

**Happy staff – happy students**  
**Annual Report General Council 2025**



*General Council of the University of Applied Sciences 2025/2026*



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## Foreword by the Chair

It is with pride that I present the 2025 Annual Report of the General Council. A year in which we have worked with dedication, focus and commitment towards our shared ambition: a university where staff and students feel heard, valued and supported. After all, 'happy staff – happy students' is of particular importance at this time: a time when budget cuts are affecting the education landscape and when we are strongly influenced by global developments.

2025 was a year of consolidation and further development. We invested a great deal of time and energy in revising the Participation Regulations and in further professionalising our working methods. Our collaboration with the Executive Board, the Supervisory Board and the decentralised participation bodies increasingly took the form of open dialogue and early involvement, with room for differing views.

In terms of substance, key themes took centre stage, such as workload, social safety, student wellbeing and the impact of artificial intelligence on education and the organisation. On these topics, the General Council not only provided formal advice or gave its approval, but also actively sought dialogue within the organisation. It is precisely in this combination of a formal role and informal engagement that our strength lies.

We also saw some excellent results. The elections saw a higher turnout than the previous year, committees collaborated ever more closely, and the quality of our decision-making was further strengthened through additional information sessions and professional development. At the same time, there were issues that required extra care, where support, transparency and pace had to be balanced. Take, for example, the major reorganisations on which the General Council had to give its opinion. This requires listening, reflection and, at times, asking critical questions.

Personally, I look back with appreciation on the commitment of all members of the General Council, the dedication of the Registry and the constructive collaboration with the Executive Board. Participation is a human endeavour. It requires time, trust and a willingness to work together to find the best decision for the university as a whole. We look forward with confidence to the continued realisation of our ambitions in 2026.



Akram Achahboun

Chair of the General Council of the University of Applied Sciences, September – December 2025



## 1. Introduction

Before you lies the 2025 Annual Report of the General Council of The Hague University of Applied Sciences. In doing so, the General Council fulfils its statutory obligation to report annually in writing on its activities, but also aims, through this document, to contribute to keeping all stakeholders informed. This annual report covers the calendar year 2025 and spans two academic years and, consequently, two terms of office of the General Council, the composition of which changed on 1 September 2025.

At the end of 2024, the General Council focused on the themes of student success and inclusivity, and this approach was continued in the spring of 2025. After the summer holidays, the General Council began with many new members, and the [2025–2026 annual plan](#) announced that advice and decisions would primarily be formulated from the perspective that student success is only possible if staff are fully involved in new developments, believe in the Educational vision and are properly supported.

This report contains facts and figures, as well as an overview of the key substantive themes, successes and challenges encountered. From strategic policy choices to practical improvements, the council has done its utmost to ensure that the voices of students and colleagues are heard loud and clear. This careful approach sometimes meant that, initially, the council did not go along with intended decisions by the Executive Board but only did so after adjustments had been made or a commitment to do so had been given regarding the implementation of policy. Ultimately, this broad perspective has always been shown to contribute to the quality of decision-making.



*Members of the General Council, January–August 2025.*

## 2. General Council 2025

As terms of office follow the academic year rather than the calendar year, the composition of the General Council changes annually on 1 September.

### 2.1. Composition

As of 1 January 2025, the Council consisted of 18 members. One of the student members stepped down on 1 March 2025 as she was completing her final-year placement, which could not be combined with the duties of the General Council. This vacant seat was filled by the next candidate on the reserve list. From April onwards, the Council also bid farewell to one of its staff members. This vacant seat could not be filled due to the absence of a reserve list. From 1 September 2025,



the composition of the council changed following the Participation elections in June of that year, after which the council was fully staffed with 20 members. Following the installation meeting on 1 September 2025, 15 new members started their first year, whilst five members began the second year of their term of office. Until 1 September, **Diederik Brink** was the Chair of the General Council and **Tjitske Irausquin-Land** was the staff vice-chair. The position of Vice-Chair for Students was initially held by **Colin Feiter**, who was succeeded by **Jermano van Engelen** on 1 February. After the summer, the new council also elected an entirely new Daily Board, with **Akram Achahboun** as Chair, **Ellen van den Berg** as Vice-Chair for Staff and **Arcana Balsingh** as Vice-Chair for Students. This year's installation meeting and the elections of the chairpersons were again chaired by the Registrar, Gofrie van Lieshout, under the supervision of the chair of the Electoral Committee, Esterella de Roo.

