



Guidelines for re-evaluation for the UG Graduation Fund

Dear reader,

These guidelines can be used when completing the required documents for the re-evaluation in part B of the UG Graduation Fund. We became aware of the need for some kind of guidance when completing these documents last year. The CUOS (Central Executive Board for Student Organizations) hopes that the guidelines will help associations to re-evaluate successfully so that they can be included (or re-included) in the Graduation Fund. The guidelines are intended to be used by applicants when completing the documents requesting re-evaluation. In recent years, the CUOS has noticed that many associations are unclear about the procedure, and that there is no feedback unless an individual complaint is filed. The document includes various examples from applications that have been submitted over the years. These are only intended to illustrate certain points, and have been anonymized as far as possible. The associations concerned were notified in advance and have given permission for certain passages to be used.

No rights can be derived from these guidelines and they may not be used to replace the information meetings or introduction sessions organized by the CUOS at the start of the academic year. Please refer to the [website](#) for the Regulations, the CUOS Regulations, and the forms that should be completed for the re-evaluation. The forms are available in Dutch and English. You will find additional information about the re-evaluation on the website, under the heading ‘The Graduation Fund’ → ‘How to’. If you have any specific questions relating to your association, please contact the CUOS well in advance. As the CUOS is a part-time board and not always available to answer phone calls, we would prefer an email. These guidelines were compiled in the same order as the UG Graduation Fund Regulations.

Yours sincerely,

The 18th and 19th CUOS Board



General assessment

PLEASE NOTE: the general assessment is the same for every association. Different criteria apply to the different categories of associations for the special assessment (page 6 onwards). Please refer to the Graduation Fund Regulations!

Form A

The re-evaluation begins by completing Form A. This form asks for general information about the association. Please complete this and use the check list on page 2 as an extra check for yourself. Use the prescribed titles and make sure that you send all the documents to the CUOS **in PDF**. Word documents will be rejected. Please note that the 'members' referred to on page 3 means 'active' members and not alumni. If your association is a foundation but the Articles of Association do not explicitly state that your foundation works on a non-profit basis, you should refer to the Article that shows that your association is a foundation when answering question 4 under 'general conditions' on page 3.

The CUOS must be in possession of the official, certified Articles of Association, not an informal copy. The Articles of Association must satisfy a number of conditions. These conditions are set out in Article 4 of Appendix 1 of the Graduation Fund Regulations, under the heading 'Regulations'. This document must be submitted under the name: '1. Articles of Association [ass]'. You must also send a copy of your listing in the Commercial Register of the Chamber of Commerce, identifying the current board members.

The financial and secretarial annual reports must have been approved by the General Meeting of Members (GMM) or by another body if so prescribed by the relevant Articles of Association. This is an important condition; the CUOS will not approve the documents without internal approval.



Form D / Overview of activities

The overview of activities should be completed using Form D. Form D has been specially designed and must be submitted in the same format. Overviews of activities in other formats will not be accepted for processing.

Please give a detailed description of activities, the number of people attending, the frequency of each activity, and whether it was organized jointly with another association or solely by the association concerned. As usual, too much information is better than too little if that means that the CUOS gets a good impression of the type of activity being organized. This is particularly important when assessing substantive and social events. The overview of activities is obviously intended to show activities organized for the association/members and not training courses for board members or other board activities.

Form J / Formerly the secretarial annual report

According to Article 10.3 of the Graduation Fund Regulations, an association or foundation must draw up annual reports in accordance with Form J, for which a maximum of 3 points may be allocated. Compiling an annual report is generally considered to be one of the tasks that associations find confusing or complicated. What the CUOS is looking for is a description of the general policy of the association.

How is this assessed? Use form J to your advantage. Form J asks about support, development, internationalization, and inclusion. Make sure that you can provide a detailed, complete answer to these questions. Things to look out for:

How do you organize your association? Which key points, goals, basic principles, and working methods are used to shape the policy formulated by the board? How do you evaluate? Where can we see that your association is developing? What is your legacy for subsequent boards? What works, and what doesn't? Is there a long-term plan, and if so, how is this drawn up and what is considered to be important?

