



Universiteit Utrecht



# Policy and Assessment Framework for Student Organisations

Requirements for student organisations seeking support from HU University of Applied Sciences and Utrecht University *Adopted and in effect for*

*1 September 2021 till 31 August 2024<sup>1</sup>*

## 1. Introduction

HU University of Applied Sciences (hereinafter: HU) and Utrecht University (hereinafter: UU) believe that the academic development of students is shaped not only in the classroom, but also by taking part in various activities alongside one's studies, organising extracurricular activities and managing a student organisation. Supporting these activities is in keeping with the objectives of the HU and UU as outlined in their respective strategic documents: *Ambition of the HU University of Applied Sciences 2026 (Ambitieplan Hogeschool Utrecht in 2026)* and the UU's Strategic Plan 2025.

Since 2004, the HU and UU have had a common service desk for the implementation of their support schemes. The official rules for the support to be provided are set forth in various joint documents:

- Policy and Assessment Framework for Student Organisations (*Beleids- en toetsingskader Studentenorganisaties*) (hereinafter: Policy Framework)
- HU/UU Compensation for Board Activity Grant Scheme (*Regeling bestuursbeurzen HU/UU*)
- HU/UU Grants Scheme (*Subsidieregeling HU/UU*).

In addition, there is a joint Guideline on the Code of Behaviour of Student Organisations (*Handreiking Omgangsvormen Studentenorganisaties*) that helps make student organisations aware of their role within the Utrecht student community, where safety and respect for one another play an important role.

The Policy Framework contains the criteria based on which the HU and UU jointly assess whether student organisations and their activities are eligible for support. The above-mentioned schemes and the Policy Framework can be found on the joint website: [www.bestuurlijkactiefutrecht.nl](http://www.bestuurlijkactiefutrecht.nl).

## 2. Classification of student organisations

For the purpose of distributing the available resources, student organisations have been divided into various clusters:

A. Cluster A includes student organisations whose activities are specifically focused on HU and/or UU students. They are further classified under Subclusters A1 to A10:

1. Social clubs
2. Sports clubs
3. Art and culture
4. International organisations
5. Diversity and inclusion
6. Job market and work experience
7. Education and society
8. Philosophical and spiritual
9. Umbrella associations
10. Other student organisations

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<sup>1</sup> With the possibility of an extension.

- B. Cluster B includes student organisations that focus entirely or largely on students from a specific field of study or faculty at the UU, e.g. study societies and faculty journals.
- C. Cluster C includes student organisations that focus entirely or largely on students from a specific field of study or who belong to an institute of the HU, e.g. study societies.
- D. Cluster D includes student organisations that carry out tasks on behalf of the Executive Boards specifically focused on HU and/or UU students.<sup>1</sup>

The purpose of this division into clusters and distribution of resources across the clusters is to preserve a wide variety of activities and multi-faceted organisations. As a result, HU/UU students have a very wide range of student organisations to choose from, with something for everyone.

### 3. Forms of support (for Clusters A to D)

Student organisations can avail themselves of different types of support from the HU and UU, i.e. financial support as well as support in kind.

#### 3.1 Financial support

The HU and UU provide various forms of financial support for student organisations:

- Compensation for board activities (*bestuursbeurs/bestuursbeurzen*): this is intended as a compensation for the costs incurred by students who have fallen behind with their studies as a result of their activities as part of management bodies or committees. There are two types of compensation for board activities: regular compensation and compensation for specific activities.
  - The purpose of regular compensation for board activities (*vaste bestuursbeurs/vaste bestuursbeurzen*) is to guarantee the continuity of the basic activities of the student organisation. This is awarded to an organisation for a period of three years.
  - Compensation for specific activities (*bestuursbeurs/bestuursbeurzen voor specifieke activiteiten*) is awarded for a period of one year for specific once-only activities or student organisations in the start-up phase.
- Activity grants (*activiteitensubsidie/activiteitensubsidies*): these are, in principle, once-only grants for specific activities awarded to student organisations for special activities or projects that are not part of the standard programme of a student organisation.
- Basic grants (*basissubsidie/basissubsidies*): this type of grant is to be awarded to organisations, clusters or subclusters specifically designated by the Executive Boards not only because they have achieved a certain level of quality, made a meaningful contribution to the life and community in Utrecht or have taken over the responsibility for certain tasks from the educational institutions, but because they have also demonstrated the ability to perform consistently well through their activities. The three-year grant is awarded with a view to maintaining the student organisation, so that it can continue to perform its core activities. The grant is not intended for generating profits or for any legal entities associated with a student organisation (such as a company).

