

VeSte Policy Plan 2017



VeSte Faction 2016-2017:

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Introduction

Identity

VeSte is a Student Council party founded in 1997 by members of the Contractus associations, in order to keep the influence that disappeared with the introduction of the University Council. The founders decided to take things into their own hands and to look after their interests.

This year

The year 2017 will, again, be one of a growing number of students. However, this year some actions really need to be taken in order to facilitate education to all those students. This will be a common thread throughout the whole year and will be noticed in all facets of the university. Next to this a much stronger focus will be on digitalization and internationalization. The universities idea for an educational ecosystem will have effects not only for the university students, but for student all over the world. These themes are two out of many coming up this year, but are expected to show many times and in many forms throughout many parts of Wageningen University & Research.

The Wageningen University & Research high-standard education, its international character and a very active student life with many associations is what makes Wageningen special and makes Wageningen University & Research the university we have chosen to study at. Next to this the Wageningen-way of teaching, with small scale education and close interaction between teachers and students, is well appreciated. The low student-staff ratio is therefore a strong feature of Wageningen University & Research. VeSte will always aim to maintain, assure and improve the aforementioned qualities. As members of VeSte within the Student Council will defend these qualities, which are of the students' interest. We will keep close to our pillars; world class education, broad academic development and a vibrant student life. With a diverse range of VeSte members regarding their different backgrounds considering studies, associations and extra-curricular activities, we represent the diversity which also exists amongst student.

This policy plan will be VeSte's guideline throughout the year 2017. Attention will be going to the function specific targets and on committee specific targets. This document focuses on the vision of VeSte and what we would like to achieve and prioritize throughout the year. However, since VeSte functions are represented within the Student Council, all projects will be discussed within the whole council.

Next to this VeSte would like to strengthen its information providing role towards its support groups. This will not only strengthen the connection of VeSte with its support group, but also in general make students more aware of the work the Student Council does. This will be main responsibility of the commissioner internal relations, but since there are 8 seats in the Student Council in the beginning of the year 2017 the new function of commissioner involvement is added. This function is created to strengthen the bond between the VeSte and individual students. The whole VeSte faction will try to bring the students closer to the Student Council and make them more aware about the processes and important decisions which are being made.

A new development which should be mentioned is the participation of Wageningen University & Research to the 4TU network. The 4 Technical Universities show numerous similarities which creates the opportunity to learn from each other and bundle forces where needed, also on council level. This creates the opportunity for the university to be well represented on a national level.

With this in mind, VeSte is ready to start the new calendar year. Challenged by the different parties within the Student Council we are ready to show what we can accomplish as VeSte.



Mission

As a party in the Student Council of Wageningen University, VeSte represents *active students*. Those are students who are not afraid to take responsibility, are being co-operative and like to develop their negotiation-, management-, social and organising skills. To maintain and establish these possibilities VeSte has three main pillars which are and should always be main priority. The pillars are; *world class education, broad academic development* and *a vibrant student life*. We keep in mind that broad academic development is not only happening inside the classroom, but also outside of the academic environment of the university. Since this is a main priority, VeSte should always look behind the boundaries of the university.

Vision

In order to keep supporting the active student VeSte will stick to its main pillars.

The world class education in Wageningen is something the university wants to maintain and is proud of. VeSte will make sure that its education maintains this way by being critical in all cases. There are a few things which are important in the Wageningen way of teaching which makes the education as good as it is at the moment. This includes the small scale teaching, the student staff ratio, the possibility to approach teachers easily, the individual supervision, the flexibility within a student's programme and the multidisciplinary approach. A very fast growing development all over the world is the digitalisation of education. Wageningen is one of the front runners concerning this topic. In order to maintain the world class education VeSte will keep up with these developments and will undertake action when it seems to be the case that the quality of education is decreasing.

Students have the possibility to broaden their academic development coupled with their personality in different ways. One possibility for this is the current developments which take place concerning digitalisation of education. This makes it easier to connect and exchange knowledge from everywhere. Students should be stimulated to expand their view by making use of this. One of them is being involved in extracurricular activities. This is something which offers students more than the knowledge they obtain by studying. Next to these activities we think that it is important to be able to communicate with people with different backgrounds not only from other cultures, but mainly other perspectives. Therefore we will support and maintain possibilities for students to do activities which will help them developing in the broadest sense of the word.

The vibrant student life in Wageningen is amongst other things established by many activities and parties that are organised mainly by students themselves. Organizing this helps students in their personal development and makes it possible that other students are being active. One other important thing which should not be forgotten is the culture which is available in Wageningen. There is a theatre, multiple movie theatres, music performances, cultural festivals and many more activities. VeSte will facilitate this for students within the possibilities we have.

VeSte will therefore focus on ensuring possibilities for students to be active besides their study.

SC committees

Brascamp Education Enhancement

The Brascamp Education Enhancement committee (BEE) is the committee in the Student Council that focusses mainly on the insurance of the quality of education and improvement of education. This committee is dealing with the quality of education in several ways.

There are three topics which we see as main important: innovation, digitalization and accommodating growth. These are important features at the WUR and has its effects throughout the whole university. Within smaller projects we want to ensure that the growth does not have a negative effect on the quality of education.

