



AKKU

RAATD

Election Program 2020







1. Chameleon rooms

The shortage of study work places remains a problem at Radboud University. In exam periods and the weeks preceding them, libraries and other study workplaces on campus are extremely busy. Since all faculties have started taking their exams in the same weeks, it has only gotten busier in study workplaces on campus. At the same time, many regular classrooms are vacant during exam periods. AKKUraatd therefore proposes the following simple solutions:

a. Chameleon rooms

AKKUraatd argues that empty classrooms should be transformed into study workplaces in exam periods. However, merely unlocking the door of a classroom doesn't make it a study workplace, yet. We want to adjust the set-up of tables, ensure that there are more comfortable chairs and add some plants and screen dividers. This way, we can easily and quickly create a bunch of pleasant study workplaces.

b. Construction of new study workplaces

AKKUraatd advocates for considering the lack of study workplaces in all of the university's on-campus real estate plans. In the upcoming years, there are plans to renovate the Erasmus Building and build a new building next to the Maria Montessori Building to replace the Spinoza Building, for instance. Aside pressing matters, such as student housing, AKKUraatd feels that new study workplaces should be a central part of the university's real estate plans.

2. Online exams: not at the cost of privacy

AKKUraatd takes the view that online exams should not be at the cost of students' privacy. The university is currently considering online exams in which students are kept under watch by a system called 'proctoring'. By means of a webcam, students and their (virtual) environment are being observed by both artificial intelligence and unknown human observers.

Proctoring is problematic to students' privacy in many ways. For once, quite a lot of data of students and their environment is being collected, whilst it is not clear where, for how long, and in what way it is being stored. Secondly, according to multiple

studies, proctoring does not fully protect against fraud. Exams are also happening via Zoom: a popular video application which is under fire due to privacy concerns.

The goal of these online surveillance methods is to prevent students from committing fraud. But do these methdos warrant students' privacy? And are students allowed to object to such an online exam? AKKUraatd believes that online exams with privacy-sensitive programmes such as online proctoring and Zoom should only occur under the exception that the university critically evaluates these programmes, points out what students' rights are, and offers alternative exams to students who have principal objections against these programmes.

3. Binding Study Advice (BSA)

AKKUraatd believes that the BSA should be a personal advice to help first-year students decide whether or not the programme suits themselves. Currently, the BSA is an impersonal performance measure which causes first-year students to experience a large amount of (unnecessary) stress. AKKUraatd therefore thinks that the BSA should drastically change, specifically in terms of:

a. Support

Currently, it is too often the case that students are spoken with only at the end of the academic year concerning whether or not their programme suits them. AKKUraatd thinks this conversation should take place earlier as well as more extensively by means of comprehensive support before, during and after your BSA. This reflection should commence even before the programme starts by means of providing a good and honest study check. Unfortunately, this check does not occur in every programme yet. Next, first-year students should be guided, for instance by a mentor or a study advisor, at multiple instances during the year to help answer the question "Does this programme suit me?". This support should not end after the first year. Even students who have secured their BSA can still find out their bachelor's does not suit them at a later stage and should then be guided to a suitable alternative.

b. Personal norms

The current BSA's rigid ECTS-boundary does not take into account students' developments in the first year at all. It is for instance often the case that students

underperform in the first semester due to long travelling times, problems making new social contacts, getting used to university itself, etc. AKKUraatd does not believe that students should be reproached for a bad first semester. Therefore, AKKUraatd argues for an urging instead of a binding study advice. There should be space for a personal plan to show that the study indeed fits the student, but the choice should ultimately be the student's.

c. Decrease of stress

The BSA causes a lot of stress in first-year students, given that they are potentially not allowed to finish their studies. This stress is in many cases unnecessary, however. Students who have passed nearly all of their courses in the first semester generally secure their BSA. AKKUraatd thinks that the university can alleviate their stress by providing a positive BSA for all students who have received 24 ECTS at minimum after half a year already. For students with personal circumstances, AKKUraatd feels that the university should provide clarity earlier in the academic year about the possibilities for a reduced BSA norm due to their personal circumstances.

d. BSA policy in the Corona-crisis

The Corona-crisis has caused study delay for many students. This can have radical consequences for a first-year student's BSA. AKKUraatd thinks that these students should be able to flexibly arrange the ECTS yet required and allow them to use (compulsory) courses from their entire bachelor's programme.

