



University Council

**Date**

19-03-2021

**Subject**

Response to letter 60 EC BSA policy

**Our reference**

CvB/AZ/RK05032021

**Your reference**

UR/MH/38422

**Page**

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**Enclosure**

EUR articles on BSA

**Department**

Executive Board

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Dear members of the University Counsel,

Thank you for your letter regarding the EUR bsa-policy. The requests by the UC constitute to a major and fundamental evaluation of the bsa-policy. The EUR introduced the BSA in 2012 and has done a lot of research into its operation and outcomes. See:

- Uitgebreide Pilot "Nominaal = normaal" aan de EUR (2013)
- Betere studieresultaten dankzij 'Nominaal is normaal' (2013)
- Bindend Studieadvies BSA (2019) Gender-specific effects of raising Year 1 standards on medicine students' academic performance and stress levels (2020)
- Raising the Bar: Higher education students' sensitivity to the assessment policy' (2020)

An additional list of EUR articles and studies on the BSA has been added as an appendix.

The BSA and the level of the BSA standard are part of a coherent education system aimed at enabling students to obtain their bachelor's degree within a reasonable period of time. Other components are compensation possibilities between parts of the study, the tutoring in the first year, the design of the education and the way examination boards deal with personal circumstances and doubtful cases.

We do believe that a fundamental EUR-wide evaluation of student success in the bachelor programme and in the first year of study specifically could be useful, however the timing suggested by the UC is problematic for the following reasons:

1. The current Covid situation has led to an adjustment of the bsa-norms, making it difficult to evaluate or review the original bsa-policy.

2. At this moment the universities – by way of the VSNU - are in conversation with the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science about the BSA. Various student bodies and unions take part in these discussions. It is the intention of the ministry to inform the House of Representatives about the BSA in spring.
3. The BSA is assumed to be a topic of negotiation during the formation of a new administration. Also, from this perspective it will be more productive to await the developments as the EUR will (have to) align with national politics and policy.
4. Ensuring the continuation of education during Covid and the mitigation of possible Covid effects requires substantial effort from programs, schools and EUR administrative departments. A fundamental review would increase the workload and possible work pressure. Conducting a full evaluation now is therefore not practically feasible and would be impossible to ask from those currently trying to manage the situation at hand. Also, we do not know yet how the post Covid education and policy will look like.

Therefore, we propose to undertake the evaluation at a later appropriate time, which will include the areas of concern addressed in the letter by the UC and which will include the active participation of schools, programs, and program committees.

Your sincerely,

The Executive Board of the Erasmus University Rotterdam,



Prof. dr. Frank van der Duijn Schouten  
Rector Magnificus a.i.

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Your reference  
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## Appendix: Suggested articles and research

### From/about Erasmus University

<https://www.erasmusmagazine.nl/2018/09/19/afschaffen-nn-minister-slaat-de-plank-volledig-mis/>

<https://www.eur.nl/nieuws/informatie-over-het-bsa-bij-eur>  
<https://www.erasmusmagazine.nl/2020/10/29/eur-bevangen-door-mildheid-over-afschaffen-bindend-studieadvies/>

<https://www.erasmusmagazine.nl/2018/04/26/nominaal-is-normaal-niet-in-strijd-met-de-wet/>

<https://www.eur.nl/onderwijs/praktische-zaken/toelating/bindend-studieadvies>

<https://www.scienceguide.nl/2013/12/nominaal-is-normaal-werkt/>

<https://www.folia.nl/actueel/62458/nominaal-normaal-succesverhaal>

<https://docplayer.nl/4579884-Nominaal-normaal-aan-de-erasmus-universiteit-rotterdam-en-de-mogelijke-invloed-op-instroom-en-studiesucces-van-subgroepen-studenten.html>

<https://s3-eu-west-1.amazonaws.com/erasmus-magazine/app/uploads/2017/03/07160941/AP-07.1-Rapportage-en-doorwerking.pdf>

[https://www.eur.nl/sites/corporate/files/Onderzoeksrapport\\_Risbo\\_Uitgebreide\\_Pilot\\_Nominaal\\_is\\_Normaal.pdf](https://www.eur.nl/sites/corporate/files/Onderzoeksrapport_Risbo_Uitgebreide_Pilot_Nominaal_is_Normaal.pdf)

### Research by Ivo Arnold (et al.)

<https://www.eur.nl/people/ivo-arnold>

### Research by Guus Smeets (et al.)

<https://www.eur.nl/people/guus-smeets>

### Research by Rob Kickert

<https://www.eur.nl/people/rob-kickert>

<https://www.eur.nl/evenementen/promotie-r-robert-kickert-2020-12-04>

<https://www.nrc.nl/nieuws/2020/12/03/strenger-studieadvies-leidt-tot-hogere-cijfers-a4022448>

<https://www.scienceguide.nl/2021/01/minister-bsa-onderzoek-eur-niet-gebruiken-voor-brede-conclusies-over-bsa/>

### Research by Karen Stegers-Jager (et al.)

[https://www.researchgate.net/profile/Karen\\_Stegers-Jager](https://www.researchgate.net/profile/Karen_Stegers-Jager)

<https://www.erasmusmagazine.nl/2018/09/06/de-dubbele-strijd-voor-gelijke-kansen-in-het-geneeskundeonderwijs/>

<https://www.scienceguide.nl/2021/01/het-bsa-zou-nooit-dwingend-moeten-zijn/>