Innovation in education is one of the three focus points of the Executive Board to accommodate growth. Of course we are always in favour of innovating in education as long as it improves the quality of education. We should have a critical view on all the changes the Executive Board proposes in order to prevent innovation taking place solely to facilitate the growing student numbers. A major innovation, nevertheless not as solution to the growth, are the bachelors in English which the university wants to implement. In collaboration with the internationalization committee we will be critical on the information and decisions the programme committees are facing.

More specifically the innovation will mainly happen through digitalization. Together with the IT committee BEE needs to look into the effects for students. Get a broad students' opinion on the digitalization of education and in what specific forms they would like to see it. As important is in what ways digitalization affects the quality of education.

Student-staff ratio is what the university uses in their promotion, but they are not transparent in the calculations that resulted in the specific ratio. We would like to get more insight in how this ratio is calculated and what is truly the trend of the last years. This opens up a discussion on the small-scale education and possible consequences for the quality of education when the student-staff ratio changes.

VeSte vision

There are some new topics coming up in 2017 either because of developments in national politics or because the university itself is making some big changes. It is our task to create a VeSte and eventually SC vision on these topics and to get involved. This can be done by having close contact (by the commissioner national) with ISO. When we are well informed and have a clear vision ourselves we stand stronger towards the Executive Board and the OWI Board.

VeSte wants to stimulate academic challenging outside the regular study program, named as 'extracurricular activities'. We should encourage the university to create possibilities, maintain and evaluate them. The new website "trigger your talent" provides a good overview for these possibilities. The site is something the student council accomplished in 2016 and will be promoted and maybe extended in 2017.

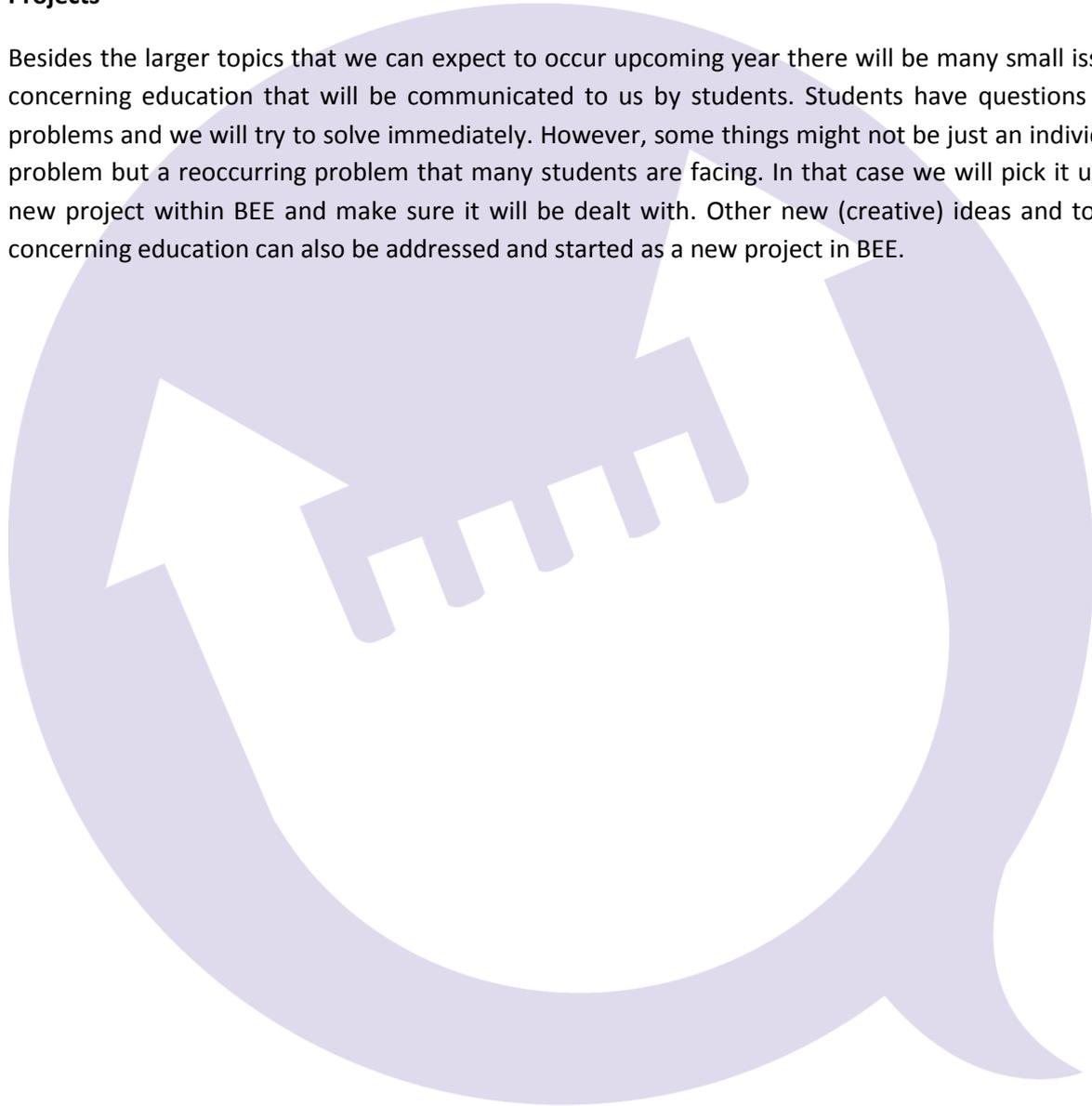
VeSte would very much like to have more students involved in their own education. The main source to do this is through the programme committees and universities working groups. VeSte therefore would like to continue with having more (and a greater variety) students involved in the programme

committees and working groups. They should know more about their rights, and there should be more transparency in the selection of those students.