4. Remote desktop

In the era of digitalisation, it is essential that students can access the tools and programmes which are available on university desktops at home as well. Examples include being able to use SPSS, Photoshop, MATLAB or accessing specific scientific articles or journals remotely. A remote desktop, which the RadboudUMC already uses, makes it possible to log on to a university's desktop via your own laptop at home. This way, you'll have all the benefits of a computer in the University Library, but at home instead.

5. Skills courses for all students

In Honours Programmes, honours students are offered specific 'skills modules'. These modules include writing essays, debating, presenting skills, as well as other academic skills. AKKUraatd thinks

it is odd that these modules are only offered to honours students. These skills are valuable in every programme, after all. In regular programmes, most students are not offered similar extensive courses for these competences. Instead, they are often only assessed during exam opportunities. AKKUraatd thinks that such skills courses are valuable to every student, not just to those who excel. Especially students who have difficulties with such skills can benefit from said courses. AKKUraatd proposes that every student should have free access to (at least one of these) skill modules in their programme.

6. Well-organised and extensive interdisciplinary education

AKKUraatd believes that education programmes have a lot to offer to one another. If we look at society, we see that alfa-studies can't function without beta-studies and vice versa. That is why AKKUraatd wants to devote itself to a higher degree of interdisciplinarity in our education. This can be stimulated in multiple ways. On the one hand, the information supply regarding minor programmes should be improved. It would do well to provide a clear and well-organised web page with a university-wide overview of all minor programmes as well as a reference to the corresponding study advisor. Caution should be taken to ensure that the information is correct, as there are too often mistakes left in the study guide.

Next to that, the number of joint courses could be expanded. There are currently some courses which emphasise the importance of cooperating disciplines, yet students from different faculties often do not work together for the same course. Should students from various programmes work together, this would not only improve the results by combining students' forces but also help envision the interdisciplinary work field after university.

7. Balanced internationalisation

AKKUraatd thinks it is important that education is accessible to everyone, both Dutch and international students. However, AKKUraatd feels that the process of internationalisation should occur in a balanced manner. Quality of education needs to stay the top priority and should after all remain uncompromised.

That is why AKKUraatd thinks that studies should only be offered in English on the basis of intrinsic educational reasons. AKKUraatd thinks that the expertise of students and teachers should serve as a basis for the consideration of whether or not the official language should be English or Dutch. We therefore advocate in favour of reconsidering the language choice of education programmes via a poll amongst students and teachers, amongst other things.

When a study programme remains or switches to English, it is of importance that teachers' English is adequate. Should course evaluations point out that this is not the case, the teacher should be stimulated to take a free English course.

8. Small-scale education

The past years, there has been an increase in the amount of students at our university. Unfortunately, the amount of teachers and facilities has not grown proportionally. This has caused teachers to teach increasingly larger groups of students. AKKUraatd thinks it is important that qualitatively high education is (still) being provided. This can only be the case if there are enough teachers, facilities and study support available for all students. AKKUraatd therefore argues for smaller seminar groups, ample study support and enough teachers. This keeps the distance between teachers and students small and secures the quality of our education.

9. An unambiguous and accessible weblecture policy

In these hectic times, we notice just how crucial the internet is to us. But even outside of this crisis, there are enough cases in which students who cannot physically attend lectures, however. AKKUraatd therefore believes that weblectures should be made available for all studies, without exceptions. Currently, smaller studies are often skipped because they do not have the facilities for it.

Many students can profit from weblectures. They allow for more independence and flexibility should the student have a need for it. Even when students

are not able to attend lectures, weblectures ensure that they can study independently from their peers' notes or teachers' PowerPoint presentations. This may prevent unnecessary arrears.

Currently, there are a lot of different approaches between faculties about the way they use the possibilities for weblectures. AKKUraatd therefore thinks that there should be a university-wide weblecture policy to take away these differences.