Only student organisations that can demonstrate a sufficient level of consistency, quality and administrative workload and that have at least 100 members<sup>2</sup> may be considered eligible for regular compensation for board activities and basic grants. Organisations that have less than 100 members because they are in their start-up phase, may apply for a management participation grant for specific activities.

Students who are studying at the HKU University of the Arts Utrecht (hereinafter: HKU) and are members of the management board of a student organisation recognised by the UU & HU may be

<sup>1</sup> Examples include the student board of the Utrecht Introduction Week (UIT) and the Studying without Limitations Platform).

<sup>2</sup> Foundations do not have any members. In case of foundations, their output and the reach of their activities among the Utrecht student population are taken into consideration.

considered eligible for an HKU management participation grant if they meet the regulations associated with this Policy Framework and the conditions of the HKU Student Financial Support Regulations (*Reglement Profileringsfonds van HKU*).

### **3.2 Support in kind**

In addition to financial support, the HU and UU also offer other facilities, such as:

- Workspace: office space and meeting rooms at different locations of the UU and/or HU.
- Special benefits and facilities such as a listing on the central website of the educational institutions, customised training courses and discounts on catering in university buildings (UU).
- Invitations to ceremonial and other important gatherings such as the UU Anniversary Day event '*Dies Natalis*', the Start of the Academic Year events at the UU and HU, the Utrecht Introduction Week event 'UIT' and events for board members (*Besturendagen*) and other social get-togethers (*Oploop*) at the HU.

## **4. General requirements for recognition and support (for Clusters A to D)**

To be eligible for support, the organisation must be recognised as a student organisation by the UU and HU. Recognition is granted by the Academic & Student Affairs Office (HU) and/or the Student & Academic Affairs Office (UU) under the instructions of the Executive Boards and is based on the following criteria:

- The organisation has a legal personality and its articles of association are in line with the Policy Framework.
- The organisation is registered with the Chamber of Commerce of the City of Utrecht<sup>3</sup> and is not a committee or local administration of another organisation.
- The organisation focuses on the HU/UU student community and ensures an inclusive culture, based on the objective outlined in its articles of association, where every student is welcome and feels safe.
- The organisation actively develops activities in the context of student facilities.
- The organisation is run by and for HU and UU students.
- For financial support in the form of compensation for board activities, at least 75% of the members must either be studying at the HU and/or UU or it should be no more than one year since the end of their enrolment<sup>4</sup> at the UU and/or HU.<sup>5</sup> A percentage of 70% applies for a general recognition as a student organisation.

### **New organisations:**

New student organisations may be recognised if:

- The core identity of the organisation and its activities can be considered distinct and innovative compared to already existing Utrecht student or other organisations and no obvious affiliation exists with a comparable organisation; and
- The student organisation is expected to have a sufficient support base within the student life at Utrecht.

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<sup>3</sup> For student organisations affiliated with University College Roosevelt or the HU campus at Amersfoort, registration in either Middelburg or Amersfoort is also possible.

<sup>4</sup> Students whose enrolment at the HU and UU ended no more than one year ago may be included in the percentage. In case of foundations, at least 75% or 70% of the target group of the foundation and executive board of the foundation must consist of students from the HU and/or UU.

<sup>5</sup> Student organisations may be asked to prove that they continue to meet the standard. It is therefore important that the student organisation requests the members, annually and in advance, for their explicit permission to share this enrolment information with the HU and UU. After verification, the UU and HU destroy the list and the data are no longer used for anything other than checking the student's enrolment status. The student organisation is not subsequently informed about which student is actually enrolled at which educational institution; it is only informed about or not whether the standard has been met.

New organisations are classified into the most relevant cluster based on consultation.

**No financial or other support is possible for:**

- Organisations and activities that seek to maintain or promote discrimination<sup>6</sup>;
- Organisations that do not adhere to the Code of Conduct (UU) or the Student Charter (HU&UU);
- Organisations and activities of a commercial nature or activities where the financial support is not actually utilised for the organisation of the activity<sup>7</sup>;
- Organisations or activities that are not or only minimally focused on Utrecht students;
- Organisations or activities for a closed group or activities that benefit only one or a few individuals;
- Organisations and activities that are focused solely on entertainment, such as organisations whose primary purpose is to organise a party, activities such as drinks and receptions, or other activities without any meaningful purpose;
- National organisations, political organisations or activities without any Utrecht input or influence.