An important feature in Wageningen is the flexibility students have. We will try to maintain this, even though the national government is making this harder. The digitalization of education on the other hand creates more flexibility. Within this committee we will try to find a balance between the flexibility of students, the quality of education and the growth problem.

Projects

Besides the larger topics that we can expect to occur upcoming year there will be many small issues concerning education that will be communicated to us by students. Students have questions and problems and we will try to solve immediately. However, some things might not be just an individual problem but a reoccurring problem that many students are facing. In that case we will pick it up as new project within BEE and make sure it will be dealt with. Other new (creative) ideas and topics concerning education can also be addressed and started as a new project in BEE.



FSS committee

The Financial Student Support, FSS committee (formerly the FOS committee) of the SC receives all documents related to financial items for students. This committee will therefore work on several topics:

- The public transport card compensation for second year master students of the social sciences. We think that the current policy is unfair and we would like to see this changed.
- Tuition fee free board year is a long term project and a VeSte initiative. This has started in 2016 and we want to make sure that this possibility in the law will also be implemented in Wageningen.
- This committee will keep an eye in the FOS (Financieele Ondersteuning Studenten) payment deadline. The FOS is not regularly paid, certainly not during the first couple of months for full time boards, which is inconvenient. We will make sure that the university is aware of this. We will also continue to look into making the FOS attractive and accessible for all (active) students.
- Within this committee we will make sure that students get the financial support they need in order to finish their theses or internship.
- The members of this committee will also keep an eye on the national changes and problems concerning money for students, this can be easily done with the help of ISO. Currently national topics are pre-master students, which is not a problem at Wageningen University and flex-studying. The latter is started as a VeSte initiative.
- Some students need (obligatory) vaccinations in order to complete certain practical. We will make sure that the university finance these.

The main goal of the FSS committee is, compared with previous years, extended. All topics concerning finance within for example the student charter committee will be dealt with in the FSS committee.

Housing

Since the Student Council does not have legal rights on housing the most important function of this committee is trying to influence the policy by networking. Main focus in 2017 will be to keep contacts warm and monitor the housing situation within Wageningen.

We will continue investing in our external relationships and have regular meetings, even if there are no serious problems. The following points describe activities which the housing committee can do:

- Keeping close contact with Idealis, which is and will probably remain the biggest student housing provider in Wageningen. During the year we stay in close contact to discuss occurring problems and policy.
- Keep in contact with SFO, Housingdesk and the housing committees of student associations.

The mayor, aldermen and municipality councilmembers decide about the policy in Wageningen. Joining municipality meetings and discussing relevant topics with especially the students in the council. Alderman ter Maat keeps us up to date about what is happening within Wageningen. Since the SC does not always has the possibilities to invest time in keeping up to date with the municipality, we are happy with the new development of the plans to start a new municipality party which will focus on student and starters. This hopefully will provide the SC with information easily in the future.

Next to this municipality party another development has taken place: there is a new alliance in Wageningen. The Student Alliance Wageningen (more about them later) which is also keeping track of the current housing problems. Therefore we decided that the role of the housing committee is somewhat shifted this year. The committee will provide the network they have established over the years to SAW and they will actively work on solutions addressed by the housing committee. Nevertheless this is the first year that SAW exist, so we are careful and critical in the collaboration. At the end of the year we will evaluate the contact with SAW on the housing topics and we will pass our opinion to our successors.

DUWO is the new student housing provider in Wageningen. They are responsible for Campus Plaza with about 400 student rooms. It is possible that they'll grow bigger over the years, so it's important to pro-actively invest in a relationship with DUWO.

This year the university guaranteed that all international students would get a room. Then Idealis had to house them. This caused a couple problems which the housing committee wants to prevent in the future.

The growth issue is also a topic for this committee. Currently there is a shortage of rooms, which seems to be the case every start of a new academic year. The housing committee has the task to keep an eye on the growth and available rooms in Wageningen. When this becomes too much of a problem (foreseen in the future) the housing committee will take action. Next to changes within the municipality of Wageningen, on the national level there are also many things changing. It is important for the housing committee to keep track on new developments and try to get the best out of it together with all involved parties in Wageningen.

Besides investing in relationships with external parties, we'll also keep track of (recently) new housing projects, such as Campus Plaza, de Dreijen, kerpestijn and Duivendaal.

