



Introduction:

As many of us know, the University of Amsterdam has so much more to offer than only the Bachelor's courses. However, sometimes it might be challenging to know what exactly the options are, if you are eligible for those options and if they can be part of your Bachelor's programme or not. With this booklet, 020 aims to explain the various intracurricular activities students can take at our university.

This booklet consists of six main sections. After the introduction, we elaborate on the practicalities of minors and electives. Followed up will be the honours programme and the different potential graduation titles one can aim for. When these sections are finished, we elaborate on the internships, where to get them, and their requirements. Right before the conclusion, we explain the possibility of participating in study associations and potentially extending your studies.

Although we aim to be all-encompassing, many courses have their own peculiarities and formalities. These differences can therefore affect what is stated in this booklet. If you observe any of those errors in this booklet, we would highly appreciate any feedback we can implement for our future intracurricular activities booklets.

If you have any other questions about this booklet or 020 in general, feel free to contact us through social media (@020.nl) or our website [www.0-2-0.nl]!

Kind regards,

The 020 Team

Minor & 30EC Electives

In the second semester of your third year, you are free to choose what to do between a second specialisation, an internship, studying abroad, a minor or to take electives amounting up to 30ECs. 020 has already produced a booklet that contains all the information you might want to know regarding exchange programmes, but in this booklet we will go into the other options you have in this semester, focusing on the minors and electives in this section.

Minors:

If you are interested in exploring a topic outside of your study programme or faculty, then taking a minor may be a good way to adjust your bachelor studies so that they follow and include your other interests, or allow you to study something else you have been interested in. A minor is a compressed course of 30ECs, where you can experience another specialisation or programme of your interest in a shorter amount of time. The UvA currently offers 60 minors that you are allowed to take from all faculties. Some are set in just one semester, while others are spread out throughout an entire year.

You can take a minor in the second semester of your third year or choose to do one alongside your main programme at another time. Each minor is listed on the UvA's Course Catalogue, where you can look into the programme of the minor, including each class you will take and what it entails, its assessment, and also the timeline. It is extremely important that you look at the timeline of the minor before making your decision or sending in an application, as some minors are spread over an entire year and therefore you will need to start earlier than your "free" semester as some classes are only available in the first semester of the academic year.

On the page of each minor, you can also find the application and entry requirements. A general requirement to take a minor is that you must have earned 60ECs before starting the minor (i.e. completed your first year). Most students will be able to apply to the majority of the minors available given that they meet the requirement of having 60ECs, however, some minors do have course-specific requirements and may ask for some previous knowledge. You will also have to send in a minor application, where you fill in a form stating which minor you want to take, the specific electives you have chosen from the list you are given, and how you would like to receive the credits and the title on your diploma. For some courses in specific, you will have to contact the Education Desk of the faculty that your minor belongs to, asking for admission. Furthermore, you must register for all the courses of the minor on SiS on time - there is a specific period of course registration that is announced by the UvA, usually in December where you register for your second semester courses but if it is a minor that is spread over a year you will have to register in the summer as you register for courses in your upcoming academic year.

By taking a minor, you will graduate with an extra course on your diploma. This means that as you receive your bachelor's diploma, not only will you have your bachelor's programme title, but also that you took a minor in another course.

30 EC electives:

If you do not find a minor that suits your interest or liking, you can also make your own combination of electives for your second semester. Here, you are free to choose a combination of classes you wish to take, given that they amount to a minimum of 30ECs (the amount of ECs that you would have with a minor but also the number you must obtain per semester). Additionally, you will also need approval from the examinations board for your combination of electives. For separate electives, you must check the entry requirements as some electives may be restricted to particular faculties or only to second- or third-year students, you may also need to have had an introductory course in a particular class to take a specific elective. The registration and application time for electives occurs in the same way and time as it does for the minor programmes.

You can also register for a single elective (or more) as you take classes from your bachelor's programme. Here, you will be adding an extra class to your semester and you are, again, free to choose an elective from any study programme given that you meet the requirements. The UvA also offers a series of Interdisciplinary Electives, belonging to the Institute of Interdisciplinary Studies (IIS). The IIS gives you a list of electives per semester that you can choose to take alongside your main studies, and there are no entry requirements for taking these electives. These electives touch upon topics that may be of popular demand or particular social and contemporary importance (for example, in this upcoming semester you can choose to take electives such as Climate Crisis, Sexology, Russian Geopolitics, Queer-planet, Big History, Human-Animal Studies, Radical Imagination, and Post-Human Anthropocene). As with the other electives available, you can also form your own combination with the IIS electives, given that it is approved by the examinations board.

