is the case, you may request reallocation of part of these credits in order to be eligible for financial support from the Graduation Fund. Consult your department for more information. The student counsellor can also tell you about 'Tempo' grants, performance-related grants, the Graduation Fund, deregistration, work and social benefits. **No forms, no money!**

3. Apply in good time. You must submit your application between the end of the academic year (September) and 1 February of the year following the year during which the special circumstances occurred. If you apply too late, you will not receive financial compensation. **Don't miss the boat!** Please use the digital request form, which can be downloaded from the RUG website.

4. If you are unable to handle your own financial affairs, please appoint someone to manage them for you, for example a relative or friend.

Regeling financiële Ondersteuning studenten Bèta-opleidingen (ROB) (Regulations concerning financial assistance for students of the sciences)

Students of Biology, Chemistry, Physics, Computing Science, Astronomy, Statistics and Pharmaceutical Engineering who started their studies in academic years 1996-1998 may be eligible for a maximum of one additional year of study finance. Contact your study advisor for more information.

Study progress norms and progress-related grants ('Tempo' grants)

If you were awarded a grant before 1 September 1996 for a programme in higher education, your grant will be regarded as a provisional grant (*tempobeurs*; progress-related grant). If you earn enough credits in a particular year, the provisional grant will be converted into a proper grant. If you do not earn enough credits, the provisional grant will be converted into an interest-bearing loan.

Most students must earn 30 ECTS credits per year and are eligible for a grant for a period of five years. If you have not graduated after five years, you will be eligible for a loan for two years. There are, of course, exceptions to this rule. More information about this matter can be found in the IBG folder 'U heeft een tempobeurs' (in Dutch).

The annual study progress target is 50 percent (30 ECTS credits, or 21 credits in the old system). If, due to exceptional circumstances, you find that you have not made the required progress in your studies, you may be able to get financial assistance from the Graduation Fund, the *Tempobeurs* Fund or from IBG. In order to receive financial assistance from the university or IBG, students need to notify the RUG via a study advisor and subsequently a student counsellor from the CSB. **You can read more about the conditions for financial assistance in this chapter, under 'Graduation Fund'.** The CSB and IBG can provide more information about this subject.

Rules of procedure for the financial support of foreign students

Foreign students who are faced with study delay as a result of extraordinary circumstances may be eligible for financial assistance on the grounds of the *Rules of procedure for the financial support of foreign students*. Dutch and English versions of these rules are available from the CSB and on the website. The request procedure is the same as the procedure for Graduation Fund requests. Contact the CSB or your Study Advisor for information.

Emergency Fund

Students who are faced with exceptional circumstances which result in distress can appeal to the Emergency Fund for financial assistance in the form of a loan and/or a gift. Read more about this subject on the RUG website (in Dutch) or ask the CSB.

Applications for financial assistance from the RUG and IBG

Applications for financial support from the Graduation Fund must be submitted **digitally**; see the RUG website.

Application forms for financial assistance from the Emergency Fund and on the grounds of the *Rules of procedure for the financial support of foreign students* are available from the CSB. Application forms for financial assistance on the grounds of the ROB regulation are available from the CSB and your faculty. The Board of the University makes decisions about grants, following recommendations by the following

committees respectively: the University Funds Committee (UFC) and the Emergency Fund Committee. The Board of the University will notify you of its decision in writing, and if you wish you may appeal against it (see chapter 11). Questions about the Graduation Fund can be e-mailed to: ufc@bureau.rug.nl.

Application forms for financial assistance and conditions for financial support from IBG are also available from the CSB. The university has to determine whether it can agree with the application; to this end, you must visit a student counsellor. After the university and the doctor who is treating you have signed statements confirming the exceptional circumstances, you can lodge your application with IBG.

Read more about the conditions for financial assistance from the RUG or the IBG in this chapter, under ‘Graduation Fund’ and ‘Study progress norms’.

9. PARTICIPATION IN DECISION-MAKING

Universiteitsraad: University Council

The University Council is the University of Groningen’s representative body and the Board of the University’s consultative partner. It has 24 members representing staff and students, elected from amongst their ranks: 12 from the student ranks by students, and 12 from the staff ranks by staff.

Students members are elected for one year, staff for two.

Right to consent

The University Council has the right to give its assent when the following are established or changed:

- university policies
- a system of quality control
- the Student Charter
- the governance and management regulations
- health and safety regulations
- choice of decision-making systems
- regulations relating to financial aid for students

Faculty Council

Each faculty has its own Faculty Council which functions as its representative body and the Faculty Board’s consultative partner. Half of the Faculty Council consists of student members elected by students and half of staff elected by staff. While the number of council members varies per faculty, a maximum of 24 has been set. Student members are elected for one year, staff members for two.

Right to consent

The Faculty Council has the right to give its assent when the following are established or changed:

- the faculty regulations
- the Teaching and Examination Regulations (OER)

Since 1 January 2005, the Faculty of Medical Sciences has been part of the UMCG.

Students can now be elected to the O&O Council and can become members of the management team of the UMCG Teaching Institute.

