

# Profile Fund

## *Table of contents*

- General section
- Section 1: Force majeure
- Section 2: Specific situations
- Section 3: Administrative grants for institutional bodies
- Section 4: Administrative grants for student organizations

## *Appendices*

Appendix 1: Implementation regulations, which include:

- A. General information
- B. Documents to be submitted and procedure
- C. General provisions of the Profile Fund Committee
- D. Grants awarded from the Profile Fund
- E. Provisions for supplementary support

Appendix 2: Overview of recognized student organizations [see VUnet and VU Amsterdam website]

## GENERAL SECTION

Articles 7.51 to 7.51i of the Higher Education and Research Act (*Wet op het hoger onderwijs en wetenschappelijk onderzoek 'WHW'*) contains rules with regard to financial support for students who have fallen behind in their studies as a result of a circumstance referred to in these regulations. The Executive Board has established the following regulations concerning the granting of financial support based on this statutory regulation, with the approval of the student participatory body of Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam (hereinafter: VU Amsterdam).

### Article 1 Definition of terms

1. The following definitions are used in these regulations:
  - a. CROHO: Central Register of Courses in Higher Education (*Centraal Register Opleidingen Hoger Onderwijs*);
  - b. Familiar organization: a student association or foundation that does not comply with the requirements for acknowledgement, but has obtained permission from the Executive Board to use a number of facilities at VU Amsterdam;
  - c. Financial support: reimbursement from the Profile Fund of VU Amsterdam;
  - d. Prescribed duration of study: the duration of the degree programme according to the Central Register of Courses in Higher Education (CROHO) or the Higher Education and Research Act Implementation Decree 2008;
  - e. Profile Fund Committee: the committee that assesses students' requests for financial support from the Profile Fund and advises the Executive Board on this matter;
  - f. Programme: both a Bachelor's programme and a Master's programme are referred to as 'programme';
  - g. Recognized organization: an organization that meets the requirements of Section IV of the regulations;
  - h. Student: an individual who is enrolled as a full-time or dual student at VU Amsterdam and who pays tuition fees to VU Amsterdam.
  - i. Student & Educational Affairs: Student & Educational Affairs Service Department;
  - j. UvA: University of Amsterdam.
  - k. WHW: the Higher Education and Research Act (*Wet op Hoger Onderwijs en Wetenschappelijk Onderzoek*);
2. All other terms which occur in these regulations have, if they are also used in the law, the definition used in the law.

### Article 2 Conditions

1. Financial support is granted to students who have, as a result of circumstances described in these regulations, fallen behind in their studies in an academic year in which they are enrolled as full-time or work-study ('dual') students at VU Amsterdam on a programme, the final assessment for which they have not yet had.
2. A student taking a Bachelor's programme is exclusively eligible for the financial support referred to in the first paragraph if the student owes statutory tuition fees for the programme concerned and the student is or was entitled, with respect to the programme concerned, to the performance-related grant for higher education as referred to in the Student Finance Act (WSF 2000).
3. A student taking a one-year Master's programme is exclusively eligible for the financial support referred to in the first paragraph if the student owes statutory tuition fees for the programme concerned and no more than two years have elapsed since the student first enrolled on a Master's programme at VU.
4. A student taking a two-year Master's programme is exclusively eligible for the financial support referred to in the first paragraph if the student owes statutory tuition fees for the

programme concerned and no more than three years have elapsed since the student first enrolled on a Master's programme at VU.

5. A student taking a three-year Master's programme is exclusively eligible for the financial support referred to in the first paragraph if the student owes statutory tuition fees for the programme concerned and no more than four years have elapsed since the student first enrolled on a Master's programme at VU.

### **Article 3 UvA students**

If a budget is allocated to a student organization recognized by both VU Amsterdam and the University of Amsterdam (UvA), the provisions of Article 2 do not apply to the board member of that student organization who is enrolled at the UvA for a full-time programme and who has paid tuition fees to the UvA.