Honours Programme

The honours programme is an interdisciplinary programme where students can take classes from the University of Amsterdam (UvA), the Vrije Universiteit van Amsterdam (VU), and Amsterdam University College (AUC). The topics of the honours courses are very varied, which allows the student to really get an in-depth focus of what you are already studying, or to explore classes that are out of your comfort zone. The classes are given in small-scale settings, stimulating interaction between students and professors. To successfully finish an honours programme, you need to obtain a workload of 30 extra ECs above your Bachelor's course within 4 years from the start of your Bachelor's programme.

What are the Benefits of the Programme?

Although the honour's programme can be quite challenging, there are significant benefits attached to it.

1.

First of all, as mentioned in the previous section, there is a lot of freedom within the programme. People can specialize or try something completely new. You can therefore gain more expertise in specific fields where other students cannot.

2.

A second benefit is that you will gain more opportunities to establish networks with your students and professors because of the small-scale classes. In honours classes, there is much more interaction between professors and students, creating more thorough connections than a class with many students. The professors in these classes tend to not only guide you through their honours course but also help you outside of class. It is not uncommon for professors in honours classes to offer internships or write academic recommendation letters for potential future programmes. Therefore, these connections can be of major benefit for future endeavours.

3.

A final benefit in this list is that you can graduate with a title if you follow the honours programme. With this title, you can distinguish yourself from other students within your programme. Moreover, with the honours programme, you can show certain characteristics that are otherwise harder to demonstrate. Most students who participate in this programme tend to be inquisitive, hard-working, and dedicated. These characteristics are highly appreciated for the future when looking for an internship, a job, or further academic programmes.

What are the Requirements for the Programme?

There are two main requirements to look at before you are eligible to apply to enter the honours programme.

1.

The first requirement revolves around your grade point average [GPA]. If you are an early bird and want to apply before starting the second semester of the first academic year, your GPA needs to be at least 7.5. Although this option is rarely chosen, it does bring one major benefit: you have more time to distribute the classes, giving you more breathing space during your bachelor's programme. If you apply in the second semester of your first academic year, the minimum GPA requirement is a 7. However, it is worth mentioning that if your grade is slightly lower than a 7, they can make an exception based on a motivation letter.

2.

The second requirement is, as revealed in the previous paragraph, submitting a motivation letter. Because not every student can attend the honours programme due to a limited number of seats, the universities look at the students' motivation letters. There, you need to explain why you believe you are eligible for the programme and what distinguishes you as a student. Although every student who applies has different assets, we believe two general tips will help. First, make sure to write a structured letter that is no longer than one page. Include a short introduction, a body, and a brief conclusion. Second, focus on two to three qualities you possess, rather than superficially writing about many attributes. This way, you will substantiate the arguments you make throughout your essay, rather than just stating what they want to hear.

How does the Procedure of Honours Classes Look Like?

After you get accepted into the honours programme, the first step we recommend you do is look at how you need to achieve the 30 credits of your honours programme. Different bachelor's programmes sometimes require students to take at least one mandatory honours class. To find the specific requirements for your course, we recommend looking at the UvA page on their website: <https://www.uva.nl/onderwijs/bachelor/studeren-aan-de-uva/talentprogramma-s/honoursprogramma-s/honoursprogramma-s.html#Overzicht-honoursprogrammas>.

Once you know which classes are (potentially) mandatory for your course, you can further schedule when you would like to take what amount of credits. Suppose you decide to start the honours programme in the second year of your bachelor's programme and you need to take courses that equal an amount of 30 ECTS. In that case, it is almost inevitable that there will be one semester where you need to take two honours classes at the same time (unless you extend your Bachelor's programme to four years). It would be highly unfortunate if one does not take this into account and realizes that he/she needs to do two more honours classes at the same time as your thesis. If you structure your way forward beforehand, these unfortunate events can be avoided, making your honours programme much more fun to attend.

After you decide when to take how many credits, we recommend looking at the course catalogue and seeing what classes they offer. There are a couple of important elements you should take into consideration. We highly recommend you to check whether or not you meet the entry requirements. Whereas most classes are open for any honours student, some courses are restricted because they are highly similar to classes that students could have already had. For example, the VU course "Brain & Cognition" is not open for psychology and medicine students because they would learn very little during that class. Once you see which classes you are eligible for, we recommend you to already make a top list with classes you are interested in.

Furthermore, as almost all honours classes are taught in small-scale lectures, the honours programme can't guarantee access to your favourite course. When you apply for an honours course, you need to fill in a form with your top four classes. Out of these four, they decide which course you will take. Therefore, our last tip is to ensure that your selected courses do not overlap with your regular programme. If you have one semester where you will need to take two honours courses, make sure that these don't overlap either.

See the change

Graduating Titles

If you decide to enrol in the honours programme, there is a significant chance that you will graduate with a title on your diploma. However, these titles can sometimes be quite confusing, and many of us tend to mix them up. Therefore, this section will briefly state what one needs to obtain to graduate with a title.