Internationalisation

Wageningen University promotes itself as one of the most international Universities in the world. This is not only about students coming to Wageningen from all over the world, but it is also about students going abroad. Many students are going abroad for courses, internships and to write their thesis. Exchange possibilities for students of Wageningen University are important to maintain. Next to exchange possibilities the WUR is focussing on becoming more international. This is in line with the idea of the online educational ecosystem. Another focus of the university is the international classroom, also for bachelor students.

Incoming and outgoing exchange

VeSte would like to gain more insight in the different influxes of students, such as international students, student from other research universities in the Netherlands and students coming from applied sciences. WUR students experience difficulties cooperating with students having different backgrounds or starting knowledge, but it is not exactly known from which group of students this problem is the most striking. Possibly there is no specific group and this is only occurring for individual cases. Some attention should be paid on the different levels of knowledge of those different student groups. This can be field-specific knowledge and the level of English. These are two different projects picked up by the internationalisation committee in 2015 and discussed in 2016. For this topic a strong cooperation with BEE is because of the influence it could have on the quality of education. It can also be decided to pick up these projects in BEE rather than internationalization.

A problem at the university is the growing amount of student numbers. This has also an effect on exchange possibilities. It results in too little exchange places in general and specifically for the social sciences better communication is desired. There are a lot of places at universities that are not well known or not in the most favourable countries. If the exchange team could somehow make students more aware of unfamiliar and non-popular places this would already make the allocation of spots a lot easier. The places for Social Science students are limited and there is not much being done about it. VeSte should try to get more insight in how the exchange team is spending their budget and monitor whether there are improvements regarding the number of exchange places for social science students. VeSte is going to do this by maintaining the well-established bond and communication with the exchange team.

VeSte can also help by thinking of own initiatives and helping the exchange team with communication to students. One initiative that has just started up is mentioned as VeSte committee (VeSte Goes Abroad).

The internationalization committee will make sure that the English version of the universities website for contains the same information as the Dutch website. International students have the right to get the same information as the Dutch students.

Bachelor in English

There are plans to shift the language of all bachelors to English. At the moment concrete plans are made by a couple 'pioneers programmes' who will be the first which shift their complete programme to English in the academic year of 2018-2019. The main reason hereof is the international classroom;

students will have the possibility to learn how to collaborate with students from different cultures and backgrounds.

VeSte thinks this that the international classroom is a good objective and contribution to the academic development of students. Nevertheless at this moment we see other major problems which should be main priority of the university, mainly the growth.

Therefore the bachelors in English can only be implemented when the growth is in control and the university can accommodate more students. When this is the case we think that the complete bachelor in English will only be useful when the labour market has the main language English. Then it will be an addition for students to talk English. Nevertheless another problem arises when the labour market is in English, but the stakeholders main language is Dutch. Then students should be able to communicate in their field of expertise in both languages. Which makes a complete English bachelor not favourable. The programme committees have to make plans and some saying about the language. They can make the best estimation about what is good for their programme. Therefore VeSte will make the importance and consequences of this decision more known at the programme committees. As addition to these remarks is the level of English of teachers. To maintain the quality of education this level should be high enough. Before the English bachelor will be implemented the university has to make sure that all teachers should be capable to teach in English.

To follow the trend on this topic there is information needed from high schools, since students learn their basic skills here. This should be done by the university, but ISO is also a valuable source for this.

If in the end the English bachelors will be realized, it is important to include skills as intercultural communication into courses mostly at the start of the bachelor. We will monitor the implementation and address all the problems students experience to the Executive Board and the OWI board.

In order to maintain the vibrant student life in Wageningen it is important to improve integration between all students. This can be accomplished with new initiatives like for example new (international) student associations. This option we see as ideal and this will be promoted and supported. All study associations should also be able to communicate in English (if this is not the case at the moment). Another concern is the language of the universities' staff. Not only the teachers, but everyone working at the WUR should be able to communicate in English.

IT

The IT committee is a committee where much is possible since this is actually an external committee where an employee of the IT department is also member. This year we expect a lot of changes which will take place in this area which means we have to take into account future developments. The idea of an educational ecosystem for example is what the university wants to implement (on short notice) but has its pro and cons. With this committee we will make sure the new developments will be in favour of the students in Wageningen.

Some topics where we will focus on are stated below:

- Digitalisation is getting used more and more often for educational purposes and the possibilities are endless. We stimulate developments of digital programs during the year, but will remain very critical about its use for students and teachers. We will not allow it to negatively affect the quality of education in any form.
- This year we expect that digitalisation in education will be used to redevelop courses with the use of for instance MOOC's or knowledge clips. It must not be the case that a current course is replacing lectures for videos without reconsidering the whole set-up of the course. We believe that this way of thinking is likely to negatively affect the quality of the course. Therefore we stimulate the digitalization in education, only when it is beneficial for students.
- This year there will be a new digital learning environment chosen (or the choice to stay with blackboard will be made). The IT committee will actively participate in this process and advice which option will be the best.
- Not only the lectures will experience more influence from digitalization, also facilities throughout the whole university will notice this. Especially in the Student working places (of the future) this will play a big role. Therefore the new idea of a 'bring your own device' policy is developed. This means that student have the possibility to do all the work on their own laptop. This could be a solutions for the growing number of students and the lacking growth of (individual) working places. But the university needs to facilitate the lap. In collaboration with the Student Facilities committee we can find concrete solutions and make new developments optimal for students. Therefore we have to make sure that students are involved in new developments and the IT department has the students' perspective as the most important one.
- Not only students benefit from new developments, but teachers certainly also do. Therefore new digital possibilities should be tested in multidisciplinary teams with people from all layers of the university in order to make it an useful and properly functioning tool. This will be encouraged among the IT department.
- In 2015 we build up a good relationship with the IT department. We have experienced them as very enthusiastic and driven employees, so it is very beneficial for us to keep in close contact with them. Certainly when we have our own initiatives, so in general we will benefit