[Appendix 1](#) sets out the full composition of the GC in 2025, covering both the period before 1 September 2025 and thereafter.

## 2.2. Ambitions & direction

The change in the composition of the General Council after the summer also brought with it new ambitions. AI and student participation were given priority. On major issues such as workload policy, social safety and student success, the course set by their predecessors was continued.

In the spring of 2025 in particular, the General Council urged the Executive Board to engage in more substantive dialogue with students and staff across the organisation, in order to ensure that policies and decision-making enjoy broad support. This is particularly important in the case of significant organisational changes. Since then, sessions and visits have been organised noticeably more frequently to listen to and inform those directly involved. One example of this is the round-table discussions on student success, following on from the intended decision to replace the BSA with a different scheme. In the autumn, members were regularly given the opportunity to attend meetings where strategic topics were on the agenda.

The General Council regularly exercised its right of initiative by putting forward proposals that improved or supplemented existing policy, which were subsequently adopted by the EB. Examples of this include the 'Peace' memorandum drafted by a student member and the General Council's AI working group.

In December 2025, the General Council published its 2025–2026 Annual Plan, entitled '[Happy Staff – Happy Students](#)', setting out its ambitions and priorities. The EB provided an appendix listing the expected requests for advice and consent to serve as a guide for agenda setting and planning.



### 3. Impact achieved & challenges

#### 3.1. THUAS general university matters

**Participation Regulations** - In 2025, a great deal of time and energy was once again devoted to revising the Participation Regulations. This process had already begun in 2024, and in 2025 it was decided to engage an external legal professional to draw up new regulations. Despite reaching an '80% version' before the summer, no decision was reached and discussions resumed in the autumn. Building on the consensus previously reached on a number of provisions, discussions between the General Council and the EB continued in the autumn. By the end of the year, work was underway internally on a new draft version for decision-making in 2026.

**Monitoring of the 2025 Framework letter** - Before the General Council consented to the 2025 Framework letter in 2024, additional agreements were made regarding it, which are included in the 'Addendum to the 2025 Framework letter'. These provisions related, amongst other things, to the implementation of more efficient processes (so-called DOP lines) and the balance between THUAS' ambitions. Throughout the year, all agreements were discussed during both committee meetings and in meetings between the EB and the General Council.

**Artificial intelligence (AI)** - At the end of 2025, the General Council set up the AI work group. The aim is for the Participation bodies to help steer the development and integrated use of AI within The Hague University of Applied Sciences, focusing on three themes, namely:

- **Innovation & the human touch** - striking a balance between the pace of technological developments and care for students and staff.
- **AI literacy & professional development** - what are the minimum knowledge and skills that students and staff need to possess?
- **Impact on education & organisation** - what does AI mean for degree programmes, professional fields, assessment, support and the educational vision?

In the spring of 2026, the work group will further elaborate on these points and put them into practice in consultation with the constituency and the management.

**Social Safety** – Social safety remained a topical issue in 2025, and the General Council continued to ask probing questions on this matter whenever it, or a related topic, was on the agenda of the EB, the service departments, the faculties or in consultations with the unions. Following the Labour Inspectorate's routine visit in February 2025, an assessment was launched to identify potential risk factors that could lead to undesirable behaviour within the organisation. The General Council is closely monitoring this process, which is due to be completed in 2026.

**Brand Manifesto** – The General Council was involved in the development of THUAS' new corporate positioning. Together with the sub-councils, members provided critical feedback on drafts presented throughout the year, which regularly led to amendments and further discussions on the 'Why, How & What' of the manifesto, which is due to be rolled out in the spring of 2027.