**Financial or other support may be withdrawn if:**

- The organisation and/or activities no longer comply with the Policy Framework and/or regulations associated with the Policy Framework;
- The organisation breaks the law;
- The organisation does not adhere to agreements made with the Executive Boards, e.g. the Introduction Week Code of Conduct (*Gedragscode Introductietijd*); and/or
- The organisation and/or the activities of the organisation and/or members (those representing the organisation externally) cause damage or harm to the good name, network of relationships and/or reputation of one or both of the educational institutions.

## **5. Specific requirements for recognition and support per cluster**

### **5.1 Cluster A**

#### **A1: Social clubs**

Social clubs are associations that organise activities spanning the entire spectrum of student life.

- a. They organise activities in the areas of:
  - Personal academic development, e.g. lectures, debates and conferences
  - Culture, e.g. theatrical performances and singing contests
  - Sports, e.g. sports days and tournaments
  - Study support, e.g. study groups and mentoring
- b. They own and operate a facility (i.e. one or more accommodations/clubhouse) that has been managed by the club for at least six years and provide a central meeting space for their members.
- c. They organise a period of introduction in accordance with the Introduction Week Code of Conduct;
- d. They undertake activities to fulfil their social responsibilities, e.g. by encouraging voluntary work among members and organising benefit activities; and
- e. They contribute positively to increasing their visibility within the city by also organising activities aimed at the residents of that city.

#### **A2: Sports clubs**

Sports clubs are associations that organise activities focused on the practice of one or more sports. They focus on the following:

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<sup>6</sup> For a definition of discrimination, see: <https://students.uu.nl/en/practical-information/policies-and-procedures/complaints-objections-and-appeals/misconduct> <sup>7</sup> This includes activities where the grant is used for profit-making purposes.

- Association-based active participation in sports by students; and
- Organising association-based competitions and/or training sessions; and
- Pursuing an active policy for the training and active participation of members in the more technical aspects of sporting performance (trainers, coaches and/or referees).

During the Assessment<sup>8</sup>, sports clubs may receive a larger share of the budget available for the relevant cluster under the following conditions:

- They own a facility (i.e. one or more accommodations/clubhouse) that has been managed by the club for at least six years and provide a central meeting space for their members; and/or
- They have teams and/or individual members ranked at a recognised elite sporting level (based on criteria set by NOC\*NSF, the Dutch Olympic Committee\*Dutch Sports Federation).

### **A3: Art and culture**

These are associations that organise activities aimed at cultural and artistic expression. They focus on the following:

- Creating and conducting artistic productions and music or dance performances;
- Organising exhibitions and presentations;
- Stage and theatre productions; or
- Other association-based cultural events.

### **A4: International organisations**

These are organisations that focus on the following:

- Facilitating the international orientation of HU/UU students and organising a programme of activities tailored to this; and/or
- Organising a programme of activities tailored to the international students of the HU/UU, with the aim of making these students feel at home in the Netherlands and particularly in Utrecht.

### **A5: Diversity and inclusion**

These are organisations that focus on the following:

- Enriching the academic debate by offering a platform to members of various origins and backgrounds; and/or
- Contributing to an intensive cooperation and exchange with civil society organisations in the field of diversity and inclusion; and/or
- Encouraging diversity and inclusion within student life in Utrecht by organising activities that contribute to this; and/or
- Helping to bridge differences and create equal opportunities for, in particular, Utrecht students from diverse backgrounds; and/or
- Establishing a connection between students of various origins within education, research and the organisation.

### **A6: Job market and work experience**

These organisations focus on the following:

- Organising activities that prepare HU/UU students for the job market, e.g. by organising internship opportunities at home and abroad or project and consulting work; and/or
- Organising activities for UU students that are supplementary to the UU Careers Day (*UU-Carrièredag*) and the activities of UU Career Services; and/or
- Helping students become acquainted with various aspects of entrepreneurship, either by giving them the opportunity to work in a company or by helping them set up their own company.