When we explain the different titles below, keep in mind that these apply for the bachelor's programmes; the master's programmes have different requirements. For the bachelor's, there are three main titles with which one can graduate:

Graduating with talent: if you graduate with talent, you have to meet two criteria. First, the GPA of your honours programme needs to have a minimum of 7.5. The second requirement is that the GPA of your regular bachelor's courses need to be 7.

Graduating with honour: graduating with honour is quite similar to graduating with talent. The only difference is the GPA of your regular bachelor's course, which in this case needs to be 7,5. The minimum GPA of your honours programme stays the same, namely 7,5.

Graduating cum laude: unlike the two aforementioned titles, you do not need to participate in the honours programme to graduate cum laude. However, they do have challenging requirements. First, the GPA of your regular bachelor's course should have a minimum of 8 and your thesis should be awarded a minimum of 8. Furthermore, you cannot have a resit or any final result lower than a 7 for any course taken in your bachelor's programme. The last requirement is that you finish your bachelor's within the nominal study duration, which in most cases is three academic years. It is important to note that even if you meet all requirements, the Examinations Board will still individually assess whether or not they will reward the cum laude qualification.

Internships

An internship allows students to gain work experience in a working environment that is suited for your studies. Although most internships are unpaid labour, it might still be interesting for students, given that many bachelor's courses offer a maximum of 12 credits for one. It would therefore be the perfect part of the 30 ECs electives many courses offer in their third bachelor's year.

What Are the Benefits of an Internship?

1.

First and foremost, the greatest benefit of an internship is that you will gain first-hand experience in your field of choice. It is therefore very distinct from regular courses or an exchange since these options are very study-focused. With an internship, you can already apply what you have learned to the "real" world, understanding and learning from the peculiarities and formalities in your field of interest.

2.

A second benefit of doing an internship is the connections you can make while still studying. These connections can play a vital role in finding a future job and can therefore be a very important benefit in the job market.

3.

Lastly, internships provide mentorship. You will be able to work in your field of interest while still receiving guidance. In the event of a mistake happening, your mentor will efficiently guide and help you in avoiding those for future cases.

Where to Find an Internship?

There are many different strategies for finding an internship that suits your interest. The most prominent platform where students look for internships can be found at the "UvA Job Board" section on the UvA website [jobboard.uva.nl/en]. Here, you can filter the type of job, the field of interest, the sector, and the working language.

If the UvA Job Board does not offer what you are looking for, you always have the opportunity to find an internship yourself. One of the most common platforms to do so is LinkedIn, but also personal connections will be a great asset.

Two important requirements should be taken into account. First, the internship you want to do should be related to the field of your studies. If this requirement is not met, those who examine your internship application will most likely reject your internship request. For example, those studying Political Science are most likely not able to do an internship in hotel management. We therefore highly recommend taking into account that the field of your internship is closely related to your studies. The second requirement is that the internship you want to apply for has a personal supervisor who can guide you. If there is no mentor, the university cannot accept your internship request.

Something to Take Into Account:

Although many internships require full-time engagement, the maximum amount of credits you can earn are 12 credits. Therefore, you will still need 18 ECTS of electives to finish your bachelor's programme successfully. Another element to consider is that the internship is more than working in your field of interest. Because you can earn credits with your internship, you will have to hand in three documents concerning the internship: one document before, one during, and one after the internship. In the first document, you explain the practicalities and formalities of the chosen internship. The second document mainly requires the student to elaborate on their experience during the internship, what they are working on, et cetera. The last document is a reflection of the internship. As you can tell, the documents are straightforward and don't require students to write in an academic-styled manner. However, it does take time and not handing in these documents can have drastic consequences for the internship.

See the change

Student Associations

Each study programme has its own student association, which consists of a group of students working alongside their studies to benefit the study experience of their fellow programme student body. The student associations mostly work with matters separate from educational matters, focusing more on the social aspect of studying at the UvA. They provide students with opportunities to engage in networking, meeting new people and deepening their knowledge and interest in their relevant studies. Programme associations can also work with programme committees and therefore have some influence on the academic side of student life, although that is not their main concern.

Furthermore, there are also student associations that are not part of specific faculties but instead focus on specific parts of the student experience. This can be concerning sports, culture and religion, being an international in Amsterdam, arts and student life in general.

In this section, we will give you insight into two types of associations, both within your faculty and outside. Additionally, we will cover what being a board or a committee member in a student association can entail.