### 3.2. Education, Research & Student Affairs

The appendices contain a comprehensive overview of all decisions and recommendations made in 2025. Below is a selection of topics relating to Education, Research & Student Affairs:

**Implementation of the Educational Vision** - Throughout the year, the implementation of the educational vision was a recurring theme in the discussions held by lecturers and students with the EB, colleagues from the service departments and the SB. Whilst the innovations and ambitions are embraced, concerns regarding workload and the risks of inequality of opportunity were regularly raised by the General Council.

**Model EER/Personal Learning Path Advice with entry requirements (PLAMI)** - After the GC was unable to agree on an earlier proposal to replace the BSA with the DSA (Urgent Study Advice) due to insufficient support within the organisation for this change, an extensive dialogue was launched in 2025 to arrive at a widely supported recommendation for student success. Several proposals were discussed before the Personal Learning Path Advice with entry requirements was finally adopted. Initially, the GC did not respond positively to this either. It was only after the summer holidays, following a second proposal, that the General Council was able to give its approval. This policy thus became part of the EER model, which the General Council consented to in December.

**Research & Education** - Together with the EB and the Centres of Expertise Council, the General Council also explored in 2025 how research and education could further reinforce one another. Based on the Knowledge Agenda drawn up in 2024, discussions centred, amongst other things, on the discontinuation or launch of research groups, the research job series, and how research can be further embedded within THUAS as a knowledge institution.

**Performance of Degree Programme Advisory Committees** - at the initiative of the Registry, a review was carried out into the performance of the Degree Programme Advisory Committees. The General Council was closely involved in this and has indicated its intention to act proactively on the recommendations and analyses. The implementation of these is scheduled for 2026.

### 3.3. Business operations

The appendices contain a comprehensive overview of all decisions and recommendations made in 2025. Below is a selection of the topics relating to Business operations:

**Reorganisation of the Central Testing Organisation** - The General Council gave extensive consideration to the consequences for staff (job roles) and Students (SOM facilities) of this intended decision, which was submitted for consent in June 2025. Whilst the intention behind the centralisation was met with approval, there appeared to be too many concerns and even resistance, particularly within the constituency, regarding the practical implementation. The General Council therefore initially did not give its consent. Following a second proposal after the summer holidays, once the EB had outlined the steps taken to incorporate the GC's concerns into the reorganisation process, the General Council ultimately gave its consent.

**Reorganisation of the EK&C service department** - The General Council recognised the value and necessity of a restructuring within EKC, but also wanted attention to be paid to the objections and concerns raised by the organisation regarding, amongst other things, certain terminology



perceived as discriminatory, the way in which leadership roles are filled, transparent communication, appeals procedures and the involvement of the decentralised forms of participation in implementing the reorganisation. The EB made commitments on these points, which were confirmed in writing, after which the GC consented to the reorganisation.

**Framework letter 2026** - The Framework letter 2026 was a clear and easy-to-read document. In terms of content, however, the GC considered it to be rather ambitious on a number of points. The EB and its advisers took ample time to address questions, and the document was consented to before the summer holidays.

**Workload Policy** - The issue of workload policy was raised in several cases and continued to be taken into account by the GC in its decision-making throughout 2025. In July 2025, the GC consented to the proposed workload policy and continues to monitor its implementation closely.

## 4. Work processes and collaboration

### 4.1. Decision-making cycle

Each academic year is divided into five periods (decision-making cycles) during which decisions and recommendations are made and prepared. The General Council receives, via the Registry, the intended decisions of the Executive Board, together with a request for advice, consent or for information. Decisions are taken during the final meetings of each cycle: the Internal Meeting (IM) and the Official Meeting (OM). Prior to these, the GC's Education, Research & Students Affairs (E,R&S) and Business operations (BO) committees have meetings with the relevant portfolio holders from the EB (with or without their advisers present). During these committee meetings, substantive questions are raised and discussions held in preparation for the OM. Generally speaking, documents are submitted to the GC in good time before the agreed deadline. In 2025, members also met increasingly often outside formal meeting sessions, which has improved the decision-making process. Additional information sessions organised by colleagues from service departments involved in policy implementation have also contributed to this.