Keep in mind that there can be huge differences between small and large associations, and that answers are not definitively right or wrong. This is why CUOS will never be able to publish a single 'perfect' example of re-evaluation. It is particularly important that the description of general policy goes further than a personal evaluation written by the secretary. There are, however, certain things that you should pay attention to, things that the CUOS will always be looking for. Remember that the CUOS is not familiar with your association and therefore relies on your answers to decide how many committee grant months will be allocated over the next three years. Bear this in mind when completing Form J.

Well-structured answers on Form J will make a huge difference. You don't need to write an entire book, but you would do well to realize that if you describe the policy you have pursued in a mere three sentences, the CUOS will probably be unable to make a full assessment (or any assessment at all). Policy must be clearly described

No rights may be derived from these guidelines, nor may they be used to replace official documents or the UG Graduation Fund Regulations.

The guidelines are not a guarantee and are only intended to provide extra assistance.



and recognizable as such to the CUOS. In other words, a direct copy-and-paste job from the minutes of the last GMM will **not** suffice. Neither should it be a slimmed-down version of what each board member has done during the previous year (for example: the CUOS understands that a secretary takes the minutes).

The CUOS should not have to search through the form to find out how board members (and former members) ran the association during the past three years. The board has spent a whole year doing this, and should be in a position to explain the ins and outs of its operations to a third party. So make sure you answer all of the questions on Form J! You can make new sub-headings if you like and there's no word limit, but you shouldn't simply copy-paste the entire annual report or minutes of the GMM in answer to one of the questions without also providing a clear answer. To illustrate - the CUOS cannot derive policy from a short paragraph including a simple reference, such as: *'The board organized an extensive introduction period (more information can be found on page x of the secretarial year report 2022-2023).'* A clear, complete explanation is required, particularly because Form J is the only form that will be submitted for the re-evaluation and the secretarial annual reports may no longer be included. So it must be possible to deduce the entire policy from Form J.

To demonstrate what we mean, we have added several examples of constructions that can be used in Form J. **Please note:** these are examples that were submitted by associations in previous years. You do not have to complete Form J in exactly the same way, and some aspects of policy may be totally irrelevant to the smaller student associations. Other ways of completing this form are welcome, as long as they provide clear answers to the questions. These examples do not provide a guarantee and are only meant to provide clarity.

'The general policy focuses on the goals set out in the Articles of Association. This means...:'

- Specify and explain; what does your association stand for?

'In addition, this year the xxth board of the association has been working on x key points, which have affected the policy. The key points are...:' state and explain.

'According to the long-term plan, subsequent boards will work on a number of selected subjects: professional development, raising the level, and association spirit. We have set out the policy we intend to implement for each of these points in the forthcoming years, so that our association will develop in a positive direction. In terms of professional development, this year we worked on...'

- Specify and explain. How did you approach the key points? How did you work on them? What was the result? How can we see that you realized your goals in this respect (if you did)?

'The results of the sponsoring committee have tailed off considerably during the last few association years. In the 2021-2022 association year, the board intensified its

No rights may be derived from these guidelines, nor may they be used to replace official documents or the UG Graduation Fund Regulations.

The guidelines are not a guarantee and are only intended to provide extra assistance.



supervision of the sponsor coordinators in an attempt to increase committee sponsoring to €x. Sponsor information sessions on approaching sponsors were organized in October and December 2021, including tips on how to contact potential sponsors. This has had a positive effect, as demonstrated in...'

'The SMART goal for the second key point was as follows: When compared with the number of people being appointed to committee positions in 2020, the percentage of applicants for each committee position must be at least 150% by August 2020 (see table 1 for the percentages in previous years). To ensure that this percentage would rise, i.e. that more people would apply, we decided to organize two or three committee markets per years. This resulted in..'

'... In addition, more workshops, open rehearsals, drinks, trips, and other activities were organized in recent years. All in all, this has resulted in a steady rise in membership numbers. In conclusion, we would like to say that the association is doing well and that this board wants the current upward trend to continue. We intend to do this by setting the following goals:'

'Every year, the board draws up a vision or key point, which forms a common thread through its policy. Although much of the policy is not directly connected with the key point (everything described in point 2 refers to general policy and will therefore be implemented or organized irrespective of the key point), the changes that were introduced in any particular year were based on, and reflected, the key point. The board is using the annual report to look back on these changes. The following passage includes the evaluation of the key point in the 2021-2022 board year. This can be found in the 2021-2022 annual report, under 1.1, and used as a reference when reading the following explanation. The key point was fleshed out in several ways....'

