



University of Groningen Graduation Fund Regulations 2017-2018

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

Introduction

Section 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. Article 7.51d of the WHW enables institutions to provide financial support to students who do not satisfy the nationality requirement set out in Article 2.2 of the Student Finance Act 2000 and are thus not entitled to student finance.

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 29th of June 2017.

See also:

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

Article 1. Definitions

The following definitions are used in these regulations:

Ba:	The nominal duration of a Bachelor's degree programme.
International student:	A student registered at the University of Groningen for a full-time degree programme who either does not have Dutch nationality or is not treated as a Dutch citizen on the basis of a legal provision and who does not qualify for a performance-related grant under the Student Finance Act 2000 (WSF 2000).
CLRS:	Central Portal for the Legal Protection of Student Rights.
Board of the University:	The Board of the University of Groningen.
Higher education:	Education provided at universities (WO) and universities of applied sciences (HBO).
University tuition fees:	Tuition fees which apply to students who do not meet the requirements for the statutory tuition fees as referred to in Article 7.45a WHW.
Ma:	The nominal duration of a Master's degree programme.
Degree programme:	A Bachelor's or Master's degree programme.
UG:	University of Groningen.
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.
Student Support & Career Services (SSCS):	University of Groningen expertise centre in the field of study and career guidance.
Student counsellor:	Confidential advisor for students who have study progress problems, employed by the SSCS.

Study advisor:	Employee of the Faculty; advisor for study-related issues, study planning, study progress and the choice of degree programme.
Student finance:	A performance-related grant plus 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.
Academic year:	A period of time that starts on 1 September and ends on 31 August of the following year.
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.
Act:	The Higher Education and Research Act (WHW: <i>Wet op het Hoger Onderwijs en Wetenschappelijk onderzoek</i>).
WSF 2000:	<i>Wet studiefinanciering 2000</i> (Student Finance Act 2000).

Article 2. Scope

These Regulations only apply to international students who are following a full-time degree programme at the University of Groningen and have not yet gained their degree, and who do not qualify for a performance-related student grant under WSF 2000.

Article 3. Extraordinary circumstances

1. The following may constitute grounds for financial assistance:
 - a. illness of the claimant
 - b. pregnancy of the claimant
 - c. physical, sensory or other functional disorders/chronic illness contracted during the nominal programme duration on the part of the claimant
 - d. death of a relation by blood or affinity in the first degree
 - e. an insufficiently feasible study programme
 - f. other extraordinary circumstances, if rejection would result in a situation of unfairness of overriding nature.
2. Other extraordinary circumstances include:
 - a. Administrative and consultative positions as referred to in the Graduation Fund Regulations 2017-2018, Part C
 - b. Top-level sport as referred to in the Graduation Fund Regulations 2017-2018, Part C

Article 4. Conditions for financial support

1. Students who incur study delay due to extraordinary circumstances as referred to in Article 3.1 may apply for financial support:
 - a. if they satisfy the age criteria laid down in the WSF 2000 at the start of the programme, and
 - b. if they are registered as a full-time student at the University of Groningen for a degree programme for which they have not yet gained their degree, and
 - c. if they have paid statutory or University tuition fees to the University of Groningen for the period to which the request refers.
2. Students must be able to prove that they have no other sources of financial support available to them. This means that they must provide information concerning any financial allowance or student grant they are receiving or have received.

Article 5. Duration of support

1. In addition to the provisions of Article 4, 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 4, 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 in Higher Education (Ma + 1).

Article 6. Reporting study delay

1. A student must immediately report to his/her study advisor as soon as it becomes clear that the extraordinary 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.
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, and in any case within 4 weeks of 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 student counsellor and make every effort to minimize the study delay.

Article 7. Determining the extent of the study delay

1. The link between the extraordinary circumstance as referred to in Article 3.1 and the study programme will be taken into consideration when deciding on the extent of the study delay. The number of months of study delay caused by an extraordinary circumstance can thus normally only be calculated at the end of the period Ba+1 or Ma+1.
2. Financial support is only granted per full month.
3. No financial support will be granted for study delays of less than one month (less than 5 ECTS).

Article 8. 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 by means of the digital request form on the website: www.rug.nl/studievertraging.
3. Students must request provisional financial support by means of the digital request form on the website www.rug.nl/studievertraging.
4. Students must upload the documentary evidence via de website, and must then fill in the digital request form in accordance with this Article.
5. The following documents must be submitted:
 - a. Documentary evidence of the extraordinary circumstance (e.g. doctor's / psychologist's statement, death certificate, faculty statement, etc.)
 - b. Summary of all financial support received by the student (e.g. bank statements or other legal documents)
 - c. An authorized printout of ECTS credit points from the Student Administration Office.
6. Requests submitted on or after 1 February of the year after the academic year in which the extraordinary circumstance occurred will not be processed.
7. If the request is incomplete, the student will be granted four weeks to complete the request. If the request is not completed within this term, it will not be considered any further. The student will be notified of this.
8. The Board of the University will make a decision with regard to the request after consultation with the UFC. This will take place as soon as possible but within a maximum of 8 weeks of receipt of the completed request.

9. 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, supported by reasons, will be communicated to the student in writing. Students will be notified of the fact that they can lodge an appeal against the decision within 6 weeks.

Article 9. Request for definitive granting of financial support

1. A request for definitive approval of provisionally granted financial support may be submitted:
 - a. one month before until no more than six months after the end of the period Ba+1 or Ma+1, or
 - b. one month before until no more than six months after graduation or termination of registration.
2. The decision will be:
 - a. either the definitive granting of financial support, or
 - b. rejection of the request, or
 - c. non-consideration of the request because it was submitted after the deadline, or
 - d. non-consideration of the request because the request was incomplete and the missing information was not provided before the deadline.
3. The decision, and the reasons for it, will be communicated to the student in writing. Students will be notified of the fact that they can lodge an appeal against the decision within 6 weeks.
4. The amount of financial support will depend on the amount of study delay actually incurred, which will be determined on the basis of an up-to-date printout of the student's study results.

Article 10. Extent and amount of financial support

1. The financial support is related to the extent of the study delay and amounts to € 286 per month.
2. The financial support received by a student in connection with an administrative or consultative position equals the amounts laid down in chapters 2 and 4 of the University of Groningen Graduation Fund Regulations 2017-2018, Part C.
3. The financial support received by a student in connection with with practising top-level sport equals the amounts laid down in chapter 7 of the University of Groningen Graduation Fund Regulations 2017-2018, Part C.
4. An accumulation of circumstances as referred to in Articles 3.1 and 3.2 will never result in financial support for more than 12 months per academic year.

Article 11. Payment of financial support

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

Article 12. Possibility of appeal

Students can lodge an appeal 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, 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.

Article 13. 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 14. Deviation from the regulations

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

Article 15. Date of commencement and validity

These regulations will take effect on 1 September 2017 and will remain in force until 1 September 2018.

Article 16. Citation and publication of these regulations

1. These regulations may be cited as 'University of Groningen Graduation Fund Regulations 2017-2018', possibly with the addition of 'Part B: Financial support of international students who incur study delay due to extraordinary circumstances'.
2. These Regulations have been sent to the Faculty Boards for reference, published on the internet and included as an appendix in the Students' Charter.

Groningen, 17th of July 2017, The Board of the University