The current meeting schedule is always available on the [General Council's intranet page](#).

### 4.2. Work method

The practice of starting each cycle with a consultation between the chairs of all the sub-councils and the Daily Board of the GC continued in 2025. Attendees keep each other informed; the chair can provide an update on matters currently before the GC, and feedback and questions raised by the sub-councils are gathered.



During the GC's first work meeting, the dossiers received from the EB are allocated to the committees, arrangements are made regarding preparation, and all other current matters are discussed.

In order to carefully address the volume of intended decisions and the variety of topics, the dossiers were divided between the two committees mentioned. Following the committee meetings, the chairs presented their advice to the other members of the GC during the second Work meeting. During this meeting, the substance of all decisions was discussed in plenary session. Any additional questions or decisions already taken were sent in writing to the EB via the Registrar. The response could then be taken into account during the joint meeting, the OM. In between these sessions, the EB and the DB met for a brief preliminary discussion of current issues and to finalise the agenda.

#### 4.3. Cooperation and liaison with the decentralised participation bodies, the EB and the SB

**Decentralised participation** - communication with the sub-councils focused primarily on contact with the chairs during regular meetings. These meetings were well attended, and chairs provided both solicited and unsolicited input and shared feedback from their respective organisational units. The General Council has no formal consultation structure with the DPACs. Communication with the committees took place via the Faculty Councils and/or the relevant faculty member on the General Council.

**EB** - In 2025, in addition to the formal meetings, the EB also met with the Chair of the EB every cycle to discuss issues that had not been formally placed on the agenda. Both chairs also met regularly for informal one-to-one discussions. The cooperation covenant signed in 2024 by the EB and the GC remained in force until the summer of 2025. A new covenant to take effect on 1 September 2025 was not drawn up pending the new format to be incorporated into the revised Participation Regulations.

**Supervisory Board** - In 2025, two formal meetings took place with the members of the SB. Insights and experiences were exchanged, and the more complex issues in particular were discussed, followed by in-depth discussions on specific topics. The member who sits on the SB on the recommendation of the GC stepped down, and the succession procedure was initiated jointly.

## 5. Participation Elections 2025

From 3 June to 18 June 2025, elections were held at The Hague University of Applied Sciences for the 230 vacant seats on the councils and committees. With 280 candidates, elections took place across 33 electoral districts.



*Announcement of results: 24 June*



### 5.1. General review

As in previous years, the online election process was supported by WebElect. This process was evaluated with them, and the areas for improvement and development have been taken into account for the 2026 elections. The election process ran smoothly from both a technical and organisational perspective, without any obstacles.

### 5.2. Facts & Figures

The overall turnout in 2025 was 8.8%. This was higher than in 2024, when it stood at 8.5%. Notable was the decline in turnout among students compared with the increase among staff. This was the reverse of the trend seen in 2024.

Following the elections, the occupancy rates for the various councils were as follows:

|                                        |      |
|----------------------------------------|------|
| - General Council                      | 100% |
| - Faculty Councils                     | 96%  |
| - Services Council                     | 100% |
| - Centres of Expertise Council         | 100% |
| - Degree Programme Advisory Committees | 72%  |

For the first time in years, the General Council, the Services Council and the Centres of Expertise Council were fully staffed following the 2025 elections. Occupancy rates in the Faculty Councils also improved very slightly in 2025. By contrast, the occupancy rates in the Degree Programme Advisory Committees deteriorated slightly, with the exception of the SWE Faculty.

In [the evaluation report](#), the Electoral Committee identifies the key areas for attention in 2025, supplemented by recommendations for 2026. This report was submitted to the GC as the Electoral Committee's commissioning body.



## 6. Strengthening the quality of participation: facilitation and support

### 6.1. Professionalisation

During the start conference in August 2025, the new GC members took part in the training course 'Introduction to Participation in Higher Professional Education'. This start conference marked the start of the participation year, and the two days were entirely devoted to getting to know one another, discussing the direction and ambitions, and laying the foundations for collaboration with the EB and the SB.