Curriculum Committees

Each programme has its own Curriculum Committee. It offers advice relating to the Teaching and Examination Regulations, and assesses them. Half of its members are students. The committee members are appointed by the Faculty Board.

Facilities for students in representative bodies

If you are a student member of the University Council, a Faculty Council or a Curriculum Committee, you may not be able to attend some exams or compulsory modules of your programme because they coincide with meetings of the relevant Council or Curriculum Committee. Your faculty will try to enable you as far

as possible to take the exam and to attend the modules at a suitable time or arrange a substitute assignment.

10. HOUSE RULES AND SANCTIONS

HOUSE RULES AND SANCTIONS

Disregarding the rules relating to the use of university premises may lead to denial of access to university buildings and grounds for a maximum of one year.

Using the university computer systems

Using the university computer systems, including hardware, software and network facilities, is only permitted in accordance with the account assigned to you. All users must comply with the regulations stated in the User Regulations for University Computer Systems. These regulations have been included as an annex to the Student Charter.

Privacy

You have the right to view your personal and academic records held by the university's administrative office and to request that they be altered. Your records may otherwise only be accessed by RUG personnel entitled to do so. Information may be edited to the extent that this is consistent with the aim for which the information was collected (for example to provide student information per e-mail). Other parties may only view the information if you agree to this or if the Personal Data Protection Act (*Wet bescherming persoonsgegevens* (Wbp)) permits it. The RUG has its own privacy regulation based on the Wbp: *de Regeling bescherming persoonsgegevens studenten en personeel van de RUG* (Regulation concerning the protection of personal data of students and personnel of the RUG). This regulation is available on the RUG website.

Harassment, sexual harassment, aggression, violence and discrimination

The Board of the University has set rules relating to how the RUG shall deal with sexual harassment, aggression, violence and discrimination in the so-called *SIAGD Code of behaviour* (*Gedragcode SIAGD*).

Health and safety rules

The Board of the University has set rules to ensure the safety, health, and well-being of both ordinary and *extraneus* students at the university.

11. LEGAL RIGHTS

If you disagree with a decision, you have the right to lodge an appeal or complaint. The procedures for academic matters differ to those relating to enrolments and financial regulations. The former are dealt with by the Board of Appeal for the Examinations, and the latter by the Board of the University.

An appeal to the CBE

If you disagree with an examiner or Board of Examiners decision you have the right to appeal to the Board of Appeal for the Examinations (CBE), but only if the decision relates to matters of the types dealt with in sections 3, 5 and 6. They include the following:

- establishing the number of credits earned
- admission to exams
- fairness of exams
- admission to programmes (individual cases)

Procedure

1. Students must lodge a written appeal with the Board of Appeal for the Examinations (CBE) within 4 weeks. The address is: PO Box 72, 9700 AB Groningen, tel. 050-363 54 39. In urgent cases, students may request that temporary provisions be made.
2. The CBE will pass on the appeal to the chair of the Board of Examiners, who will first try to see whether the parties will agree on a compromise. If this is not successful, the CBE will rule on the appeal.
3. The Board will give one of the following judgements within ten weeks of submission of the appeal:
 - there are no grounds for appeal, and the appeal is dismissed
 - the appeal is not allowed and no judgement will be given since there has been a breach of procedure (for example, the appeal was not lodged in time)
 - there are grounds for appeal and the decision is annulled. The examiner or Board of Examiners will have to revise their decision.
4. In some cases, the CBE's decision may be contested in a court of law. Such an appeal must be lodged within 6 weeks after the CBE's decision was sent.

Submission of objections to the Board of the University

If you disagree with a decision made by the Board of the University, you can lodge an appeal with the same board if the decision relates to matters of the types dealt with in sections 3, 4, 8 and 10. They include the following:

- enrolment (ordinary or *extraneous*)
- cancellation of enrolment because of illness, family circumstances or educational circumstances beyond your control
- financial assistance
- denial of access to the RUG's premises and grounds

Procedure

1. Students must lodge a written appeal with the Board of the University within six weeks of the decision. The address is: PO Box 72, 9700 AB Groningen.
2. During the hearing, both the Board of the University and the student will be heard by the Advisory Committee for Appeals (ACB).
3. The Advisory Committee for Appeals will pass on its recommendations to the Board of the University, which will then make its decision.
4. The student can lodge an appeal with the CBHO (Higher Education Appeals Board) within six weeks of this decision. The address is: Paleis van Justitie, PO Box 20302, 2500 EH The Hague, or a court of law, depending on the nature of the decision.

Costs

The costs of appealing to the Higher Education Appeals Board or an (administrative) court of law are as follows:

- regardless of outcome, court registration charges of €38 (CBHO) and €141 (Court)
- court costs if the decision is not in your favour and costs are awarded against you.

Information

The RUG's Department of Corporate Administrative and Legal Affairs (ABJZ) can provide information about legal rights and other legal matters. The address is: ABJZ, PO Box 72, 9700 AB Groningen, tel. 050-363 54 40.

Information can also be found in a brochure published by the CSB entitled 'Bezwaar en Beroep' (in Dutch).