Faculty Student Associations

If you are joining an association inside your faculty, you will work mostly with matters concerning your study programme. Although, you will still get insight into the work of the associations of other study programmes. You can join in two ways: become a committee member or become a board member. Depending on the association, as a board member, you will either take a board year where you have a study delay of one year (as is the case for example with the Psychology VSPA Student Association) or you will be a board member alongside your studies. Some student associations have a more busy schedule and heavier board duties. Board members will therefore need to take the board year as a full-time job of expected 40 hours a week. As a board member, you will be working closely with a small group of board members throughout the year and each of you will have a specific role, such as Chair, Secretary, Treasurer, etc. Being a board member in one of these student associations can give you somewhat of an idea of what it is to work closely in a team in a working environment. You will develop a lot of skills applicable to working in an organisation that you might not develop purely through your studies, such as organisation, efficiency in decision making, teamwork, flexibility, and continuously building on feedback regarding all your projects.

The application process of joining the faculty student associations as a board member differs from association to association. However, they will usually resemble your typical work application process. You will usually have to send in your CV to the application committee as well as a motivational letter. Following that, you may be asked to participate in a round of interviews where the current board members will get to know you and see if you fit the team, as well as see what role would be most suitable for you.

Apart from being a board member, you can also be part of a committee, a role that requires less commitment and work but is nonetheless enjoyable and gives you a similar taste of the teamwork that comes with being in an association. Each association has a number of committees, taking care of different parts of the association, and again with each member having different roles. For committee applications, you have to send in a motivational letter that is a bit more specific, where you describe why you would be a good fit for that committee in specific and why you are interested in it. The committees are more involved in organising events or providing opportunities and resources to the students of their programme, such as borrels, guest lectures, and workshops. The work of a committee member is less demanding than that of a board member, yet you will still work closely with the board for every project you come up with.

Other Student Associations

You can also join associations that are less tied to your study programme but rather your interests. There are associations around the topics of culture, religion, gender and sports, but also some around skills that may come helpful later, such as entrepreneurship, sustainability, and law. Here, you interact with students you may relate to in terms of interest and create projects around them where you learn new skills and maybe even help other students. The application process can be similar to one of faculty student associations, or more simple--such as through an online questionnaire. In these associations, you can have many opportunities of your interest including workshops, networking events and competitions but also some similar to the faculty ones, such as more social events like borrels.

Why Should You Join a Student Association?

Being part of a student association gives you insight into what it can be like to be in an organisation, through having a professional environment with your team while also keeping your student identity, as you are ultimately working to benefit and help the student body or simply connect more to it. The skills you obtain will be extremely useful for your life beyond your studies and you will also make close connections and friendships. By joining an association, you can connect to other students who have more similar experiences or interests to you, and explore more of what the UvA (and more particularly its students) have to offer besides your programme studies.

Bachelors Extension

A lot of students come into university thinking they must and will finish their bachelors within a timeframe of three years. However, it can be the case that students experience delays in their studies and stay for longer. Having a study delay and extending your bachelor's programme is not a negative thing and can actually be beneficial to you, especially if you are struggling with the workload of simultaneous classes or even due to personal circumstances. In any situation in which you may need to or wish to extend your bachelor's or have a study delay, the first step and best course of action is to set up a meeting with your study advisors.

The most common cause for a study delay is usually when a student is not able to achieve a passing grade for a specific course that is needed to continue to programme. When this happens, the best course of action is to contact a study advisor and make sure you know all your options and how the rest of your bachelor's programme will look for you. Having a study delay for this reason will often give you more time to complete your bachelor's degree, as you will have your courses spread out over an extra semester (or year). This means you will have more time to take your classes and also perhaps less overlap between classes which can be quite relieving. Usually, the delay is of one semester, meaning you will graduate at the end of the first semester of your fourth year.

If you are extremely interested in a particular minor that is spread over a year and creates a substantial overlap with the classes you are already taking for your main study programme, you can also ask for a study delay of a semester or a year in order to complete your minor of choice. As was mentioned in the minor section of this booklet, some minors are spread over a full year and have compulsory classes that can only be taken in the first or second semester of the academic year. Since this is the case for many minors, students can be discouraged to take the course, however taking a study delay can allow you to complete both your bachelor's and your minor in a better-distributed amount of time, allowing you to do all the classes at a pace and intensity that you can keep up with. However, if you decide to extend your Bachelor's program, it is useful to know that you will have to pay tuition fees for one extra year.

Conclusion

Our university offers much more intracurricular activities than one might expect. We hope that this booklet provided you a structured and clear explanation of the various possibilities that are possible to make your curriculum as pleasant as possible, ranging from electives to internships! We want to highlight that this booklet is not all-encompassing, but rather serves as a guideline.

If you have any inquiries, or feel like something is missing in the Exchange Booklet, don't hesitate to contact us through our website [www.0-2-0.nl] or any of our social media platforms [[@020.nl](https://www.instagram.com/020.nl)].

All the best,

Your 020 Team