of a pro-active approach of the IT committee members. For these it is important to involve Wilfred Hoefakker since he is the person that can make ideas reality.

- The university is looking into the possibility to increase the storage of the WUR-email inbox. The IT and Student Facilities committee should be monitoring whether this is being implemented without problems.



Quality vs Quantity

The university is changing, constantly increasing student numbers and new technologies make that the university could and should adapt. The Quality vs Quantity committee has made it its task to be aware of what the university is doing regarding this topic and to make sure the Student Council develops its own idea regarding these adaptations.

Hence, the goal of this committee is to develop a clear and long term vision on the growth of the university. This will also help the SC by developing an opinion on more specific related issues. For example to accommodate the students. Key is to find and adopt solutions which will not harm the active student life in Wageningen. Therefore VeSte will make sure the three main pillars will be represented in the SC vision.

In addition to the growth and the related consequences which will influence a lot of students. The consequences could be a decrease of the quality of education since the classroom will consist of more students, there will be less time to finish a practical and there could be less supervision for the theses. VeSte will keep its network updated on all steps in the process on the decision-making of the university.

The specific goal of VeSte within the Quality vs Quantity committee is therefore:

- Involve their network in forming its opinion on growth related issues
- Communicate the process and consequences of growth related decisions to their network

SC Elections

For the elections committee the ultimate goal is rather clear:

- Increase the voting percentages of the Student Council elections

The elections committee is partly dependent on the work of the promotion committee. Better work of the SC promotion committee during the year lightens the work of the election committee during the elections.

This committee has also the task to make sure the communication between different parties will go smoothly, mostly focussed on the elections. For this purpose a “gentleman agreement” is made. The Gentlemen’s Agreement describes the party promotion and behaviour towards the voters during the election week. It has been formulated by the SC ’15-’16 to establish a fair voting environment and to prevent friction between the parties.

The week before the elections week the SC will have a (passive) SC promotion time. Last year this was a week, but this seemed unnecessary and too long. We will shorten this passive promotion period, preferably to one day. Next to this we will try to have another day for active promotion of the student council where we will focus on the accomplishments the SC made. These days are meant to make students aware of the SC and the upcoming elections. Another goal of this committee is thus:

- Create awareness of the elections before they take place.

SC Finance

VeSte wants to retain its pro-active attitude towards the finances of the university. We should always ask for additional information if we find that this would help us in getting a more thorough understanding of the budget. This can be optimally performed when this committee has a close cooperation with the WUR-Council committee finance, or has even the same (student-) chair.

A fair system for the SC Budget

VeSte wants to take up an active but mediating role in the division of the Student Council budget. Ideally there would be a fixed division rather than having this discussion again every year. Nowadays there are broadly two problems related to the SC Budget: (1) The absolute total amount of Party promotion budget is too low. (2) The division of the budget between parties doesn't take in account a democratic principle: Parties who have a larger number of adherents, should receive a higher amount of party budget, which could be used to maintain the sustainable relationship between the adherents (this is actually where most of the money is spent on in practice).

Right of approval

The SC has right of approval on the main lines of the budget. Therefore this committee should focus on having critical questions on the budget. Taken into account the financing models of the education system which are currently used. The models are important to master in order to know where the money is going, therefore this committee should, in close cooperation with the WUR-Council committee finance, form an opinion about the different models. This committee will make sure a presentation for the successor student council will be held in September to prepare them for the cycle of approving the budget of the university.

Pre-investments

The pre-investments are of huge importance for students as it is indirectly the money they had to give in. We should make sure we always get the right information on what the pre-investments are being spend and, just as important, we should receive this information on time. Throughout the Netherlands Student Councils faced difficulties on being informed on time, so there is some nation-wide attention for it. If we from now on receive the information on time we want to actively open the discussion on what exactly is 'quality of education', since that is where the money should go to.