The majority of the members were new to the General Council, so the focus was on getting to know one another and the introduction. However, there was also time to reflect on the previous year with those members who were starting their second term. Successes and lessons learnt were discussed, and together they set the ball rolling on determining the direction for the coming period and their own ambitions. The EB and the SB joined the meeting, and discussions took place on ongoing issues, each other's roles and mutual expectations. The start conference was well received by all participants and, year after year, proves to be a pleasant starting point for effective collaboration.



*Student members of the General Council*

*Staff members of the General Council*

*Photos taken during the start conference in August 2025*

GC staff members made modest use of the professional development programme, which is reviewed and updated annually. Furthermore, students and lecturers from both the central and decentralised participation bodies often shift their priorities at the last minute when faced with a heavy workload. Generally speaking, their priority does not lie with participation in one of the programmes, even if they have registered. Continuing to offer a high-quality programme is therefore a challenge, particularly when there is a high rate of 'no-shows'.

New additions to the 2025-2026 professional development programme were the EER Masterclass, which was very positively received by participants, and the session 'Collaborating with participation', in which directors and Programme managers exchanged knowledge and experience on effective and pleasant collaboration with participation.

### 6.2. Participation Budget

The budget for participation amounted to €1,703,000 in 2025. After offsetting and paying for the hours allocated to staff and students for their roles in the participation bodies, a sum of €94,000



remained available in the budget to facilitate support. This includes organising elections, translation services (interpreting and translation), minute-taking, communication resources, and providing a professional development programme and team-building activities for councils and committees. To avoid a deficit, a number of items have been removed from the budget, such as the use of external minute-takers at all GC meetings, organising a university-wide kick-off event for participation, accommodation during the GC start conference, and providing lunches during training sessions.

The plan to achieve significant savings on the use of interpreters through the use of AI has not yet been realised by 2025, as the proposed tools do not meet THUAS' security and privacy requirements. Thanks to the temporary additional funds made available by the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science (OCW) to strengthen staff participation, the year was able to be closed with a positive result.

### **Quality Agreements/SVM**

As in previous years, in the spring of 2025 the General Council drew up a reflection report on the process and implementation of the 2024 Study Advance Funds (SVM). In 2025, the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science (OCW) also requested a review of how the SVM funds had been spent in relation to the quality agreements covering the entire period from 2019 to 2024. Both documents are included in [Appendix 3](#).

### **Facilities and support for the General Council of the University of Applied Sciences**

Apart from a minor technical amendment, no significant changes were made to the Participation Regulations and the Facilitation scheme in 2025.

The support provided by the Registry in terms of processes, information and professional development for the entire participation system in general, and the Registrar's role as an adviser to the GC in particular, remained unchanged in 2025. The lack of professional communication support, particularly during the election campaigns, was seen as a shortcoming. GC members have many ideas and are actively committed to recruiting new members, but due to a lack of sufficient time on the agenda, guidance and support in implementation, the activities and their impact remained limited.

The Registrar and the Daily Board held weekly meetings, and the team prepared and coordinated all facilities for the GC.

## **7. Appendices**

1. Composition of the General Council
2. Decisions and advices 2025
3. Reflection reports on quality agreements/SVM



## Appendix 1. Composition of the General Council 2025

1 January to 31 August 2025

| Electoral district | Staff                                           | Students                                                                                |
|--------------------|-------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| BFM                | Sudhan Balakrishnan                             | Vlad Polienov<br>Collins Matthew                                                        |
| PLS                | Remmelt de Weerd                                | Marjorie Miranda (until 1 March)<br>Janeth Decipulo-Ladia (from 1 March)<br>Marijn Rijk |
| HNS                | Christine Kick                                  | Jelle van Lier<br>Jeffrey van Loon                                                      |
| ITD                | vacancy                                         | Akram Achahboun                                                                         |
| M&O                | Diederik Brink                                  | Colin Feiter                                                                            |
| SWE                | Tjitske Irausquin-Land                          | Jermano van Engelen                                                                     |
| TIS                | May Almuhsinawe (until 4 April)                 | Lara Gomaa                                                                              |
| Services           | Chantal van der Horst<br>Brigit Koek<br>vacancy | N/A                                                                                     |

