

Framework Regulations for the Binding Recommendation on Continuation of Studies (BSA) at VU Amsterdam

Version history

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| 1. Adopted by the Executive Board | 18 January 2010 |
| 2. Revised after evaluation | 7 January 2013 |
| 3. Revised pursuant to discontinuation of second-year BSA | 14 June 2016 |

General

1. The present Regulations apply to all Bachelor's programmes at VU Amsterdam, with the exception of the Bachelor's programme in Liberal Arts and Sciences (taught at Amsterdam University College) and the Bachelor's programme in Philosophy, Politics and Economics.
2. Where the Regulations refer to the Faculty Board, this can also mean the Governing Board.
3. These Regulations apply to full-time students only. The faculties are free to draw up their own regulations for part-time and work-study students if and as needed.

Conditions for teaching

4. The teaching programme of the first year of every Bachelor's programme is to be representative of the teaching programme of that Bachelor's programme as a whole. The teaching programme is determined by the Faculty Board pursuant to the recommendations of the programme committee.
5. First-year students will be provided with an orientation to their new academic environment. This will in any case include guidance through a mentoring or tutoring system in the first year. Each Bachelor's programme will tailor this system to suit its specific situation.
6. Bachelor's programmes will safeguard the quality of their teaching and student guidance through the application of an internal quality control framework.

Information about study progress, study guidance and study recommendations

7. Students will be informed about the BSA on at least four occasions during their first year. After the first examination period in November, students will receive a letter containing

information about their programme, study guidance and the BSA and its consequences.

Students will subsequently be informed of their study progress before 31 January and again on or before 22 August. These dates are the same every academic year. An additional SAP email notification will be sent before the final round of examination resits in June providing an overview of the credits the student has obtained to date. The recommendation of 22 August is the BSA.

8. The recommendation issued on or before 22 August is binding. This recommendation will be negative if the student has obtained fewer credits than the programme's minimum requirement for the first year or fails to satisfy the qualitative requirement as described in the Academic and Examination Regulations. The first-year minimum credit requirement is 42 credits. In the Bachelor's programmes in Psychology and Education, the minimum credit requirement is 48 credits. In the Bachelor's programmes in Dentistry, the minimum credit requirement is 40 credits.
9. No study recommendation will be issued in the event of personal circumstances as referred to in Article 14 below. If due to personal circumstances no recommendation can be issued at the end of the first year, the student's fulfilment of the programme's minimum credit requirement and of the qualitative requirement, if applicable, will be evaluated at the end of the second year.
10. For the second and third study progress notifications, faculties will fix a specific number of credits to be defined as signalling 'green' (all or almost all credits obtained, along with any qualitative requirements), 'amber' (a portion of the required credits obtained) and 'red' (none or almost none of the required credits obtained).
11. After the second and third study progress notifications, students who have received an 'amber' or 'red' signal will be informed of the possibility to schedule an appointment with the study advisor. During their meeting with the study advisor, the student will be questioned about why they have fallen behind and any personal circumstances that may be involved [see Article 14]. In the meeting following the second study progress notification, the student will be invited to draw up a personal study plan assisted by the study advisor or the study advisor's designated replacement. This plan will specify the sequence of courses that the student will take and must pass in the first year and, if applicable, in the second year (resits).
12. Students who receive a negative BSA will not be allowed to register for the same Bachelor's programme or for other Bachelor's programmes with the same first-year curriculum for a period of three years. Students who deregister before 1 February of their first year will not be issued a BSA for that academic year. If the same student registers for another degree programme at VU Amsterdam, this will be deemed their first registration for the purposes of these Regulations.

BSA procedures

13. The BSA procedures are laid down in the Academic and Examination Regulations as adopted by the Faculty Board. The BSA is issued by or on behalf of the Faculty Board.

The Faculty Board may designate this task to a committee appointment specifically for the purposes of the BSA.

14. The Faculty Board (or the committee to which the Faculty Board has designated this task) will not issue a BSA to students who have not been able to satisfy the minimum requirement due to personal circumstances (within the meaning of Section 7.8b, paragraph 3 of the Higher Education and Research Act (WHW) and Section 2.1 of the WHW Implementation Decree). Personal circumstances may include illness, disability, exceptional family circumstances, pregnancy and certain management responsibilities for a student body.
15. The Faculty Board may decide to exclude application of or diverge from Article 8 insofar as its application would lead to a disproportionate disadvantage, having due regard for the interests these Regulations are intended to protect.
16. As soon as it becomes apparent that a student will receive a negative BSA, the Faculty Board will inform that student of its *intention* to issue a negative BSA. The student will simultaneously be asked to supply documents providing evidence of any personal circumstances that may have played a role in the delay and will be invited to attend a hearing organized by the Faculty Board.
17. If the Faculty Board establishes that there are personal circumstances (within the meaning of Section 2.1 of the WHW Implementation Decree) which impeded the student's ability to deliver the required academic results, the student will not be issued a BSA until the end of the following academic year, at which time the student will be evaluated on the basis of the minimum requirement that applies to the end of the first year.
18. Students who do not agree with the BSA they are issued can lodge an appeal with the Examination Appeals Board (CoBEx) of VU Amsterdam (in accordance with Section 7.6.1, paragraph 4a of the WHW) within six weeks. The CoBEx will ask the Faculty Board to investigate whether it is possible to reach an amicable settlement (i.e. review of the decision) under the terms of the BSA Regulations, to which end the student will be given an opportunity to be heard. If it is not possible to reach an amicable settlement and the student wishes to continue the proceedings, the CoBEx will schedule a hearing.

Implementation

19. Implementation will be monitored at two levels: (1) by the Faculty Boards and (2) by the programme committees. (1) Faculty Boards will be responsible for drawing up BSA Regulations tailored to their degree programmes (in conformity with the present Framework Regulations) and to lay down the formal BSA procedures in their Academic and Examination Regulations. Faculty consultation bodies will have the right to approve the procedures as laid down in the Academic and Examination Regulations (not whether or not to apply the BSA). (2) Programme committees will be responsible for monitoring whether policy is implemented in accordance with the adopted

regulations and to report their findings to the Faculty Board.

20. The Executive Board will ensure that periodic reviews are conducted (for example, every four years) to evaluate implementation, which will include an analysis of any appeals procedures. This evaluative review will mainly focus on ascertaining to which extent the intended objectives of the BSA have been achieved. This encompasses both the objectives defined by the committee (placing students in the most suitable programme at the earliest stage) and the expectations of the Executive Board. The review will also examine whether the procedures have been implemented in the manner proposed.