

Election programme Student Union AKKU

2024/2025

The election program of student union AKKU for college year 2024/2025 is divided into five pillars: (1) student welfare, (2) good education, (3) student life for all, (4) sustainability and (5) strong participation. For each pillar, here are our key points:

Student wellbeing

- Zero tolerance for abuse of power
- Free menstrual products
- More student psychologists
- From binding study advice (BSA) to personal study advice (PSA)

Good education

- Breaking ties with Israeli universities
- No cuts in education quality if a faculty has a budget deficit
- Physical education with recordings at all faculties!
- Encourage interdisciplinary education

Student life for all

- Better bus connections
- Tuition-free board year
- Radboud Rocks and CultuurCafé must stay
- More attention for creativity

Sustainability

- Greener campus
- Stop the demolition!
- Further encourage plant-based food

Strong employee participation

- Compliance with higher education law (WHW)

Student wellbeing

Social Safety

Transgressive behaviour is still a major problem at Radboud University. AKKU believes this should be addressed urgently through:

- **Zero tolerance for abuse of power.** Transgressive behaviour is a major problem at our university. Student union AKKU thinks the Executive Board is not showing enough decisiveness in tackling this problem. So far, it is mainly discussing a plan of action, but consequences for misconduct are lacking. This while at other universities, such as Maastricht and Leiden, professors guilty of misconduct have been dismissed.
- **The ombuds officer should be given the opportunity to address structural problems.** The ombuds officer should be actively involved in addressing broader structural challenges and bottlenecks within the university, and play a proactive role in cases of injustices. Also, in addition to a mediating role, the ombuds officer should be able to give binding advice to the Executive Board. The ombuds officer should act as a bridge between students and the university, advocating transparency and accountability. The visibility of the ombuds officer should also be increased.
- **The campus should be a safe place for all students.** There should therefore be a code of conduct for students. Currently, there are only codes of conduct for staff and student organisations. For students, reference is made to the Student Statute. However, this does not say anything about behaviour and manners and we think this is essential. The threshold for using existing resources such as the confidential advisor will be lower with a code of conduct

Better support for students

Currently, some students (or student associations) experience difficult situations without sufficient support. Financial support is often insufficient and incidents are sometimes not handled properly. Moreover, both staff and students experience a high workload, which can lead to stress. AKKU calls for major welfare improvements and better support.

- **More student psychologists.** Student psychologists face capacity shortages, especially during the winter months. This leads to long waiting lists and even refusal of help in some cases. The university has a duty of care and refuses to devote sufficient attention and especially resources to this. Due to unwillingness of the CvB, many students are not being helped or not being helped in time.
- **More time for study advisors.** Due also a lack of capacity among student advisers, most students have little opportunity to get appropriate and comprehensive help if they are struggling with problems regarding course attendance, scheduling, and other questions. Although these questions are sometimes minor, the barrier to asking them becomes high when there is little room to schedule an appointment or get a response by mail.
- **More comprehensive support for associations.** There needs to be support for associations dealing with personal, difficult events. It takes more to make an association a safe environment. The university has a duty of care and should also help associations if there is a need. The CvB should provide more resources to support associations when it comes to transgressive behaviour or other tough circumstances.
- **Thorough investigation into the high workload** for both staff and students. AKKU believes there should be a study to identify the causes of workload and find effective strategies for reducing it. The goal? Creating a healthy environment for everyone.

Free menstrual products

AKKU has been advocating the provision of free menstrual products across campus for years. The university has heard our call and has launched several pilots in recent years to address menstrual poverty. For instance, lockers with free menstrual products can be found on most MIVA toilets.

- **Menstrual products should be made available free of charge.** After all, menstrual products are a basic supply, just like toilet paper, water and soap.
- However, the RU should **extend the provision of the products to all toilets in the university.**
- In addition, the pilot should no longer be just a pilot, but become **a permanent part of university policy.**

From BSA to PSA

Currently, Radboud University works with a binding study advice (BSA), which you have to pass in the first year of your studies. In practice, the BSA causes a lot of stress and is also a snapshot that cannot determine whether or not you have chosen the right study. After all, it does not take drastic circumstances or external factors sufficiently into account.

- **The binding study advice should be replaced by a personal study advice (PSA).** A PSA ensures that it is not the credits, but the student who becomes central in determining whether or not a study suits them. Indeed, failing a PSA does not necessarily mean that the study would not suit someone.
- **Advice should be based on personal counselling.** Active talks should be held with students throughout the year to see if the study suits them. This should not only look at grades, but also at the student's intrinsic motivation. This way, any personal circumstances can be taken into account.

Good education

Do not drop a faculty!

The past academic year has shown that the Faculty of Management Sciences is facing a huge financial deficit due to mismanagement. Other faculties are also facing deficits.

