

Mutual agreement concerning the university teaching qualification (BKO) at Dutch universities

The Board of Vice-Chancellors of the Association of Universities in the Netherlands (VSNU) have agreed, with respect to:

- Drawing attention to the quality of academic education and scholarship in university teaching in the Netherlands,
- Ongoing staff development in teaching within each university,
- Accountability regarding 'quality of staff' and 'staff policy' with regard to the National Framework of Qualifications in Higher Education in the Netherlands,
- Establishing professional standards regarding academic teaching, as is customary in other sectors of education,
- Removing barriers in case of mobility of academics (academic teachers) between universities,

that:

1. Within each university the standards of an academic teacher are laid down in a university wide regulation for a university teaching qualification (BKO),
2. The university teaching qualification is the result of a formal assesement of the teaching competences,
3. The regulation is in line with the key features mentioned in appendice 1 so the participating universities acknowledge each others teaching qualification (no new assesement needed)

Signed on behalf of the university

Date, Januari 28th 2008

By

Appendix I: Characteristics of the basic university teaching award (BKO) of Dutch Universities

The participating universities attach importance to the mutual agreement of the basic teaching award. They attach importance to uniformity if it is possible and flexibility when it is needed (when autonomy is at stake, e.g. regarding differentiation and / or stressing distinct features).

Mutual agreement of the basic university teaching qualification is possible if the regulations of each of the participating universities reflect the following characteristics:

Characteristics of content:

- Standards for qualification are in term of behaviour (competences) rather than in terms of knowledge and insight
- The requirements to be met correspond with international standards of academic teaching (Dublin descriptors)
- The requirements to be met are set by the professional practice, which implies paying attention to teaching performance, course and programme design, assessment, programme evaluation, counselling and coaching of students and organisational demands (=staff is sufficiently qualified to ensure that the aims and objectives regarding the content, didactics and organisation of the programme are achieved)
- Teachers are researchers who contribute to the development of their subject/discipline.

Characteristics of assessment

- All aspects of the performance of an academic teacher are involved in the assessment
- Concrete criteria are explicit and known in advance
- The extent of the required experience in academic teaching is established
- Reflection on one's teaching practice is a substantial part of the assessment
- The assessment procedure is formalized to assure confidentiality, credibility and conformability
- The expertise of the members of the assessment board is established.

Characteristics of process

- Content, method and size of the staff development programme of university teachers (e.g. training modules, coaching, portfolio development) are deduced from the requirements according to the regulation for university teaching awards
- During staff development courses teachers put educational knowledge into practice
- The university facilitates staff development of university teachers to the level of BKO (basic teaching award).

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