### **Article 4 Non-EEA students**

A student who receives no support from the WSF 2000 exclusively on the grounds of his nationality may invoke these regulations. The student concerned must meet the requirements of these regulations with the exception of the provision that he is or was entitled to the higher education performance-related grant as referred to in the Student Finance Act 2000 (WSF 2000). The student concerned must have paid the institutional tuition fees to VU.

### **Article 5 Transfer of authority**

The Executive Board authorizes the Director of Student & Educational Affairs to take decisions based on these regulations, with the exception of decisions on an objection.

### **Article 6 Decision**

1. The director of Student & Educational Affairs will decide on behalf of the Executive Board within fifteen weeks of receipt of the request. The Profile Fund Committee will advise the director before the decision is taken.
2. The decision will be given in writing, supplemented by a brief statement of reasons. The decision states that an objection can be lodged with the Executive Board within six weeks.
3. Financial support will not be awarded for a delay in studies of less than one month.

### **Article 7 Objection and appeal**

1. An objection may be lodged with the Executive Board in accordance with the objection procedure stipulated by this Board against an adverse or partly adverse decision, or against a decision not taken within 15 weeks after a full request for a grant of financial support has been submitted. The deadline for lodging an objection is six weeks.
2. An appeal may be lodged against decisions of the Executive Board taken on an objection on the basis of these regulations with the Higher Education Appeals Tribunal, on payment of filing fees. The deadline for lodging an appeal is six weeks.

### **Article 8 Incomplete request**

If the request for establishment and payment is incomplete, the applicant will be granted a reasonable term in which to supplement the request. If the request is not supplemented within this term, the request will be disregarded and the applicant will be informed accordingly. As long as the term for submission has not elapsed, the applicant may submit a new request.

### **Article 9 Combination of circumstances**

In the event of a combination of circumstances referred to in sections 1 and 2 of these regulations within the same period, which each give separate grounds for the awarding of financial support, the ground which has led to the greatest delay in studies will be established. Financial support will be based solely on this ground.

### **Article 10 Maximum payment**

1. For the entire period that a student is registered with VU Amsterdam, the duration of the support on the grounds of sections 1 and 2 will jointly amount to no more than half of the prescribed duration of study per academic year and in total no more than half of the prescribed duration of the programme. The number of months thus arrived at is equal to the amount of units to be awarded, as referred to in the appendix Grants Awarded from the Profile Fund.
2. If an applicant only fills a position, as referred to in section 3, during a part of the academic year, the grant will be reduced proportionally.

### **Article 11 Hardship clause**

In all cases other than the circumstances referred to in these regulations, the Executive Board can take measures to prevent significant unfairness.

### **Article 12 Entry into force, short title**

1. These regulations enter into force for as of 1 September 2019 and are valid for five years, i.e. until 1 September 2024.
2. These regulations apply to students who first give notification of circumstances causing them to fall behind in their studies on or after 1 September 2015.
3. The regulations can be cited as Profile Fund Regulations.

### **Article 13 Evaluation**

These regulations will be evaluated in the year prior to the end of the validity of these Regulations, unless the Executive Board or University Student Council deem an earlier evaluation necessary.

## **SECTION I Financial support based on force majeure**

The General Section applies unless explicitly derogated from in this Section.

### **Article 1 Applicability**

1. Force majeure is taken to mean the following extenuating circumstances:
  - a. Illness or pregnancy and birth
  - b. Extenuating family circumstances
  - c. A disability or a chronic illness
  - d. Loss of accreditation of the programme the student is taking.
2. Students can report circumstances causing them to fall behind in their studies based on force majeure during the term referred to in Article 2 of the General Section.
3. Students should submit a request for the ascertainment and payment of support from the Profile Fund at the end of the academic year in which the circumstances occurred, and before 15 January.