1 September to 31 December 2025

| Electoral district | Staff                                              | Students                       |
|--------------------|----------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| BFM                | Dave Boone                                         | Sini Salmi<br>Minhyeok Sung    |
| PLS                | Michel Heidenis                                    | Max Fulham<br>Sadaf Heidari    |
| HNS                | Michel Bosman                                      | Jeffrey van Loon<br>Alise Lase |
| ITD                | Alice van Waas-van Duuren                          | Akram Achahboun                |
| M&O                | Paul Treanor                                       | Roan van Gilst                 |
| SWE                | Ellen van den Berg                                 | Jermano van Engelen            |
| TIS                | Hans Glerum                                        | Arcana Balsingh                |
| Services           | Chantal van der Horst<br>Brigit Koek<br>Peili Wang | N/A                            |

Allocation of roles until 1 September 2025

| Division                                        | Elected                                                                                                              | Role                                             |
|-------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------|
| Daily Board                                     | Diederik Brink<br>Tjitske Irausquin-Land<br>Colin Feiter (until 1 February)<br>Jermano van Engelen (from 1 February) | Chair<br>Vice-Chair Staff<br>Vice-Chair Students |
| Business operations committee                   | Christine Kick (until 1 April)<br>Remmelt de Weerd (from 1 April)                                                    | Chair                                            |
| Education, Research & Student Affairs committee | Akram Achahboun                                                                                                      | Chair                                            |



Allocation of roles from 1 September to 31 December 2025

| Body                                            | Elected                                                   | Role                                             |
|-------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------|
| Executive Committee                             | Akram Achachboun<br>Ellen van den Berg<br>Arcana Balsingh | Chair<br>Vice-Chair Staff<br>Vice-Chair Students |
| Business operations committee                   | Chantal van der Horst                                     | Chair                                            |
| Education, Research & Student Affairs committee | Jermano van Engelen                                       | Chair                                            |



## Appendix 2. Decisions and advices 2025

| Cycle                         | Document No.              | intended decision                                                                                                                                                               | GC decision     |
|-------------------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------|
| <b>3</b><br><b>Jan–Feb</b>    | 24uit01291                | Request for advice on the section concerning institutional tuition fee rates in the 'Regulation on tuition fees for funded programmes at THUAS 2025–2026' → student delegation  | Positive advice |
|                               | 24uit01324                | New Research Group on Legal Aspects of Cyber Security (LACS)                                                                                                                    | Positive advice |
|                               | 25uit00001                | Termination of the United Nations Peace and Justice Studies (UNPJ) Research Group                                                                                               | Negative advice |
|                               | 25uit00004                | Amendment to the Regulations on Enrolment and Deregistration of funded programmes 2025–2026                                                                                     | Consented       |
|                               | 25uit00026                | Business case for Electrical and Electronic Engineering                                                                                                                         | Consented       |
| <b>4</b><br><b>Mar–Apr</b>    | 25 of 00097               | New job series for research                                                                                                                                                     | Consented       |
|                               | 25uit00122                | Institutional tuition fees for the Joint Master's degree in Applied Quantum Technology                                                                                          | Positive advice |
|                               | 25uit0124                 | Processing of 2024 results                                                                                                                                                      | Consented       |
| <b>5</b><br><b>May–August</b> | 25 of 00165               | Business case for the Associate Degree in Built Environment                                                                                                                     | Consented       |
|                               | 25uit00182                | Business case for the Joint Degree Master's in Public Procurement & Contract Management                                                                                         | Consented       |
|                               | 25uit00183                | Amendment to the Code of Conduct and Disciplinary Measures                                                                                                                      | Consented       |
|                               | 25uit00184                | Update to the ICT Regulations                                                                                                                                                   | Consented       |
|                               | 25uit00188                | Action Plan on Workload                                                                                                                                                         | Consented       |
|                               | 25uit00199                | Framework letter 2026                                                                                                                                                           | Consented       |
|                               | 25uit00200                | Reorganisation of the Central Assessment Organisation                                                                                                                           | Not consented   |
|                               | 25uit00201                | Towards a Personalised Learning Pathway Advice with Entry Requirements                                                                                                          | Not consented   |
| <b>1</b><br><b>Sep–Oct</b>    | 25uit00734                | Towards a Personalised Learning Path Advice with Entry Requirements (2 <sup>nd</sup> proposal)                                                                                  | Consented       |
|                               | 25 of 00735               | Student holidays for the 2026–2027 academic year                                                                                                                                | Consented       |
|                               | 25out00736                | Compulsory leave days for staff in 2026                                                                                                                                         | Consented       |
|                               | 25uit00737                | Request for advice on the section concerning institutional tuition fee rates in the 'Regulation on Tuition Fees for Funded Programs at THUAS 2026–2027' → student delegation    | Positive advice |
|                               | 25uit00755                | Amended Reorganisation Plan for the Central Testing Organisation (2 <sup>nd</sup> proposal)                                                                                     | Consented       |
| <b>2</b><br><b>Nov–Dec</b>    | 25uit00782/<br>25uit00810 | Redesign of the decentralised selection process for the Skin Therapy programme → student delegation                                                                             | Negative advice |
|                               | 25uit00783                | Institutional tuition fees for English-taught Master's programmes → student delegation                                                                                          | Positive advice |
|                               | 25uit00784                | Integration of the World Citizenship research group into the Inclusive Education research group and integration of Peace and Law into the Multi-Level Regulation research group | Positive advice |