Student-staff ratio

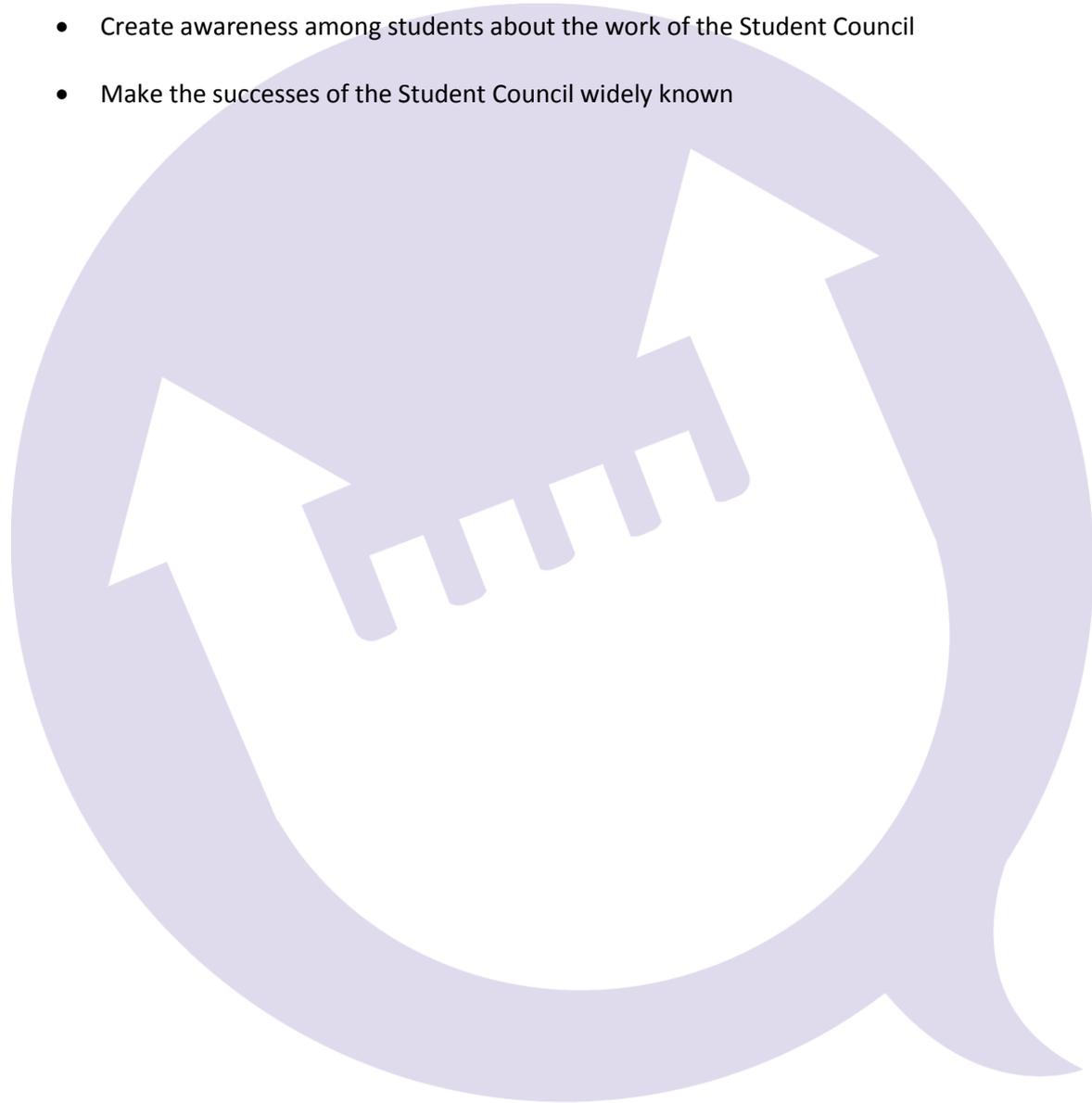
The university uses this ratio in their promotion, but are not transparent in the calculations that resulted in the specific ratio. We would like to get more insight in how this ratio is calculated or create another KPI to measure the number of teachers. We should try to find a way to measure this so that we can also trace the money of the pre-investments better. To maintain the Wageningen way of teaching we want to decrease the student staff ratio back to one student to the maximum of seven teachers.

SC Promotion

The goal of the promotion committee is to increase the visibility of the Student Council by organizing several events. We want to make the students of the WUR aware what the Student Council does and how the SC can be helpful for them.

The goals for this committee are obvious and clear:

- Create visibility of the Student Council
- Create awareness among students about the work of the Student Council
- Make the successes of the Student Council widely known



Student Charter

In the Student Charter committee we will monitor the rights students have and whether they are implemented correctly by the university. We have formal rights on the EER which are handled by this committee, also the code of conduct and its implementation is this committee's responsibility.

This committee should always think from the perspective of the active student. Policy changes should therefore be beneficial for that group. We will also monitor whether the promised changes will be performed.

This year the Financial Student Support committee tasks is extended, which means that all issues passing considering money will be transferred from the Student Charter committee to FSS. Outcomes of other committees concerning the EER will also be addressed by this committee in order to implement it in the policy.



Student Facilities

The Student Facilities committee is a committee where concrete ideas considering facilities can be executed quickly. An important task for this committee is monitoring whether the capacities of buildings and facilities satisfy the requirements, since the number of students at the WUR keeps increasing. Due to this growth, signals of shortcomings are becoming more apparent.