### **Article 2 Notification and reduction of a delay in studies**

1. In the event of a delay in studies due to force majeure, students must notify the academic advisor of their programme immediately, and in any case, no later than three months after the occurrence of the circumstance in question, in order to discuss measures to be taken to avoid a delay in their studies insofar as possible. Notifying an employee other than the programme's academic advisor does not constitute making a claim.
2. If notification is given later, no claims will be considered for support due to a delay in studies which occurred more than three months before the extenuating circumstance was reported.
3. Also in the event of an extenuating circumstance of a long-term nature (such as a chronic condition), notification of falling behind must be given anew each year to the academic advisor. This notification may be given by email.
4. Students who have fallen behind in their studies and for that reason wish to be eligible for financial support undertake to effectively use the help offered by the university to reduce the delay in studies. Examples of such help include advice from an academic advisor, recommended courses, a study schedule drawn up in consultation with an academic advisor, study advice, help with planning or the provision of special facilities.

### **Article 3 Establishing the delay in studies**

1. The amount of financial support is based on the duration of the delay in studies actually incurred as a result of the extenuating circumstances referred to in Article 1, in relation to the prescribed duration of the programme per year. The classes and examinations of the relevant programme(s) will be taken into account.
2. The duration of the delay in studies is established each academic year. No later than 15 January after the end of academic year in which the extenuating circumstances occurred, a calculation will be made on the basis of the number of prescribed credits to be obtained and the credits actually obtained of how many months' delay in studies the extenuating circumstances

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<sup>1</sup> A Bachelor's programme and a Master's programme are taken as separate programmes.

- have led to. The academic advisor can refer a student to the student counsellor for help with submitting a request for establishment and payment.
3. A delay in studies due to extenuating circumstances can never exceed the number of credits that, according to the classes and examinations (laid down in the Academic and Examination Regulations) associated with the prescribed duration of the programme(s), could be obtained in the relevant academic year.
  4. Applicants who obtained 60 or more credits in the academic year, regardless of the number of programmes they are taking simultaneously, are not considered to have fallen behind in their studies.

#### **Article 4      Pregnancy and Birth**

1. Students who were or are pregnant during the academic year are eligible for financial support subject to the provisions in Articles 2 and 3, paragraphs 2, 3 and 4 of these regulations.
2. Pregnancy or birth should be confirmed in writing by a physician, GP or midwife or evidenced by an extract from the registry of births of the municipality.
3. Financial support will be paid for a maximum period of four months.

#### **Article 5      Extent of financial support**

The number of months of study delay as established by the Profile Fund Committee corresponds to the units referred to in the appendix Grants awarded from the Profile Fund.

## **SECTION II support in specific situations**

The General Section applies unless explicitly derogated from in this Section.

### **Article 1 Applicability**

1. This section of the regulations applies to the following:
  1. students taking an insufficiently attainable programme
  2. students taking a CROHO-accredited programme not wholly subsidized by the government
  3. students performing at the highest level in sports or culture.
2. Students can give notification of circumstances causing a study delay, as referred to in paragraph 1, during the term referred to in Article 2 of the General Section.
3. Students should submit a request for establishment and payment of support from the Profile Fund at the end of the academic year in which the circumstances, referred to in paragraph 1, occurred and before 15 January.
4. In the event of a delay in studies due to circumstances referred to in paragraph 1, students must report to the academic advisor of their programme immediately, in any case within three months after the occurrence of the circumstance in question, in order to discuss measures to be taken to avoid falling behind in studies as much as possible. Notifying an employee other than the programme's academic advisor does not constitute making a claim.

### **Article 2 An 'insufficiently attainable' programme**

1. Students who have fallen behind in their studies as a result of the way the institution actually provides the programme ('insufficiently attainable programme') may report a circumstance causing a delay in studies.
2. Notwithstanding paragraph 1, a student taking a Master's programme in medicine cannot claim financial support until after a waiting period of three months before they can start their first or following housemanship.
3. Students wishing to become eligible for support on the grounds of an 'insufficiently attainable programme' should apply to the Faculty Board through an academic advisor. The Faculty Board will issue the student with a statement listing the number of months the student has fallen behind in their studies.

### **Article 3 Master's programme exceeding 60 credits (non-subsidized part)**

1. Students following a CROHO-accredited Master's programme with a study load exceeding 60 credits, while receiving no or no full government funding, may give notification of circumstances causing them to have fallen behind in their studies.
2. Students wishing to become eligible for support on these grounds should apply to the Faculty Board through an academic advisor. The Faculty Board will issue the student with a statement.