|  |            |                                                                |                 |
|--|------------|----------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------|
|  | 25uit00786 | Reorganisation of the OKC service department                   | Consented       |
|  | 25uit00791 | College budget for 2026                                        | Positive advice |
|  | 25uit00825 | Model Education and Examination Regulations (EER)<br>2026–2027 | Consented       |



### Appendix 3. Reflection Reports on Quality Agreements/SVM

#### Reflection of the General Council on the process and implementation of Study Advance Funding 2024

12 May 2025

The picture that is painted by the THUAS Management around the process and the distribution of the Student Advance Funds (Studievoorschotmiddelen, SVM) is generally recognised by participation councils. The dialogue with various participation bodies has been constructive. Sub-councils and programme committees were involved in the process, and an overview has been made of the implemented plans. In addition, various faculty councils have also been proactively kept informed of the spending of the funds during the year, but this does not apply to every faculty to the same extent.

The student loan funds have led to extra time and attention for the described objectives. However, various sub-councils note that the exact impact, for example on extra capacity, was not always measurable or felt within teams.

There have been no major problems in the process. However, various participation bodies have reservations about both the process and its effect on the 'shop floor'. The most common of these are:

1. There has been the involvement of faculty councils, but the involvement of education teams or faculty offices was not a matter of course. This has impacted the support for the plans and the (correct) connection of initiatives to existing initiatives.
2. Within the available time sheets of employees, it was often difficult to find space for the implementation of the plans.
3. The (quality of the) intended goals and their effects (are the initiatives successful?) are and were not always clear to the councils involved.
4. Participation was involved in the planning, but was often sidelined in the monitoring, evaluation and adjustment of plans. Evaluation of the results is judged by various sub councils to be substandard.

Finally, the most important side note: with the disappearance of the funds, the question is whether there has been a lasting impact and quality improvement. Several participation bodies are not convinced of this, especially given the current shrinking financial framework at THUAS.



6 May 2025

This reflection report provides a concise review of the spending of the quality funds (student loan funds) within The Hague University of Applied Sciences during the period 2019-2024. In summary, the conclusion is that the spending of the resources has contributed to quality improvement within the university of applied sciences, although the success and enthusiasm about the (use of) the resources seems to vary greatly between faculties and programmes. Various stakeholders, including the General Council, faculty councils and programme committees, have been involved in the planning for the use of the resources. There are also critical voices. For example, about the coherence between activities, about the connection to existing (training) plans, about increasing workload, about monitoring and assessing the results of the activities and also about the extent to which initiatives can be sustainably safeguarded after 2024.

