

Corona news update educational support #4 (week17 2020)

ONLINE EDUCATION

Provision of information

The information working group has made a number of updates to the Online Education website for lecturers. These will be available as of Friday 25 April. The updates include a new page with 10 tips on how to design online courses.

In the VU Canvas Student Guide students can find information on online education, including online proctoring.

On Canvas, faculty support staff can find information on online teaching. The course Getting to Know Canvas for Faculty Admins, for example, explains the procedure for applying for Zoom accounts for sessions with 300 to 1000 students.

Support

The support working group is preparing workshops for lecturers on course design, making knowledge clips, and using online resources (for instance, open textbooks and copyright). These interactive workshops will start in mid-May, led by VU NT&L. The communication on this will start soon.

Although nowadays not many students make use of the online consultation hours, there are still some students who would like to make use of this. Their questions have become more specific. That is why we have decided to make online consultations possible until at least 5 June. Please note: from 28 April consultation hours will be from 12:30 to 13:00.

The faculty support staff for online education meet online once a week, together with experts from IT, Corporate Real Estate and Facilities, the University Library and Learn! Academy.

Web conferencing

Since 1 April, lecturers and students can make use of Zoom for the purpose of synchronous education. Zoom can be accessed via Canvas and, as from this week, via SURFconext (<https://vu-live.zoom.us>). The VU license has been set up in such a way that privacy and security risks have been minimized as much as possible. On Canvas you will find the details on how to use Zoom. This page is updated daily (see <https://canvas.vu.nl/courses/39984/pages/zoom>).

Students who want to make recordings are strongly advised to use Kaltura, as the recordings can be stored safely on this platform. For a manual on how to use Kaltura, please see https://sites.google.com/a/vu.nl/video/kaltura-capturespace#h.p_ID_52

In the coming period we will work on further embedding Zoom within VU Amsterdam. We will also be working on updating the documentation on the purchase and use of applications. Zoom will be available for online teaching until the end of the academic year. On Friday 24 April a meeting will be held with two members of the University Student Council to discuss the importance of privacy settings.

ONLINE EXAMINATIONS

Online proctoring

- On Tuesday 21 April, the Executive Board has decided to enter into a contract with Proctorio as of 1 May 2020, to enable us to use online proctoring during the period of the coronavirus measures.
- In the coming weeks, we will carry out pilots together with Proctorio so as to get familiar with the platform and get ready to safely implement Proctorio university-wide.
- A maximum of 1200 students can take examinations at the same time using Proctorio (for instance, 2 examinations with 600 students at the same time, or 4 examinations with 300 students).
- Based on this capacity and the current timetable, we have made a preliminary planning for proctored exams for exam periods 5 and 6.
- Students will be informed timely.
- All examinations for which online proctoring has been requested so far have been scheduled. Only a very small number of exams have been rescheduled to avoid exceeding the maximum capacity of 1200 simultaneous participants.
- The Education Offices are checking the feasibility of the preliminary planning.
- For examinations to be held via online proctoring
 - The exam must already be in TestVision, or this must be arranged by the lecturer or examination support staff.
 - Only TestVision software can be used during the exam.
 - Please note: Only when no alternative is available, use can be made of online proctoring. Only then does VU Amsterdam have a legitimate interest to admit students without asking permission.
- The proctoring timetable will be ready on 29 April.
- The remaining exams from periods 4 and 5 for which proctoring has been requested have been scheduled in period 6 in consultation with the examination support staff.
- Every week, we will publish on Canvas how many examinations have been held using online proctoring
- According to the preliminary planning, 132 of the 656 examinations planned in the examination week of period 5 and throughout period 6 will be held using online proctoring.

Miscellaneous:

- On Canvas there's an updated manual of TestVision
- The Canvas Student Guide explains why we provide online education at VU Amsterdam. This guide also includes detailed information on how we handle students' privacy.

- We are working on providing students who are unable to take examinations at home with a computer and space on campus where they can take the examination. Students may make a request for these facilities through their academic advisor. More information will follow a.s.a.p.

CENTRAL SUPPORT ISSUES

Registration for education and examinations

This week the working group has provided input for a letter that will be sent to students about the examination week of period 5. Students are still requested to register for courses and examinations within the set deadlines. In addition, on vu.nl/corona information will be published on how to register.