- Please note that although boards may refer to additional documents, form J *itself* should in principle contain enough information for the CUOS to form an opinion, and that the CUOS may not necessarily need the other documents. The CUOS should not have to go in search of any documents that are referred to.

Evaluation is an important part of the policy and amongst other things, shows how the association has developed. After all, you want the new board members to be able to build on your work and continue helping the association to develop, and not have to start from scratch. The following examples clearly show how evaluations of chosen key points/goals can be carried out, but are not the *only* way of evaluating, and are certainly not intended as a template. They are not a guarantee that the evaluation part of the application will be assessed as completely satisfactory.

No rights may be derived from these guidelines, nor may they be used to replace official documents or the UG Graduation Fund Regulations.

The guidelines are not a guarantee and are only intended to provide extra assistance.



'We achieved two things with last year's expansion of study facilities: the academic results of our members improved, and we saw increasingly more contact between our members (in terms of studying).'

- This should then be explained in detail, particularly the aspects that could be improved or things that you want to pass on to the next board.

'Goal: To ease the transition of international students into Dutch student life and to provide them with social contacts during the start of the year

- Explanation of the goal.

Evaluation and advice: We advise the candidate board to maintain working on the topic of internationalization. Our association still does not reflect our programmes in terms of numbers of non-Dutch students, and there are some initial signs that our programmes will have even more non-Dutch students from next year onwards...'

'One of the annual goals is to actively involve Master's students in the association. We do this by actively approaching Master's students and inviting them to events. Although some Master's students attended the events that we thought would attract them most (the career day and the alumni get-together), there weren't as many as we had hoped for. We need to look for other ways of promoting these events among Master's students in future. The board advises...'



Special assessments

As stated above, special assessments differ per category of student association. However, some parts of a special assessment are the same for all categories, namely exceptional participation and general member loyalty. Please refer to the Graduation Fund Regulations for the specific special assessments per association.

General member loyalty

The points that are available for 'general member loyalty' largely speak for themselves. These points are allocated for events aimed at promoting member loyalty within the association. Events such as introduction drinks are a good example. Here too, explain exactly what was organized, the aim of the event, and the ultimate effect. The event being organized must focus specifically on member loyalty, and this must be clear from the description given.

Exceptional participation

The number of points allocated for exceptional participation differs per category. This part of the re-evaluation is often seen as a sort of 'black box', but you can also use it to your advantage. Exceptional participation is exactly as it sounds: an assessment of how your association is going above and beyond the minimum effort expected of an association that supports students. What makes your association/foundation stand out from the rest, and what are you working towards? Which extra activities does the association undertake to raise the profile of the UG and make a positive contribution to active student life? In other words, what else does the study association do apart from maintaining good contact with the faculty and actively supporting its members in their studies? These are activities that we expect from a study association and therefore do not count as exceptional participation.

As the regulations state, exceptional participation includes international policy, benefit activities, focus on the integration of first-year students, actively encouraging inclusion, and in principle, anything else you can think of. The main thing is that you make this clear in your application.

The exceptional participation must, of course, be in line with the Graduation Fund Regulations. For example, the organization of an activity or implementation of policy that contravenes the 'Code of Conduct for Student Associations and Organizations Groningen', or does not contribute to the positive image of the UG (or UG and Hanze UAS jointly) etc., obviously does not count as exceptional participation as referred to in the Graduation Fund Regulations.

As you will see from the forms that need to be completed, there is no separate form or section of a form that draws attention to exceptional participation. So the CUOS examines all the forms that have been submitted, particularly the secretarial annual

No rights may be derived from these guidelines, nor may they be used to replace official documents or the UG Graduation Fund Regulations.

The guidelines are not a guarantee and are only intended to provide extra assistance.



reports, Form J (for example, but not solely limited to the question about standing out), and the overview of activities before arriving at a final assessment of this section. It is therefore important to ensure that all of the documents in your application show the extent of your association's exceptional participation.

If you have any further questions, you can contact the CUOS by sending an email. You can also call the CUOS, but as we are a part-time board, we will not always be available to answer your call.

Good luck with completing the documents!

Please remember that the deadline for applications is 12 noon on the 15th of November.