## Background and context

The quality agreements have their origins in the abolition of the individual government grants for students in 2015, whereby the funds released were used to improve quality in higher education. The plan submitted by The Hague University of Applied Sciences was initially assessed as insufficient by the NVAO in 2020, but this was rectified and approved in 2021. This illustrates the learning curve that THUAS has gone through in implementing and monitoring the quality agreements.

The participation bodies have played a monitoring and advisory role throughout the process, which is in line with the requirements set by the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science.

## Spending within thematic frameworks

The quality resources have been spent within the six nationally determined themes, with THUAS having its own emphases. The funds have been used for both college-wide initiatives and faculty-specific projects. In general, the participation process at the central level went better than the process within the faculty district councils.

### 1. More intensive and small-scale education

Within this theme, investments have been made in reducing the size of working groups and intensifying guidance within education. The faculties have placed different emphases in this regard. The general picture is that the majority of the intentions have been realized. In some faculties, full realisation has not been achieved, mainly due to challenges in staff recruitment. A point of criticism in the planning of this theme was not so much the involvement of participation, but rather the active participation of education teams and faculty offices in making the plans. As a result, the support and capacity for the implementation of the plans, has not always been optimal.



## **2. More and better guidance of students**

The funds have been used to strengthen study career guidance and the appointment of student psychologists and counsellors, including for counselling and psychological support. This has contributed to better support for students, especially during the Covid period it was very valuable. Faculties have also invested in programmes and services that fit within their own context. The participation council has contributed ideas about the practical implementation.

## **3. Study success**

The investments in study success have led to an improvement in transfer rates and study success, with special attention to specific target groups such as first-generation students and students with a migration background. The approach is deliberately differentiated per faculty to do justice to the different student populations and needs from different programmes.

## **4. Educational differentiation**

Investments have been made in broadening the range of education, including minors, honours programmes and international programmes. This has provided students with more options to tailor education to their needs. The participation council has contributed ideas about the development of new forms of education.

## **5. Appropriate and good educational facilities**

The investments in educational facilities have contributed to the modernisation of learning environments, with specific attention to digitisation and flexibilisation. The corona period has acted as an accelerator in this, investing in digital infrastructure in particular. The General Council has ensured that these investments actually benefit the primary education process.

## **6. Further professionalisation of teachers**

The professionalisation of lecturers has been tackled both centrally and decentrally, with a focus on digital didactics, testing and feedback, and supervision of various student groups. Whether these investments have contributed to an increase in the quality of education and the innovative capacity of teaching teams is difficult for many faculty councils and programme committees to assess.

## **Financial accountability**

The financial accountability was carried out through the regular planning and control cycle, in which the participation bodies were primarily involved at the time of planning and budgeting. In the second half of the period, a shift is visible from temporary projects to more structural embedding in regular education. This raises questions about the sustainable safeguarding of the initiatives after 2024.



## Involvement of participation

The participation council has played a role in all phases of the quality agreements, from planning to monitoring and adjustment, but this role was sometimes too limited or shaped in too short a time. The General Council has reflected annually on progress and implementation, and has worked constructively with faculty councils to get a complete picture of the decentralised spending and impact.

## Future

The experiences with the 2019-2024 quality agreements provide us with valuable information for future policy choices. We pay special attention to the following points:

1. The importance of clear objectives and measurable results at the start
2. The added value of a good balance between central frameworks and decentralised interpretation
3. The importance of continuous involvement of the participation bodies, not only in consent but also in monitoring and tightening policy
4. The challenge of sustainability: how can temporary resources lead to structural quality improvement? How do we prevent improvements from being undone, now that the university of applied sciences has entered a period of financial contraction?
5. The need for a close link between quality agreements and regular quality assurance

## Conclusion

The use of the student loan funds within The Hague University of Applied Sciences has contributed to improving the quality of education, although it has often been difficult for the participation councils involved to measure whether the plans have had the desired results. The participation council has been able to make an active contribution to the planning, although this seems to have come out better at the central level than at the decentralised level.

