

asap's bullet points 2013



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1. Improve Career Counseling

Many students face obstacles when trying to find a job after they have graduated. The university is responsible to prepare students appropriately for their working careers. Therefore, the university should encourage its students to familiarize themselves with the labor market. Most preferably students should start with this at an earlier stage in their academic careers. What students need is to have the possibility to be informed about the possibilities that lie ahead concerning their future. This way students can make well-considered decisions regarding (extra) subjects, minors, and internships. A mentor (which is provided to every student during their BA or BSc studies) plays a crucial part in the provision of information on this subject.

While the university already offers a Career Service, this has yet to become more widely known among the students, and its reach seems to be limited. The university already offers a wide variety of career guidance programs and career prospects. However, this needs to be brought to the attention of every student. Organizations which are part of, or closely linked to the Radboud University, already offer resume checks, writing labs, and the training of many other skill sets. It is of essential importance that councilors and other guidance personnel are aware of these options.

2. Enhance ICT-facilities

Almost every student makes use of the ICT-facilities which the RU provides. A working web connection is of vital importance to enable flexible study areas. However, the campus' WiFi connections are not always up to par. We have noticed a significant lack in WiFi connections at the Medical school, where sometimes there is no wireless connection at all. Therefore, **asap** supports a campus-wide implementation of an accessible and stable wireless internet connection.

In addition we believe that the already existing study areas need our attention. Current software and ancient computers have to make ways for faster and more reliable computers, which can be updated at will. Besides from that, **asap** supports the improvement of the existing RU website (with a working search module), and the free availability of a Blackboard app.

3. Higher standards for faculty members

The ability to clearly convey the study material, and a high proficiency of the English language are of crucial importance to enhance and maintain the high quality of our university education. Often, faculty members have portrayed different levels of aptitude. **asap** believes that many faculty members could improve their professional skills regarding their lectures and thesis guidance. To accomplish this, **asap** promotes the idea of staff peer reviews and peer groups. This way, faculty members are able to learn from each other and exchange a system of best practices. Students are able to play a large role in this. After all, students evaluate every course, and with that, they also evaluate the faculty member who facilitates the course.

However, generating the results of these evaluations is often shortcoming. **asap** feels that these results should be made available to every student. Students attend lectures to indulge themselves with new knowledge, but when this becomes unnecessarily difficult because the faculty member lacks the English proficiency or the skills to transfer the material in a comprehensive way, **asap** believes that this is alarming. Therefore **asap** advocates the inclusion of these professional skills in the Basis Kwalificatie Onderwijs (BKO), which is a basic competence qualification all faculty members have to adhere to. By giving faculty members the ability to increase their competences, students can only expect that the quality of the lectures will likewise improve.

4. Increase communication

The previous two years **asap** has been managing to improve the university's communication channels with the students, but has also been encouraging the communication from within the student councils and fractions. For instance, **asap** has assisted in the founding and maintenance of the "Wat zijn de plannen"-project (a project focusing on the Dutch government's measures concerning education) and **asap** has strongly supported the implementation of the NUmedezeggenschap.nl website. Also, the effective use of social media has been used to reach out and inform a plethora of students. We are very proud that this valuable asset to inform students has been an example for other (nationwide and regional) student parties, to be able to reach as many students as possible.

Also, at the university itself **asap** has been strongly involved in the provision of communication. Among many other things, **asap** has worked on a report on information provision, together with initiator AKKUraad. **asap** believes that the university can very much improve its communication concerning the courses and trainings it provides to its students. Often, services, like the writing labs or courses provided by the student affairs office, remain unused, for students are unaware that these services are offered.

5. Effective use of the intensification of teaching

The quality of the intensification of teaching, which has been introduced at the university last year, differs when looking at different departments. Multiple students have indicated that parts of their lectures/seminars have been put to use as independent study hours or movie sessions. It is of crucial importance that the university provides education of excellent quality, certainly when often the amount of lectures and seminars a week does not exceed 15 hours.

As this is of utmost importance **asap** will demand that the evaluation of the intensification will be put forward. Currently, this evaluation is planned to take place in one and a half years, but **asap** feels that an early evaluation (including the course evaluations students have filled out) can pinpoint the problems that have occurred after this implementation, which call for a swift response.

6. Easy way to go abroad

To study or have an internship abroad offers many assets; it is fun, it stimulates personal development, and is a great addition to your resume. Students who aspire to spend time abroad in an academic or professional environment need our support. This can easily be achieved by implementing a period specially designed to be filled out by the students themselves, which can be used to spend time abroad. When a department facilitates such a period, students should be informed of this option at an early stage. Currently, it is often the case that students, who aspire to spend time abroad, are discouraged by their student councilors to pursue their ambitions, as it will definitely lead to a delay in their academic life. Also, it should be made less complex to go abroad via another department, if this department has the contracts with the desired university or extra places available, which the student aspires.

7. Quit patronizing measures

Students know very well how they study the most effectively. Mandatory lectures and seminars do not fit the image of the responsible student. **asap** believes that, when students are free to design their own way of studying, they become more motivated to delve into the subjects they are interested in the most. The university is certainly allowed to expect a certain measure of academic responsibility of the students, but should withhold itself from implementing paternalistic measures.

8. Active support for active students

Active students are extremely important to this university, but also to their fellow students. By doing committee work, high level athleticism, board functions, or volunteering, students promote and encourage a positive atmosphere that makes the Radboud University unique. It is therefore of utmost importance that these (often voluntarily) activities are supported by the university. For instance, at the Faculty of Arts, many study societies have to share crammed office spaces, while at the same floors empty offices are available which are prohibited to be used. Or, an athlete who is suffering from an overuse injury, does not meet the requirements to be offered the same regulations as students who suffer from Pfeiffer's disease. Moreover, sometimes faculties use the subsidies they grant to restrict study society's policies. **asap** encourages the active student, who has proven to be invaluable to the university, and therefore deserve the gratitude and recognition they wish for. This means step-by-step support granted by for instance a righteous drafted FOnS regulation, but also regulations which for instance consider exemptions for active students regarding mandatory seminars and/or lectures

9. Expand study areas

It is very frustrating when you would like to study or discuss study material and there is no study area to be found. **asap** would therefore like to increase the amount of study

areas available campus wide. Considering this, we do not only promote quantity, but also quality. **asap** promotes areas that meet the standards of the student nowadays, who often studies in the library for longer periods of time. Students need proper ICT-facilities, whether for individual or group work. Furthermore, the study areas need a clear indication whether they are designed for silent work, or for discussion.

10. Online availability of lectures

asap has been known as a progressive student party, which example the university should follow. Therefore, **asap** promotes the availability of MOOCs (Massive Open Online Courses) which are taught by the excellent faculty members the RU has to offer. This enables people worldwide to take courses which are offered freely by our university.

For students this progressive step should also mean that their lectures will become available online, even only on blackboard, as well as Soeterbeeck-lectures. This way, motivated students will be able to expand their field of interest and studies.