#### *Talented students*

### **Article 4 Conditions for establishing a delay in studies**

1. Students recognized by VU Amsterdam as top-level athletes or as being outstandingly talented in a cultural field, and who have fallen behind in their studies as a result of activities directly related to the performances referred to, may give notification of a circumstance causing a delay in studies.
2. Students as referred to in paragraph 1 should notify the academic advisor of their programme as soon as possible, but in any

case within three months after the study-delaying circumstance occurred. If such notification is given later, no claims will be considered for support due to a delay in studies which occurred more than three months before the extenuating circumstances were reported. Notifying an employee other than the programme's academic advisor does not constitute making a claim.

3. Applicants who obtained 60 or more credits in the academic year, regardless of the number of programmes the students are taking simultaneously, are not considered to have fallen behind in their studies.

#### **Article 5     Awarding support**

1. A student is eligible for financial aid if he or she is enrolled throughout the entire academic year. This condition may be deviated from in circumstances to be assessed by the Executive Board. Financial support is granted proportionally.
2. If students can claim another source of income related to using their talent, the amount from the other source will be deducted from the amount referred to in the appendix Grants Awarded from the Profile Fund.



### **SECTION III Administrative grants for institutional bodies**

The General Section applies unless explicitly derogated from in this Section.

#### **Article 1 Applicability**

1. To qualify for financial support on the basis of this section of the regulations, one must occupy one of the following positions:
  - a. member of a Participation Council at central or faculty level,
  - b. member of a Programme Committee,
  - c. observer of a Faculty Board,
2. Any persons making use of this section of the regulations are considered to have fallen behind in their studies as a result of their activities. Please note: the other conditions of the General Section are applicable. The general provision that a delay in studies must be demonstrated for financial support to be provided, is scrapped.
3. In derogation from Article 2 of the General Section, a person who has paid institutional tuition fees to VU is also eligible.

#### **Administrative grants**

##### **Article 2 Title-holders, conditions for administrative grants**

In order to be eligible for an administrative grant, a student must hold one of the positions referred to in the beginning of these regulations, provided that - if applicable - the other conditions in this section have also been met.

##### **Article 3 Extent of financial support for administrative grants**

1. The amount of an administrative grant is expressed in units. One unit consists of the amount referred to in the appendix Grants Awarded from the Profile Fund.
2. The administrative grant to be awarded consists, for a full year's sessions, of the number of units referred to in the appendix Grants Awarded from the Profile Fund.

#### **Attendance fees**

##### **Article 4 Conditions for attendance fees**

1.
  - a. Anyone to whom Article 1 sub a applies is entitled to payment of an attendance fee. The right to payment of an attendance fee arises once the student has attended at least 80% of the number of meetings and stayed for 80% of the the meeting. This must be evidenced by the minutes. Student members who have minimum requirements will receive the maximum amount.
  - b. Anyone to whom Article 1 sub a applies is entitled to payment of an attendance allowance if the Faculty Board has decided that the student has performed satisfactorily in accordance with the agreements entered into with them.
2.
  - a. A meeting as referred to in paragraph 1 is deemed to exist if
    - a. it concerns a meeting of a director with the full University Student Council, Faculty Student Council or Joint Assembly;
    - b. it concerns a formal meeting with the full University Student Council or Joint Assembly on which the administrative secretary reports.
3. A meeting as referred to in the previous paragraph is called in a timely fashion by circulating the agenda and documents. Minutes are kept of the meeting which are adopted in the subsequent meeting. The minutes note any member joining the meeting after it has started or leaving the meeting before it has ended.

To establish whether a student member has met the provisions of paragraph 1, only the meetings on the course calendar of the relevant body will be taken into account.

4. If in an agenda-setting meeting between
  - a. a member of the Executive Board and the University Student Council or the Joint Assembly;
  - b. a member of the Faculty Board and the Faculty Student Council or the Joint Assemblyit is jointly decided to hold an additional meeting, no right to a supplement to the attendance fee will arise. If, however, the number of additional meetings exceeds the number of meetings stipulated in the course calendar of the relevant body by 25% or more, student members will be awarded a supplement to their attendance fees. This supplementary attendance fee is equal to the amount per regular meeting granted to student members who have attended all meetings of the relevant body.