- **Cuts in teaching quality are unacceptable.** Now, at the Management Faculty there is already talk of courses no longer being taught or losing quality. This is unacceptable.
- **The Executive Board should not drop faculties with financial deficits.** If necessary, the Executive Board should step in to prevent cuts in faculties.
- **The participation council should be involved as much as possible in hard choices.** This applies to the USC, the faculty student council as well as to programme committees. The board of the Faculty of Management Sciences tries to keep the council out as much as possible. This is unacceptable and goes against everything we as students have had to fight for years.

Improved campus facilities and amenities

- **Address space shortages quickly.** AKKU believes space shortages at Radboud University should be addressed quickly by exploring alternative solutions. Instead of immediately thinking of demolition, we **should use existing buildings more efficiently** and, where possible, adapt them to accommodate all students. Furthermore, we should look for use of external locations or partnerships with other educational institutions. Facilities for students on campus must be maintained
- **Facilities for students on campus should remain.** In addition, the current facilities such as **computer rooms** and **collaboration rooms must be maintained** to provide opportunities for collaboration and study. With a view to the arrival of the new Spinoza building, it is essential to ensure sufficient available study spaces. The new building should not come at the expense of the overall availability of study spaces on campus.
- **Funding study materials should not cost extra money on top of your tuition.** Currently, the RU says that all required software and literature are available on campus. In our opinion, this is not enough - sometimes all computers are occupied or all literature is on loan. Student union AKKU wants students to no longer be saddled with extra costs, for example by buying a reader. All required literature should be offered digitally for free, in addition to the limited possibility to borrow the literature in the university library.

Maintaining physical education with admissions as the norm

- **Physical education should remain the norm.** Texts surfacing in Radboud University policy documents suggest that it is assumed that there is less need for large teaching halls. AKKU stresses the importance of physical education, as direct contact and interactive sessions between students and lecturers are indispensable in education.
- **In addition, recordings should be made of lectures at all faculties.** Before the examination period, these should be made available on Brightspace - for all undergraduate studies at all faculties. These are not only useful for exam preparations, but also for students who cannot attend lectures due to circumstances or illness. Without recordings, they would miss much of the lecture material.
- **During ov disruptions and operations, lectures should be online available.** Due to railroad work, among other things, students can sometimes have difficulty reaching campus. To ensure that students do not a disproportionate amount of extra travel time, Radboud should on such days offer worthy online alternatives.

Free language courses In'to Languages

- **RU should make language course offerings free.** The Radboud University can count itself rich with an institute that offers high-quality language courses like In'to Languages. Unfortunately, the financial threshold for is still too high for many students. Therefore, the RU should should make these courses free and further encourage participation.

Open academic culture

University life hinges on an open academic culture. The quality of education depends on the ability to share your opinions and the willingness to respect those of others. Yet academic freedom is not unlimited - for instance, violent organisations are not welcome as far as AKKU is concerned.

- **Cut ties with Israeli universities contributing to war in Gaza.** When Russia invaded Ukraine in 2022, Dutch universities soon ended their cooperation with Russian universities. Radboud University should do the same with Israeli universities that work intimately with the Israeli army and are thus complicit in the humanitarian disaster unfolding in Gaza.
- **The university must protect the right to demonstrate.** The right to demonstrate is under pressure in the Netherlands. This was also evident recently at the University of Amsterdam, where the ME beat down a non-violent encampment demonstration with a bulldozer and batons at the insistence of the

university administration and the public prosecutor. The RU administration should not allow police violence on campus.

- **No place for hate organisations on campus.** Together with other student parties, AKKU put out a statement last year about a violent far-right organisation on the intramarket. The university should develop policies to bar violent organisations with racist, sexist or otherwise discriminatory views from events like the intramarket. After all, the RU itself says it values inclusivity and diversity and wants to tackle discrimination and harassment.

Student Life for everyone

Come up with better bus connections

- **There needs to be better bus service to campus.** Currently, bus 10 to and from campus is overcrowded during rush hours. Bus SB58 often runs with enormous delays or sometimes not at all. As a result, students are less able to reach campus in a green way.
- **The RU needs to more actively lobby the province and municipality to work together to improve these campus connections.** Buses are not the only public means of transportation where improvement is needed. The Meuse line to Heyendaal station or the bicycle routes to and from campus are congested in the mornings and cause a lot of student for much frustration.
- We encourage **development toward a car-free campus!**

More financial support for student board members

A board year can be expensive. This while you learn a huge amount from it and the university also actively encourages it. Because it is still insufficiently attractive to take up an administrative year, several associations and organisations are at risk of not being able to find a board. For this reason, AKKU, together with dozens of other student associations and organisations, sent a [fire letter](#) to the Executive Board last year.

- **A tuition fee-free administrative year should become possible.** At many other universities, such as those in Groningen, Leiden and Utrecht, this is already possible.
- **Higher financial support for board members.** The financial support or board months are meant to compensate for study delays caused by an board year. However, the current amount of around €340 per month is not nearly enough. The RU needs to increase this amount substantially.