10. Internships for all students

AKKUraatd thinks that both research internships and professional internships are very valuable for students' development. However, there is a lot of room for improvement concerning these internships. Many bachelor's programmes, for instance, do not have room for internships in their curriculum. Next to that, there are a lot of differences between programmes in awarding study credits for internships. Lastly, whilst some bachelor's programmes do have room for internships, there seems to be a lack of supervision for these internships. First and foremost, AKKUraatd thinks that the university should stimulate both professional and research internships. This can be made possible by creating (optional) room for professional orientation in each curriculum. Next to that, AKKUraatd believes that the university should award study credits for all internships as well as intensify the supervision for professional internships. In addition, these two points also contribute to the first point: stimulating students to take up an internship.



**Student Life
for everyone**

1. Useful and accessible support

Proper student support is essential to the well-being of all students. AKKUraatd thinks it is very important that every student receives the support they need at the right moment. It should be clear who students can contact for support and the threshold for this support should also be as low as possible. We therefore advocate for three improvements:

a. Accessible support

It is quite a big step to approach counselling for students who are in need for it. To reduce this, AKKUraatd argues in favour of the possibility to contact someone who immediately answers any questions surround your well-being. We insist on a clear overview of all support possibilities that are offered by the university for students with a functional disability, carers, pregnant students etc., preferably on a user-friendly site. The flow of information about studying at Radboud University as well as the affairs that should be settled before starting a course of study should also be sorted out, especially for international students.

2. Mentor guidance for all students

AKKUraatd wants students to be able to get in touch with an approachable and confidential advisor who can support them in their studies, their lives as students and other education-related affairs. Currently, these mentors are only available in the first year of study in most studies. AKKUraatd believes that mentors should not just be available to students in the first year but also in later stages of their studies. Therefore, AKKUraatd suggests to hire additional mentors who are (financially) supported, prepared and educated so that they can concern themselves with students during the course of their entire study programme. From the second year of studying, all students will be provided optional access to a mentor. Next to that, AKKUraatd thinks it is important that the university takes an active position with regards to promoting this guidance. Given the potential shortage of teachers as mentors, AKKUraatd proposes to take on student employees as student mentors.

3. Improved accessibility of student psychologists

AKKUraatd believes that student psychologists should be accessible and approachable for every student. However, several matters undesirably raise the threshold for contacting the student psychologist. Firstly, the waiting period for an appointment is too long given that this period is currently about four to five weeks. Additionally, it should not be the case that students should play for their first appointment, which is the case at present. This service should be something the university offers to help students. The fact that there is currently a registration fee and that the waiting time is so long entails that the threshold to approach the student psychologists is now too high. It is essential to lower this threshold so that every student receives the timely and professional help they need.

2. Suitable compensation for active students

AKKUraatd believes that the university should reconsider the compensation for active students who take a part in associations' boards and student participational bodies. This compensation ought to be in balance with the actual workload. We would like to see to it that the grants are increased, given that the current workload is higher than the compensation one receives for the work itself. It is important that students who contribute to student life and/or the university are granted suitable compensation for the work they carry out. Moreover, this low compensation may also put off potential successors. Many students cannot afford any study delay due to the loaning system, but an improved compensation may ensure that devoting oneself to a better university will be more accessible.

3. Selection (numerus fixus)

In the Netherlands, more and more studies are using some form of selection (numerus fixus) to regulate admission to its bachelor's programme. Our university currently counts six of these studies. Research shows that selection can cause studies to be less accessible for certain groups, especially for students from lower social backgrounds. This is for instance the case with selection studies for which extra courses in preparation for a knowledge test can be bought commercially, whilst not all students can afford these. Social background can also play a role, as students with highly-educated parents can receive more help for preparing for such a knowledge test, for instance. AKKUraatd believes that every student should receive a fair opportunity to take up any course of study they want. Therefore, our starting point is that there should not be a numerus fixus when this is not necessary. When a numerus fixus is imperative, we strive for a selection process that restricts the accessibility of a course of study the least. AKKUraatd advocates for selection by drawing lots until it is proven that there are better selection methods available.

4. A financial contact person for the student loan system

Studying is a financially insecure time, especially since the Dutch student loan system was introduced. Many students are reserved about studying a year longer or even loaning money in fear for the impact this may have on their future. This causes students to pass up the opportunity to develop themselves next to their studies. AKKUraatd believes the university should provide information about the financial consequences of the student loan system where they can point out the pros and cons about studying longer or loaning money. This can be made possible by installing a financial contact person which students can reach out to with questions regarding studying longer, finances, and self-development. This way, students will make well thought-out decisions and will not feel heavily laden whenever they want to develop themselves further.