## **Section IV Administrative grants for student organizations**

The General Section applies unless explicitly derogated from in this Section.

### **Article 1 Applicability**

1. For an administrative grant to be awarded to a student organization, recognition by VU Amsterdam is required.
2. A student organization is deemed to be a legal entity with full legal capacity, managed by students, for at least those students taking a programme at VU Amsterdam and who have paid tuition fees there, and which is aimed at the development of its members. The organization's activities must be clearly related to the Amsterdam student community.
3. Any students awarded an administrative grant from the administrative budget on the basis of Article 9 of this section of the regulations are considered to have fallen behind in their studies as a result of their activities. Please note: the conditions of the General Section are applicable. The general provision that the delay in studies must be demonstrated for financial support to be provided is scrapped.
4. In derogation from Article 2 of the General Section, a person who has paid institutional tuition fees to VU is also eligible.

### **Article 2 Recognition of organizations**

1. A request for recognition will be taken into consideration if all conditions set out in this Article and in Articles 1 and 3 of this section of the regulations have been met. The additional conditions set out in Article 4 apply to associations.
2. The board of every recognized organization must give its name and contact details to the Profile Fund Committee. The Board must immediately forward any change in the contact person's details to the Profile Fund Committee.
3. Requests for recognition may be submitted annually to the Executive Board before 1 May. Recognition will enter into effect as of the following 1 September until the date of the general review as referred to in paragraph 4.
4. All recognized organizations will be reassessed every three years, unless Article 4 (c or d) applies. In that case the reassessment will take place three years after their review.
5. The Executive Board will take a decision regarding a request for recognition within fifteen weeks following 1 May.

### **Article 3 Additional requirements for recognition**

1. Any requests to be recognized as student organization should be substantiated and contain at least the following information:
  - a. the name and address of the organization and the contact person;
  - b. a description of objectives and activities, as evidenced from a charter executed before a civil-law notary;
  - c. a copy of an extract from the Chamber of Commerce, indicating that the organization's registered office is in Amsterdam and the identity of the members at the time of submitting the request;
  - d. a plan of activities indicating at least how the organization's objective will be pursued;
  - e. an explanation indicating in which respect the organization distinguishes itself from other organizations recognized in the previous academic year.
2. An organization must meet the following conditions:
  - a. the organization exists at least one year after the execution of the notarial deed;

- b. the organization is in principle open to all students of VU Amsterdam, or if the nature of the organization thus prescribes, to all students of VU Amsterdam who form part of, or sympathize with, a minority and the said organization is focussed on the emancipation of the minority. Emancipation is therefore part of the objectives of the organization, as is evidenced from its charter.
3. Furthermore, an organization will only be recognized if it:
  - a. distinguishes itself from other organizations recognized in the previous academic year in terms of target group, working method or type of activities, and
  - b. offers a broad range of activities, and
  - c. does not predominantly perform market-oriented activities, and
  - d. is not a division of a recognized organization performing activities for that recognized organization.
  - e. An additional condition that applies to member associations of the Amsterdam Chamber of Associations that have an introductory period, is that they have signed and comply with the Code of Conduct for Promotion and Introductory Periods of associations in Amsterdam. The board of the association will be held liable for this, also if actions within any debating societies are in conflict with the Code of Conduct.
4. Recognition is not possible if the charter, documents or activities show that the Dutch legal system is not respected. Any recognized organization that does not respect the Dutch legal system can lose its recognition.