Having fun on campus

- **Radboud Rocks should return.** For financial reasons, the annual festival on campus will not take place this year. Precisely events like Radboud Rocks contribute to feelings of togetherness and a common campus feeling. Therefore, Radboud Rocks - or a similar event - should take place again from 2025.
- **The CultuurCafé must stay.** The CultuurCafé is the vibrant heart of the campus, where academics and students can meet informally. Unfortunately, the university administration is planning to demolish the College Hall complex, and with it the CultuurCafé. This should not happen. The Yard is also nice, but not an adequate alternative. In addition, with the loss of Culture Café, you also have the loss of an approachable stage, which is ideal for small acts and programming from students.

Housing

- **The university should play a greater role in building housing in the city of Nijmegen.**
- **The room guarantee for international undergraduate students should return.** Until academic year 2023/2024, the RU reserved a room with SSH& or a private housing provider for all first-year bachelor students from abroad for one year. As of next academic year, this arrangement no longer applies, so it is predicted that hundreds of international students without a room start their studies in the Netherlands and will end up in emergency accommodation. This is unacceptable. From 2025/2026, the room guarantee must return.

Tuition fees international students

- **Tuition for non-EEA students should not exceed the institutional tuition.** It is unjust that non-EEA students now pay more tuition than necessary, that is, more than the established institutional tuition.

Attention for creativity and culture

The university should encourage and foster creative development. Studying at university is about more than academic life. It is important that students have the space and opportunity to explore and further their interests.

- **More creative course offerings (cultural courses) RSC.** The sports center also offers various cultural courses, such as painting, music lessons and creative writing. These creative "sports" often fill up very quickly, which shows that there is a considerable need for these types of cultural activities at the university. The offerings need to be larger.
- **More visibility for creativity on campus.** Consider lectures or electives that deal more with creative than academic writing. Also, placing more artworks,

temporary exhibitions on campus or on social media with creative students engaged in creative writing will already provide more visibility for the importance of (creative) development beyond studies. In addition AKKU finds it important that associations and initiatives such as Kunstof, ANS, RCC, CODC are maintained and given enough attention and support from the university.

Sustainability

Greener campus

The campus needs to be greener. Adding greenery not only enhances *aesthetics*, but also contributes to a healthy and sustainable environment. There are now many spots, such as the grassy area in front of the Maria Montessori building and the 'Linnaeusplein', that are bare and could be greener.

- **Plant trees and shrubs on bare spots.** This helps provide shade on hot days and is good for biodiversity.
- **Cut less grass.** In consultation with the fire brigade, look at which areas need less mowing. In this way, wild flowers, for example, will have more chance to grow.

Healthier and more sustainable food supply

AKKU calls for a reconsideration of the pricing policy in campus catering at the next contract talks.

- This includes **lowering price margins** where food provision should be considered a service for students and staff, and not just a business where rent and salaries are factored into the price.
- In addition, RU should **eliminate unnecessary packaging** and expenses, such as plastic sandwich packaging and decorative foods.
- **Making healthy options affordable.** This should also include specific dietary requirements such as gluten options

Stop the demolition!

- **There should be a demolition ban on university buildings.** The demolition and subsequent new construction of buildings releases huge amounts of emissions. Despite this, the 2022 campus plan states that the Linnaeus building, TvA1, the College Hall complex including the Culture Café and Mercator III will eventually be demolished.
- **Renovation is more sustainable and cheaper.** Moreover, alternatives such as renovation or reallocation can do more justice to the (art) historical value of buildings on campus. Why should we get rid of disposable cups while the university administration treats buildings as temporary utensils?
- **We encourage the repurposing of the Erasmus Building into student housing.** Student union AKKU has been pushing for this plan for years.

Strong co-determination

WHW

- **The RU must comply with the Higher Education and Scientific Research Act (WHW).** This law describes the rules to which the university must adhere comply with in the field of education. Because Radboud University is a special university, our university can make exceptions to this law. The Executive Board has now expressed its intention to fully comply with the WHW due to pressure from Student Union AKKU. Furthermore, the Student Union AKKU enormously enthusiastic about this choice of the umbrellas to participate in the elections, because it contributes to democracy within student politics. The guaranteed seats that umbrellas previously received are thus made redundant.
- **The voting ratio in Faculty Joint Meetings (FGVs) should change to 50% of the votes for both the Faculty Student Council (FSR) and the Subcommittee (OC).** Currently, Radboud University is the only university in the Netherlands with a voting ratio of 60% for employees and 40% for students in faculty participation. According to the WHW, this voting ratio should be 50% for employees and 50% for students. This rule originally dates back to the time when employees were more concerned with religion than students and therefore had more voting rights. Student union AKKU thinks this rule is outdated and argues that the voting ratio should be equal to the legal standard: 50/50.

Student employees vote in OR (Works Council) election

- **Student employees should have the right to vote in works council elections.** They now have no voice in terms of their rights as employees. The argument is that students are represented by the USR, but the USR has no voting and advisory rights on matters that the Works Councils Act (WOR) regulates for employees. While student employees should enjoy the same facilities as regular employees. An alternative is a construction like the UMC Council, a number of seats in the employee section for campus detachment employees.