Accommodating growth

- Last years a lot educational facilities have been build or created. It should be monitored whether the facilities meet the (students') expectations.
- At the moment there are silent rooms reserved by the reception in Forum. This appears on the narrowcasting. It should be monitored whether the rooms are known amongst and used by students. Also monitored is whether the silent rooms sufficiently address to the shortage problems. It should be investigated whether silent study rooms would be beneficial for the Leeuwenborch and Orion as well. If so, the SF committee will start this project.
- Keep checking on the quantity and quality of thesis rooms. Especially with the growing number of students this is a main point of concern. The committee will actively try to find constructive solutions and other options for the limited amount of space for students which are doing their thesis.
- The opening hours of the library will be extended in the year 2016-2017. The SC committee will try to realize the most favourable opening hours of the library by evaluating and monitoring. The employees of the library are open to suggestions, so relatively easy gains can be achieved. This will also be dealt with in the (external) library committee.

Lively campus

- In order to strengthen the bonds the SF committee will have close contact with the deans and supporting personal at the WUR.
- The SF committee will also have contact with the (main) caterers on campus, since a lot of students are not content with the availability and quality of the food. The committee listens to students' complaints and address them to the caterers.
- Important for students is the reachability of the campus. The SF committee will therefore try to create an optimal situation for the public transport for students in Wageningen. This can be accomplished in collaboration with the municipality and province.
- If topics at the municipality arise which are not favourable for students the SF committee will take action. This can be in collaboration with the WUR-council, especially with committee HAM. VeSte should monitor what happens in and around Wageningen and make sure that new developments will be favourable for students. Nevertheless there are no main problem expected on short notice.

Ad-Hoc committees

In 2017 a couple topics arise which are too big to handle within existing committees. The effect and influence we want to have is mostly on short notice, therefore certain ad hoc committees are started to tackle the problems.

Evening lectures

A big change at the university is the pilot of evening lectures. This pilot took place in the first two periods of the academic year 2016-2017. Whether these will be implemented permanently is questionable since the EB does not seem to be completely honest. This committee will keep an eye on how the university handles these and whether they evaluated them honestly. VeSte will always handle in favour of the active student, but should not forget to ask and handle in favour of the opinion of its direct supporters.

This committee will also be in close contact with the WUR-Council since major formal decisions are being made here. The SC opinion will be stronger when they are supported by the WUR-C.

Re structuring

There is a plan to restructure the policy, executing and management layers of the university. We have the opinion that these kind of changes should be well considered and communicated with the councils. Therefore this ad hoc committee wrote an unconsolidated advice concerning the first implementation phase. This was a short existing committee, but nevertheless very important one. When new problems arise concerning the restructuring, this committee will take action again. Keeping in mind that we want to maintain the small scale of Wageningen and therefore not many management layers in the organization. When the current status remains it will probably be the same as usual in all layers of the organization. As addition we want to make sure that students should have a role in the value creation of which the university thinks is very important.

Survey growth

The EB does not see the decrease of the quality of education due to growth. To make the students opinion visible, the SC managed to arrange that a survey will be made in collaboration with the EB so they will take it seriously. This committee will develop this together with the working group of the university so the decrease of quality of education will be acknowledge and dealt with.

Contact of the SC with SAW

Earlier mentioned is the foundation of the Student Alliance Wageningen (SAW). This alliance was mainly founded because of the evening lectures and the resistance for them by students. Now SAW is developing to a real alliance and seems to care about all problems students are facing in Wageningen. They have support groups and are busy making a working organizational structure. They are in close contact with the LSVb which is helping them in a constructive way.

The whole SC agrees on the fact that the foundation of SAW is a positive development. To inform them about recent developments and check how they are doing, a contract is established in which the contact the SC with SAW is having is arranged. There will be a biweekly meeting with SAW where all parties have one representative and the SC chair will be present in order to update and enforce each other actions. This can be in the communication towards our supporters or students, but also on action we take on for instance housing problems.

SAW is an addition to the work the SC accomplishes. But important to keep in mind is that SAW is just started and needs to find their way of working. Therefore within the SC will be discussed their contribution to the decision making of the university and whether the way of contact the SC is having with them is sufficient. We will evaluate this and constantly think about how to collaborate most efficient and effective with SAW.

WUR Council

The WUR Council is the meeting where people from the SSC and the COR participate. Topics which are being discussed are therefore relevant for staff and students of Wageningen University & Research. The VeSte members in the WUR Council will actively participate in the meetings of the WUR Council so we can give the student's opinion on all relevant WUR Council topics. The COR subject have a low priority, nevertheless VeSte can use the WUR Council to create support for the ideas.

The WUR Council can be used as another platform to have our ideas prioritized. For this it is useful to constantly ask ourselves whether the topics we are working on includes the staff or whether their vision could be influential for students. If the students and staff interests are involved on certain topics we will make sure it will also be handled in the WUR-council.

The existence of the WUR Council makes it possible that students can be represented in all committees. This is very useful in order to be up to date about every topic. We believe that it is very useful to participate in committees on certain topics in the SC as well as in the WUR C. In this manner the SC can work parallel and get things done. In the division of the SC committees there should be a good division what portfolios/functions necessarily need to be in the WUR-council.