#### **Article 4 Additional conditions for recognizing an association**

In addition to the conditions referred to in Articles 1, 2 and 3 the following additional conditions apply to the recognition of associations:

- a. a substantiated overview of the number of members registered at VU Amsterdam as of 1 January of the academic year in which the association submitted its request for recognition. Only those members who paid membership fees as of 1 January of that same academic year will be taken into account.  
Membership fees must be collected annually and amount to at least €5.<sup>1</sup>
- b. an association has at least 75 paying members who are studying at VU Amsterdam and who have paid tuition fees to VU Amsterdam;
- c. an interim review of the assessment is only possible if the association's board demonstrates that the number of members has increased to 10% above the minimum number of members  
required in order to qualify for a larger administrative budget, as indicated in the appendix Awarding Grants. Requests for a review may only be made once in an academic year and must be submitted before 1 May.
- d. the Executive Board may carry out a random interim test to check the number of members of an association. The board of such an association will give their full cooperation;
- e. if the review leads to an amendment of the administrative grant to be awarded, this amendment will enter into force as of the following 1 September. As soon as the amendment enters into force, but no later than 31 October of that calendar year, an organization may submit a request for payment

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<sup>1</sup> In 2018, a number of associations mentioned by name received permission from the Executive Board to prove the number of members of their organization by a means other than the payment of membership fees. Permission was granted for a maximum of three years, after which the derogatory rule will be evaluated. Only the designated associations may make a claim to this exception.

of the amended budget over the preceding academic year.

#### **Article 5 Foundations and other organizations**

1. The Executive Board may award an administrative grant to a foundation. A foundation must meet the same conditions as an association, with the exception of the provisions referred to in Article 4.
2. The Executive Board may decide to award a financial contribution to organizations 'familiar' to VU Amsterdam for non-recurring and non-standard activities of limited scope. A 'familiar' organization meets the requirements of Article 3 with the exception of paragraph 1 sub b and c, and paragraph 2 sub a.

#### **Article 6 Duty to Disclose Information**

The board of an association or foundation recognized by VU Amsterdam undertakes to forward in writing to the following board any agreements made within the organization, with other organizations and with VU Amsterdam and which may influence the future functioning of the organizations.

#### **Article 7 Administrative budget**

1. The Executive Board establishes how many units of financial support in the form of an administrative grant may be awarded to each organization in accordance with the division set out in the appendix Grants Awarded from the Profile Fund.
2. The grant applies from the period in which the organization was recognized up until the review, as referred to in Article 2, paragraph 4.

#### **Article 8 Payment request**

1. The board of the organization must submit a request for payment of the administrative grant, in accordance with the requirements and in the period stipulated in the Implementation Regulations. This period also applies if the committee year is not equal to the academic year.
2. If the request for payment is incomplete, the board of the organization will be given a reasonable period in which to supplement the request. If the request has not been supplemented within this period, it will be rejected without consideration. The applicant will be notified. As long as the application period has not lapsed, the board may submit a new request.
3. If the money has been spent by the student organization's board in violation of these regulations, the Executive Board will reduce the budget of the relevant student organization for the subsequent academic year by at least the amount that was not spent in the correct manner. The objection procedure is applicable to the decision by the Executive Board to impose this measure.
4. In the event of failure to comply with the provisions of the Code of Conduct on the Promotion and Introductory Period, referred to in Article 3 paragraph 3 sub e, the Executive Board may decide to withhold the administrative budget or a part thereof or to reclaim it if it has already been paid.

#### **Article 9 Title-holders, conditions for administrative grants**

The board of the organization will allocate an administrative grant from the administrative budget awarded to students who meet the following conditions:

- a. they hold a position on the board of a student organization;
- b. in the committee year, they are enrolled as a full-time student on a programme at VU Amsterdam.
- c. Notwithstanding sub b, a board member of an organization recognized by both VU

Amsterdam and the University of Amsterdam is eligible for a grant from the administrative budget if he or she complies with the provisions under a, was registered as a full-time student for a programme at the University of Amsterdam.

**Article 10 Awarding number of units of support**

1. On the basis of the criteria referred to in the appendix Recognition of Student Organizations, the Executive Board determines which organizations may be taken into consideration for application of these regulations and for which units of support at least once every three years.
2. Substantiated requests from organizations for inclusion in the appendix Recognized Student Organizations or for an amendment of the number of units awarded per board or activity should be submitted to the Executive Board. Retroactive recognition and amendment is not possible.