6. Possibilities for self-fulfilment after the first year

For many students, the information supply regarding the possibilities of development outside of their studies is not clear enough. Many students do not know that they have the possibility to design their own study planning and partake in extracurricular activities next to their studies at university. The extracurricular activities are essential to the self-development of students, which is why AKKUraatd thinks that the university should stimulate students to partake in such activities. AKKUraatd believes that students should receive information about the possibilities of self-development next to their studies after obtaining their BSA. Examples include contributing to student representation, engaging in volunteer work, joining the board of a study association or doing an honours programme. This information may be supplied via a digital letter written by Radboud University rector, for instance. It is important that students are redirected to the corresponding information pages on Radboud University's web pages and the study advisor. Next to that, this information should be provided to students on a central level, so that all students are granted the opportunity to develop themselves outside of their studies.

5. Free language courses

The language courses that are currently offered by Radboud In'to Languages are often quite expensive (nearly €150,- per course). Some students, however, need to take courses in English or are traveling abroad requiring them to know the local language better. On the other hand, many international students would like to improve their integration chances by learning Dutch. AKKUraatd thinks that Radboud University should make these language courses accessible to all students. That is why we argue that every student should be offered one free language course at least, with the possibility of increasing this amount on the basis of a detailed plan written by the student. All international students should be provided with free Dutch courses at a level which enables them to function well in our society. Students with a detailed plan should also be granted the opportunity to take multiple free courses on the basis of this plan. Naturally, it is to be expected that students who participate in a language course also devote themselves to this course.

7. A student lounge at every faculty

There are not enough adequate social spaces for students on campus. The Faculty of Science has two small canteens for students, the Faculty of Philosophy, Theology and Religious Studies has a coffee corner which they share with employees and the Faculty of Arts has a small classroom in the Erasmus Building. Not only are these rooms often too small for the amount of people that want to make use of them, they also have poor facilities. Students are generally appointed to commercial spaces such as the Cultuurcafé and the URD and there is little room for renewed initiatives.

AKKUraatd therefore argues in favour of students receiving access to an adequate and accessible social space in the form of a generally accessible coffee corner or canteen. This space should have sufficient facilities as well as the possibility for students to set up their own initiatives such as a student bar or joint

dinner. That is why it is essential that this space is run by students instead of by a commercial establishment. AKKUraatd believes that the campus is not just a place for studying, but also for bonding with other students.

8 Accessible admittance from and to university

Currently, students from universities of applied science (Dutch: hbo) are often required to meet extra expenses for compulsory knowledge tests in order to be admitted to university. Students from secondary schools or Dutch university education, however, do not need to meet these expenses. AKKUraatd thinks this is unfair, and argues that students from universities of applied science who want to go on to university should not have to meet these expenses in order to be admitted to a programme.

In addition, the transition from university to the university of applied sciences is too often considered a taboo, for instance when you find out that your current programme isn't a good fit. AKKUraatd believes that the university should see to it that students also get a fair picture of whether or not the university of applied sciences would be a match for them. That is why we feel that higher professional programmes should also be included as a valid option whenever students' current study does not seem to suit them. This can occur during the extensive BSA supervision, which AKKUraatd also advocates. It is therefore essential that Radboud University and the Hogeschool Arnhem Nijmegen (HAN) cooperate.

Sustainability

1. Towards a greener campus

AKKUraatd argues in favour of a greener campus where students and employees are stimulated to go outside during their break, but also during their studies or work. There are currently several nature reserves in and around campus which are not widely known amongst students. Examples are the forest surrounding the Berchmanianum building and the botanical gardens behind the sports field. It should be stimulated that students visit these places more often to relax in a healthy manner. That is why we strive for improved signposting of these places as well as more study workplaces in the open air, including

facilities such as power outlets for studying. These places can also be used for informal activities such as (vegetarian) barbecues. This can be achieved by the development of an 'Erasmus Park': a green, centrally-located environment on campus. Lastly, AKKUraatd advocates for planting more overgrowth on top of buildings to counter petrification where possible.