VU Introduction Days

Due to the ban on events, the VU Introduction Days cannot be held in their regular form. The same applies to the Introduction Week for Master/exchange /Semester in Amsterdam students. At the moment, two scenarios are being worked on –these have been discussed with the international office as well as the faculties- and will be discussed as soon as possible by the Onderwijsoverleg. It is scheduled to be discussed in the Executive Board on 12 May. The first option is to welcome students in small groups during an assigned timeslot, and an additional online programme. The second scenario is a fully online programme. The faculties favour the online programme and consider the alternative (welcoming students in small groups) as logistically unfeasible and too risky.

The relevant web pages on the VU website have been adjusted and indicate that we are working on an alternative programme. Via social media, messages have also been posted. Furthermore, the study associations have been sent an email and the VU Introduction Days app has been updated as well.

CENTRAL ARRANGEMENTS FOR EDUCATION AND STUDY DELAY

Transition HBO-P to WO-Bachelor's

On 22 April, OCW published a service document stating the regulations for students progressing from HBO-P to university.

Emergency Fund / Emergency provisions corona

As a result of the corona crisis and the measures taken, many students are experiencing financial problems because they no longer have any income from jobs or parental allowances. On vu.nl students can find information on how to deal with these financial problems. Students with urgent financial problems can request help from the Emergency Fund. Students can find information on vu.nl or by contacting the Student General Counselling Service.

Student Financial Support Fund

OCW states that the Student Financial Support Fund is intended for students who are ill or provide family care. It is not intended for students who have fallen behind in their studies as a result of the corona crisis. This proviso will probably be included in OCW's service document update.

STUDENT WELL-BEING

The information section of the platform has been supplemented with some useful links and a comic strip by colleague Corrie Quant about studying at home. On vu.nl a link has been added for international students to the page on corona. The community part of the platform is under construction. In the future, vlogs of lecturers, students and student counsellors will be posted there regularly. In addition, we are working on a tool that students can use to get together online, for example to study together. The University Student Councils, Faculty Student Councils and study and student associations will be asked what information they think is missing on the 'study and corona' page. As part of the Work Package, iBNO is working on the conditions under which students would be allowed to study on location at VU Amsterdam or take examinations, all at the discretion of the academic advisor. In exceptional cases, students will be allowed to take examinations at VU Amsterdam, but how this will take shape will be decided later this week.

FUTURE SCENARIOS

2019-2020

There is a draft scenario for the summer period. It is uncertain yet whether any activities can take place on campus in July and August. A press conference will be held on 13 May, which will hopefully provide more clarity. We have made a schedule providing an overview of in which weeks in July and August education and examinations will take place, and in which weeks it will not. We will submit our proposed schedule to the Executive Board next week.

In the near future we will announce the dates for when we will announce the way in which education and exams in the summer and the first semester will take place. These will be provided online, on campus or a combination of these.

Incoming students, progress, outgoing students

On Thursday 21 April, the first version (version 0.9.2) of the incoming students forecast was discussed in the Consultative Body for Portfolio Holders for Teaching (OPO). This was well received. The suggestions made by the OPO members will be incorporated in the next internal versions of the model. On Tuesday 28 April we will start on developing the next version. In parallel, the current version, adopted as version 1.0, will be used for scenario development for space requirements (with Corporate Real Estate and Facilities and Student & Educational Affairs process control) and government funding (with Finance).

The proposal to share a public version of the forecast model with fellow institutions was supported by the portfolio holders as this would enable us to a) contribute to better scenario planning in higher education and b) accelerate the acquisition of knowledge from the other institutions. After consultation with Erna, I have now created an anonymized version that will be shared under Creative Commons license with other institutions (version 1.0 CC). VSNU, EUR, OU and Radboud University were the first to express their interest. Together with these institutions, I would like to investigate whether we can launch an expert group.

On 1 May, the Doorstroom Onderwijs strategic team will meet again.

Sent to OPO, HO, DB University Student Council, VB members, Directors of Education, Christa Boer, Lilian van Gülick, Work Package coordinators, Niels Stet, deans, Code Red team, Marcel and Mirjam, Yoni Shem Tov.