



Fact sheet

Flexible learning pilot

What is flexible learning?

Since September 2017, a number of degree programmes at the UvA have been offering students a flexible learning option. This means they pay tuition fees based on the courses they take rather than for full-time study. At present this concerns a pilot with a term of four years, open to a maximum of 1,000 students each year. For the 2017-2018 academic year, around 210 students signed up for the pilot; for 2018-2019 this number is already over 350.

What is the reason for this pilot?

Flexible learning is an initiative of the Dutch Student Union (LSVb) and the VVD and PvdA political parties to accommodate students who cannot or do not wish to study full time. The pilot is being coordinated by the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science (OCW). The pilot is designed to investigate what happens when students set their own pace in order to better align their studies with their individual needs and ambitions. Also taking part in the pilot are Tilburg University, Windesheim University of Applied Sciences and the University of Applied Sciences Utrecht.

For whom is flexible learning intended?

Flexible learning is mainly for students who know from the outset that they are unable or do not wish to take all the courses of a degree programme. This could be for any number of reasons – in order to do a work placement abroad, for example, or start a business, serve on the board of a study association or care for a family member.

Which degree programmes offer flexible learning?

In the 2018-2019 academic year, students enrolled in the following Bachelor's programmes can take part in the flexible learning pilot, provided they are granted admission to the second year:

- Economics and Business (Dutch and English-taught programmes)
- Business Economics (English)
- Fiscal Economics (Dutch)
- Econometrics and Operations Research (Dutch and English)
- Communication Science (Dutch and English)
- Sociology (Dutch)
- Biology (Dutch)
- Cultural Anthropology and Development Sociology (Dutch)

Participating at the Master's level are the degree programmes:

- Labour Law (Dutch)
- Education Sciences (Dutch)
- Communication Science (English)
- Sociology (English)
- Urban and Regional Planning (English)
- Human Geography (English)
- Earth Sciences (English)
- Cultural and Social Anthropology (English)

For how long will the flexible learning pilot be offered?

Students can sign up for the pilot during a period of four years (up until the 2020-2021 academic year). Once signed up, they can continue to practice flexible learning up until the 2022-2023 academic year, with the exception of Economics and Business Administration students (up to 2021).

What are the admission requirements?

There are three main admission requirements for participation in the pilot:

- For Bachelor's students: admission to the second year.
- Students must qualify for statutory tuition fees (not the institutional fees, even if they are the same).
- The degree programme must offer flexible learning and still have places available.

What does flexible learning cost?

The tuition fees for flexible learning are calculated based on the number of credits per course, plus a surcharge of 15%. Students pay €39.48 per credit, subject to a minimum tuition fee rate equal to the price of six credits, i.e. €236.88.

Students can sign up for the pilot through Studielink up until 31 May. When the student enrolls in a participating degree programme, Studielink will automatically offer flexible learning as an option. Although this decision is entirely up to the student, the UvA strongly recommends talking with the programme director or a study adviser first to determine if flexible learning is the right choice.

Participating degree programmes have a limited number of places. If the number of applicants exceeds the number of places available in a degree programme or overall, places will be assigned by a lottery on the day that re-enrolment opens in Studielink. After this, places will be allotted on a first come, first served basis.

What are the rights of flexible learning students?

Students who sign up for the pilot have almost all the same rights as regular students, including the right to resits during the academic year, student grants and loans, and assistance from the Profiling Fund. They can also switch back to full-time study at the regular tuition fee rate during the second semester.

However, there are also a number of restrictions. Students taking part in the pilot are not allowed to take any courses other than the ones for which they have paid. They cannot claim a tuition fee refund once the semester is under way (except under the standard hardship clause). They also may not request dispensation from the Teaching and Examination Regulations on account of their learning pace.