2. Affordable vegetarian/vegan food

The meat industry is responsible for a significant percentage of greenhouse gas emissions. AKKUraatd believes that the university should take the lead in terms of sustainability by stimulating students and employees to make the more sustainable choice. Therefore, AKKUraatd insists that catering establishments on campus offer more vegetarian and vegan alternatives at cheaper prices compared to their meat counterparts. The vegetarian meal at Craft should, for instance, be offered as a vegan meal by default. This way, the meal is better for the environment and people who eat vegan have an affordable and healthy option to choose from.

3. Less plastic on campus

The university strives for a more sustainable campus and wants to become a frontrunner in terms of climate and circularity. The best way to contribute to making the consumption of plastic more sustainable is, naturally, to reduce it. Our university uses a lot of redundant plastic, however. That is why AKKUraatd argues for centralised policy which explicitly focuses on plastic, and should at least include the following points:

a. A ban on single-use plastics from 2021 onwards.

Catering facilities at university still often wrap their products in plastic. Some catering facilities even double-wrap their products. Within on-campus catering facilities, the consumption of single-use plastic should be reduced to zero. Disposable articles should be replaced by sustainable alternatives if necessary.

b. A ban on new plastic merchandise.

On the university's Open Days, a lot of merchandise is distributed which does not have a lot of added value, according to AKKUraatd. All these plastic products

are damaging to the environment. Therefore, AKKUraatd wants the university to manage ordering new merchandise sustainably.

4. Sustainability in education

Incorporating sustainability in education is a fundamental prerequisite for an effective contribution to a liveable planet and a greener economy. AKKUraatd thinks that the current curriculum insufficiently prepares students for climate change and the transition to renewable energy. AKKUraatd therefore argues in favour of more attention for sustainability within the university's core business: education and research. To realise this, AKKUraatd strives for the inclusion of Sustainable Development Goals (SDG's) within the learning pathways of the Education and Examination Regulations (EER).

5. Restrict wasting study materials

Apart from reducing plastics on campus and sorting waste, it is important that the university contributes to making the campus more sustainable in other ways. AKKUraatd believes that the university should strive for wasting as little paper as possible. Next to that, AKKUraatd thinks that study materials should be made available online. Various programmes require students to purchase compulsory readers. These often either contain assignments which students need to prepare for their seminar groups, or consist of supplementary materials such as journal articles. Students also need to purchase study books which are often no longer used when the course has ended. To reduce waste, AKKUraatd advocates making such study materials digitally available. This way, on-campus paper consumption is reduced.

Should it be impracticable to make study materials digitally available, the university should stimulate and facilitate recycling. AKKUraatd argues for a web page where second-hand study materials can be bought and sold. For instance on the university's website, which is already the case for employees at university, or via the website of the faculties in question. Recycling should be further stimulated in the form of an annual or twice-yearly second-hand study book market which can be facilitated by faculties. This way, students are granted the opportunity to exchange books on campus, buy or sell them, and contribute to the conservation of study materials at the same time.

6. More structure for sustainability initiatives

The slogan behind various university-led sustainability initiatives is "student-led and staff-supported". AKKUraatd would like to see that this slogan is fulfilled by means of facilitating more support for groups such as EcoTeams and sustainability committees. AKKUraatd especially sees room for improvement on the level of faculties. Students within these sustainability initiatives often experience insecurities regarding where they are headed towards and what they are permitted to do.

At a central level, the Green Office launched multiple initiatives such as experimental living labs where students can pitch ideas. Green Office also serves as a contact point. This organisation functions well, but AKKUraatd would like to see both Green Office and their initiatives promoted more broadly amongst students.

Strong Student Representation

1. Accessible student representation

AKKUraatd wants everyone to be able to participate in student representation at Radboud University. Currently, international students fall outside this scope, largely due to their insufficient knowledge of the Dutch language.

AKKUraatd believes that everyone should be able to express themselves in the language in which they feel most comfortable. This means that everyone should be able to take part in a conversation and should have the same supply of information at their disposal. That is why we insist on the translation of more policy documents to English.

This way, in combination with the free language courses which AKKUraatd advocates, student representation becomes a better representation of all students at Radboud University, including international students, which account for over 14%.