### **A7: Education and society**

These organisations focus on the following:

- Creating interest and commitment among HU/UU students regarding educational or social issues; and/or
- Carrying out activities or projects aimed at solving a social issue, whether at home or abroad; and/or
- Organising activities to promote the academic skills of HU and/or UU students.

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<sup>8</sup> See Chapter 6.

### **A8: Philosophical and spiritual**

These are organisations that focus on the following:

- Facilitating philosophical debate among HU/UU students by organising activities such as lectures, debates, discussion circles and conferences within an academic context;
- Undertaking activities to fulfil their social responsibilities, e.g. by encouraging voluntary work among members and organising benefit activities; and
- Contributing positively to increasing their visibility within the city by also organising activities aimed at the residents of that city.

### **A9: Umbrella associations**

These are organisations that focus on the following:

- Representing one or more clusters of student organisations;
- Promoting the interests of the recognised member associations within their cluster and representing them externally;
- Offering facilities/undertaking activities to support the functioning of its member organisations;
- Taking action on behalf of the member associations in consultation with the educational institutions; and
- Distributing the activity grants among the member associations on behalf of the educational institutions.

### **A10: Other student organisations**

These are student organisations that cannot be classified under Clusters A1 to A9 or B, C and D but which could be recognised under the hardship clause.

## **5.2 Cluster B: these are student organisations that focus entirely or largely on students from a specific field of study or faculty at the UU, e.g. study societies and faculty journals.**

These organisations are specifically linked to a particular study programme and/or faculty. This automatically implies that these organisations and their activities are expected to focus on the particular study programme and/or faculty they are linked to. To be eligible for regular compensation for board activities, organisations in this cluster must contribute to an active academic climate by:

- Organising symposia, conferences, excursions and study trips;
- Setting up and organising book sales for members;
- Participating in educational evaluations, contributing to education policy and/or organising study counselling;
- Participating in faculty introduction, job market orientation and other faculty-related activities;
- Being accessible to and organising activities for every student in the study programme to which the organisation is linked; and
- Actively contributing to community building within the study programme and/or faculty.

An additional criterion during the Assessment<sup>9</sup> is the percentage of members who actively contribute to the organisation.

## **5.3 Cluster C: these are student organisations that focus entirely or largely on students from a specific study programme or institute of the HU, e.g. study societies.**

To be considered eligible for regular compensation for board activities:

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<sup>9</sup> See Chapter 6.

- The study society must fulfil its task of promoting the community within the study programme and/or the institute;
- Each year, the study society must organise five activities directly related to the study programme content;
- The study society must align itself to and work together with the study programmes and hold discussions with the management at least twice a year regarding its alignment with the programme;
- The study society must operate within the framework of HU policy, adhere to its regulations, and contribute to the HU annual plan or long-term plan through at least one of its activities;
- The study society should have existed for at least one year and can be reasonably expected to continue to exist for at least another year.

The umbrella organisation for the study societies promotes and represents the interests of recognised member associations within this cluster and offers facilities and/or undertakes activities for the benefit of its member organisations.

#### **5.4 Cluster D: these are student organisations that carry out tasks on behalf of the Executive Boards.**

To be considered eligible for compensation for board activities:

- The organisations are expected to operate independently, although under the supervision of an employee designated by the Executive Boards of both institutions or by one of them; and
- These organisations are not required to meet the legal personality requirement and the obligation to register with the Chamber of Commerce.

### **6. Assessment (for Clusters A to D)**

Student organisations that are recognised by the Executive Boards and want to continue to make use of the available facilities, must participate in the Assessment. The Assessment takes place every three years (2018, 2021, 2024 and so on). During the Assessment, it is examined whether student organisations still comply with the general requirements for student organisations and to what extent they meet the specific criteria of their cluster (as mentioned in Chapter 5).

During the Assessment, standard activities (such as general members' meetings and board meetings) or social activities of an organisation are not taken into consideration. Only the activities that are distinctive for the cluster are assessed.

Student organisations that can demonstrate during the Assessment that they have satisfied at least two of the following key principles, may be considered eligible for a larger share of the budget available for their cluster:

- The organisation demonstrates, through its activities, that it tries to align itself and work together with other recognised student organisations;
- The organisation has also organised activities aimed at involving the international student population in the organisation;
- The organisation has carried out activities in the context of the general introduction at the UU or HU for both first-year Bachelor's students and, if applicable, Master's students; and
- The organisation has undertaken activities to promote community building among students, student organisations and educational institutions by, e.g., conducting activities jointly with the educational institutions.