The way to be more involved in the WUR Council is by having some of the students on the chairing positions of the WUR C committees. Each student can consider whether they want to have a role as chair within a WUR Council committee. SC members do not have to be impressed by the other member of the committee being staff; we should have trust in our own expertise and feel confident to be critical about what staff argues.

In 2016 the budget for 2017 is again approved after a cycle of contact with the EB. But from last year the students experience the 'leenstelsel'. As Student Council we cannot direct the pre-investments. Nevertheless VeSte will make sure this topic will be discussed within the WUR-Council and other committees which are involved when needed. Important and goal within the WUR Council regarding this topic is to inform the students about where the money is going.

VeSte committees

Acquisition

To keep VeSte in close contact with our supporters we organise several activities. To finance these activities we need to obtain external funding. With this committee we will therefore focus on approaching companies actively and set a target amount for acquisition. Last year VeSte got a lot of funding which was very useful. The goal for this year is in accordance to last year (..... euros) to generate a substantial amount of acquisition related funds. These funds will be used in the promotion during the elections and will be used to organise events. To have an overview it is most convenient when the treasurer is the chair of this committee.

We see that we can get funds in two different ways:

- Acquisition; by actively approaching companies and ask for (in nature) sponsoring
- Other incomes; by doing work for example during the AID or other festivals. When sufficient, we can ask money for the workshops we offer (more about that later). Another possibility which we will explore is getting money from alumni

In 2017 VeSte exist 20 years which means that our 4th lustrum is reality. Therefore lustrum activities will be organized. This requires much money and is therefore an extra challenge this year.

VeSte Elections

The VeSte elections committee creates a plan for a successful elections week.

The VeSte election committee starts actively coming together in November. From January onwards they will start with preparation for the elections week. A planning per month is made so it is clear what the follow-up actions are. Also we would like to get the new candidates involved as soon as possible. This was already a focus point last year, but we would like to create even more involvement this year.

Have a streamlined election period will be achieved by:

- Having a more systematic way of getting votes and possibly involving more people from our support group.
- Making use of the election evaluations of last year
- Having good and close contact with the other parties
- Having close contact with their successors, what they can expect and have to do and know before the election period.
- Asking other ISO members for ideas, tips and tricks

For a long time there is a discussion ongoing about the use of laptops and other devices during the voting period. Last elections a gentlemen's agreement was made which was satisfying for everybody. We will try to manage this next elections as well.

It is convenient when the commissioner internal relations and involvement take place in this committee due to their tasks of having contact.

Another task of this committee is the selection procedure for the new VeSte members or at least start a new application committee. This is one of the tasks of the vice chair, which makes it convenient the vice chair is also member of this committee in order to keep a track on deadlines and other activities.

VeSte Goes Abroad

This committee started in 2016 in order to communicate better between students which were or were planning to go on exchange. The committee had an idea about a website where students can leave their stories and experiences and contacts to be able to inform and help other students.

This idea developed to an application on the VeSte website. It will provide students with information on a specific universities abroad. The uniqueness of the application will be that the information is provided first-hand by students who have been to that specific university. This facilitates a platform to get in touch with students which already went abroad in a way which helps answering specific questions better than any study advisor could do.

This committee will focus on getting the application launched. It is useful that the members of this committee have been on exchange or have experience with making websites. Also very useful is that some committee members are in the SC internationalization committee because of the valuable contacts.

Therefore this committees focus on:

- Having close contacts with the exchange office
- Having contacts with IT in order to be able to launch the website

A possibility of this committee is to be present at the study abroad fair organized by the exchange office to create publicity for the website.

Promotion

This is a new committee which is basically the synergy between the secretary, commissioner internal relations, the commissioner PR, commissioner involvement and support from the design function.

This committee's main focus point will be to create more visibility and awareness of VeSte at the first year students. We do not want them to have their first acquaintance with VeSte in the elections week. A main goal of this committee is:

- Make sure students reach us when they are facing any problems or have any remarks on the course of affairs at the university.

The easiest way to get in touch with many first year students of our support is through Contractus and study associations. Possible ways to do this:

- Go to activities from study associations rather than only constitution drinks
- Have an introduction talk at the introduction weeks of KSV Franciscus/SSR-W/Ceres
- Have an (reoccurring) article in the magazine of Contractus associations and/or study associations
- Have an introduction talk at the Parent's Day organised by the university
- Having a workshop on behalf of VeSte on the Career Day of the university (investigate options for more workshops, which could also be beneficial for acquisition)
- Evaluate the contact plan which VeSte is currently using

Any more ideas that can help us gain visibility among (first-year students) should be encouraged.

Trainings

VeSte is a party of the SC which is getting offered a lot of useful trainings in different skills. These are valuable for SC members and help a lot in the work we do every day. The trainings offer us a lot of information which we think should be available for all active students in Wageningen. Therefore we decided to offer trainings to groups or committees who want to learn how they can effectively work together and get things done. To establish these a new committee is established.

VeSte already developed some workshops in the past, which caused positive reactions. This year new trainings are developed which will provide students some tools useful for their committee work or activities. The offering of knowledge in the form of workshops helps VeSte to become more known amongst students. When the trainings turn out to be very popular we can, when we are satisfied with the content and quality, ask money for it.