2. Observance of the WHW

The Higher Education and Research Act (Dutch: WHW) describes which rules the university should abide to regarding education. As the Radboud University is a catholic university, our university can sometimes

make exceptions to this law. However, AKKUraatd argues in favour of observing the WHW more strictly in certain areas to guarantee the best of both worlds:

a. 50/50 voting ratio in Faculty Joint Assemblies (Dutch: FGV's)

Currently, we are the only university that has a voting ratio of 60% for employees and 40% for students on the faculty level. By law, this voting ratio is 50% for employees and 50% students, however. This rule stems from times in which employees were more involved in religion than students and therefore had more voting rights. AKKUraatd thinks this rule is out of date and therefore argues in favour of establishing this ratio to the national level: 50/50. However, this should not be at the cost of the already full voting consent regarding the Education and Examination Regulations.

b. Democratisation of the USC

At our university, 8 out of 14 seats in the University Student Council (USC) are elected democratically via elections. The remaining six seats are appointed to the umbrella associations who act in the interests of specific associations. AKKUraatd thinks it is essential that these umbrella associations' opinions are considered in policies that have an influence on their associations. This way, it is guaranteed that these policies come about via (indirect) approval of students who are affected by them. These seats, however, currently also have a deciding vote regarding concerns that are not directly relevant to the umbrella associations' members.

AKKUraatd therefore argues for a separate umbrella association consultation, whilst the USC exclusively consists of democratically chosen members. In this consultation, the umbrella associations' representatives have far-reaching influence on policies that concern their associations. This way, they can focus on more pressing matters that are important to them, whilst the vote of every student via chosen members in the USC weighs equally in matters concerning education and sustainability. This way, we ensure that we act in the interests of all students in the most powerful and suitable way possible.

3. Buying study materials

It has been determined by law that no extra costs ought to be charged for compulsory study materials. Unfortunately, we still see that a lot of studies charging extra costs for study materials, for instance microscopes. AKKUraatd wants to see to it that this law is observed more strictly. Next to that, we do not wish for these unnecessary costs to be landed on students.

3. Involvement and transparency in student housing plans

AKKUraatd thinks that the university should have a more open attitude with regards to student housing plans and wants to devote itself to involving students in these plans. Surveys and polls can help with this, but it would also do well to make the access to these plans simpler and clearer.

The campus has undergone a lot of rebuilding lately. Consider the recently renovated Refter and the Maria Montessori Building, for example. The renovation of the Huygens Building and the Erasmus Building are also scheduled. AKKUraatd notices that information regarding these future renovation plans are difficult to locate. Next to that, there is little if any communication regarding students concerned and introduction committees are informed insufficiently. Association boards are hardly, if at all, being involved in the process of designing and locating their new board rooms. In the renovation of the library, new study workplaces and canteens, students' input is not being collected either. In sum, students are not being involved in these plans, whilst it concerns spaces in which students find themselves daily.

4. Improved communication between students and student representation

AKKUraatd thinks it is important that all students are listened to and feel listened to. Despite the fact that the student elections in Nijmegen have a relatively high turnout, it is often difficult for the student representation to reach the entire student population and vice versa. The gap between students and student representation often results in a low involvement of students in their representation. This often becomes evident in the shortage of candidates for student representational bodies who often indirectly choose their own successors. AKKUraatd wants to devote itself to realising clearer and more transparent communication between student participational bodies and students themselves.

We want to achieve this by means of facilitating student participational bodies by writing up surveys or other methods to poll students' opinions. Next to that, student participation communication towards students should also be improved. Especially for smaller bodies, such as Faculty Student Councils and Programme Committees, this is often difficult. AKKUraatd wants to improve this by standardising means of providing feedback to students, for instance via a direct newsletter or information sessions. This way, the student representation can obtain more contact with a diverse group of students. A side-effect is that students are up to date of the current affairs at their university. This way, all students can be optimally represented.

**STRONG
STUDENT
REPRESENTATION**

**VOTE FROM 2 TO
4 JUNE 2020 FOR**



**AKKU
RAATD**

AND VOTE FOR:



Good Education



***Student Life
for everyone***



Sustainability



***Strong Student
Representation***