#### **6.1 Distribution of resources**

Based on each Assessment, the Executive Boards distribute the available budget among the different clusters. With the exception of the study programme-related Clusters B and C, the distribution of the available resources *within* the clusters is taken care of jointly by the respective Directors of the HU Academic & Student Affairs Office and the UU Student & Academic Affairs

Office<sup>10</sup>. The distribution of the compensation for board activities within the study programme-related Clusters B and C is handled within the relevant institution.

### **6.2 Outcome of the Assessment**

The Assessment can lead to three possible outcomes for a student organisation:

- A. The student organisation may in principle avail itself of any form of support, financial or otherwise, provided that the organisation and its activities comply with both the Policy Framework and any regulations that form the basis of this support and provided that the resources are still available.
- B. The student organisation may in principle avail itself of any form of support, financial or otherwise, except the regular compensation for board activities and basic grant, provided that the organisation and its activities comply with both the Policy Framework and any regulations that form the basis of this support and provided that the resources are still available.
- C. The organisation has not yet fulfilled the requirements and therefore may not in principle avail itself of the facilities offered by the HU and UU (both financial and in kind) during the three academic years following the Assessment. Financial support for organisations that received compensation for board activities and/or basic grants before the result of the Assessment was known, will be phased out.

### **6.3 Decentralisation**

The Executive Boards may decide to assign the responsibility for allocating a part of the resources internally to the faculties<sup>11</sup> or externally to the umbrella organisations<sup>12</sup>, Parnassos cultural centre<sup>13</sup> or Olympos sports centre<sup>14</sup>. These decentralised resources will be allocated according to the rules of the Policy Framework and the underlying regulations.

### **Hardship clause**

The Executive Boards may deviate from the application of the criteria or rules set out in the Policy Framework in cases where strict adherence would lead to cases of extreme unfairness.

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<sup>10</sup> Unless otherwise stipulated in the regulations on which the support is based.

<sup>11</sup> In case of UU study societies.

<sup>12</sup> In case of grants.

<sup>13</sup> In case of housing for cultural organisations.

<sup>14</sup> In case of grants.



## Appendix to the Policy Framework for Student Organisations

### **For UU study societies, the distribution of the compensation for board activities is organised as follows:**

- The UU Executive Board determines the quantitative distribution of the regular compensation for board activities budget for the UU Study (*Studie UU*) cluster among the various faculties.
- Subsequently, the Dean determines, on behalf and under the mandate of the UU Executive Board, the distribution of the regular compensation for board activities among the study societies within the faculty. To determine whether an organisation is eligible for compensation for board activities, the Dean verifies whether it meets all the specific criteria listed in the Policy Framework. In doing so, the Dean considers whether it is possible to combine a new organisation with an already existing study society for the purposes of the budget allocation, partly with the aim of preventing the fragmentation of financial resources.
- The Dean establishes the extent to which the various organisations meet these criteria. On the basis of this information, the Dean determines the number of compensation for board activities grants for each organisation. For this, the Dean does not impose any new or other criteria but implements and interprets the criteria specified in the Policy Framework and he or she also takes the number of members of the study society into account. In this context, the Dean is authorised to make an exception to the 100-member criterion.
- The Dean may decide to make more financial support available to study societies and lay down further requirements for this. Study societies will be informed in advance about these requirements.
- The Student & Academic Affairs Office is responsible for the disbursement of the regular compensation for board activities to the student managers of the study society.

### **For HU study societies, the distribution of the compensation for board activities is organised as follows:**

- Every three years, the HU Executive Board determines the distribution of the compensation for board activities for Cluster C, i.e. the HU Study Societies (*Studieverenigingen HU*). This Assessment takes place simultaneously with the Assessment for the other clusters. The Assessment is carried out every three years, i.e. in 2021, 2024 and so on.
- The Academic & Student Affairs Office carries out the Assessment for the entire cluster.
- During the start-up phase of a study society, support is offered by the Student Participation Team (*team Studentparticipatie*).
- Newly set up study societies that are not yet recognised may participate in activities organised by their umbrella organisation.
- The Academic & Student Affairs Office is responsible for the disbursement of the regular compensation for board activities to the student managers of the study society.