

Fact sheet on study results, satisfaction about education, and student well-being during the pandemic

January 2021

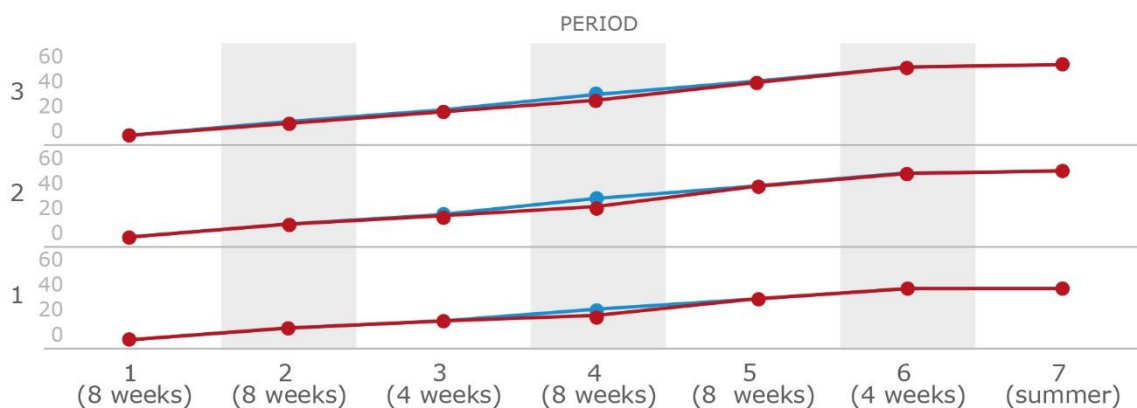
During the COVID-19 pandemic, universities have been working hard to ensure that education can continue as much as possible. Study results are comparable to those before COVID, and satisfaction about education is stable. Even so, many students are having a hard time coping mentally with the current times. More than ever, universities are stepping up to support students.

Universities have been monitoring the study progress of students since the start of the pandemic. Satisfaction about the quality of education and student well-being are also subjects of study. Universities then work together to arrive at a coordinated approach in which student well-being is the primary focus.

1. Study results for the 2019-2020 academic year

In March 2020, universities switched from contact teaching to 100% digital teaching. Students and lecturers had to scramble to make this switch. Accordingly, for March and April of 2020, we see a dip in the number of credits obtained. This dip was made up for in the final months of the academic year. On average, students obtained the same number of credits, or even somewhat more, than in the previous years, as shown for instance in the below graph of VU Amsterdam.

Average number of credits obtained in Bachelor's programme
(excluding the faculties of Medicine and Dentistry)



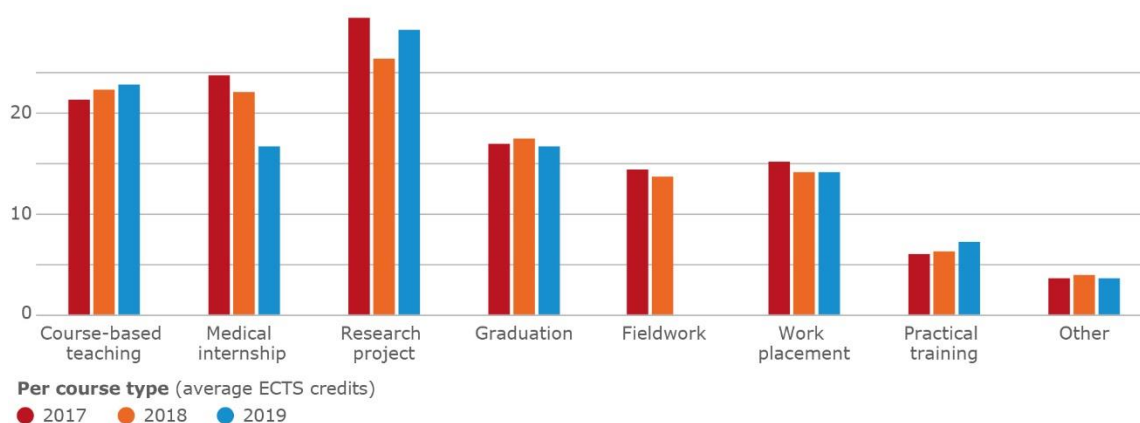
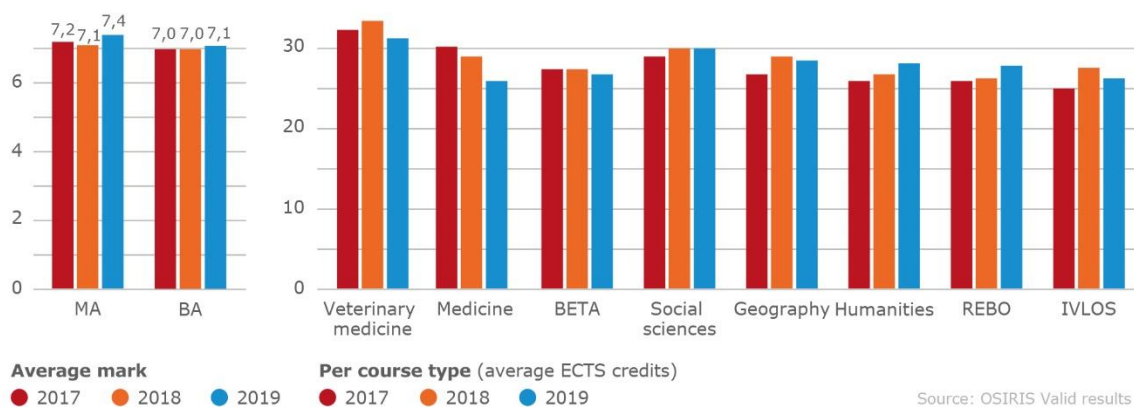
Academic year

● 2019-2020 ● Averages for 2016-2017, 2017-2018 and 2018-2019

No decreases in marks were found for the 2019-2020 academic year, as can be seen in the below example from Utrecht University.



Average number of valid ECTS credits per student from the course results in study periods 3 and 4 and the summer of the 2019-2020 academic year (the COVID period) in Bachelor's programmes and Master's programmes.



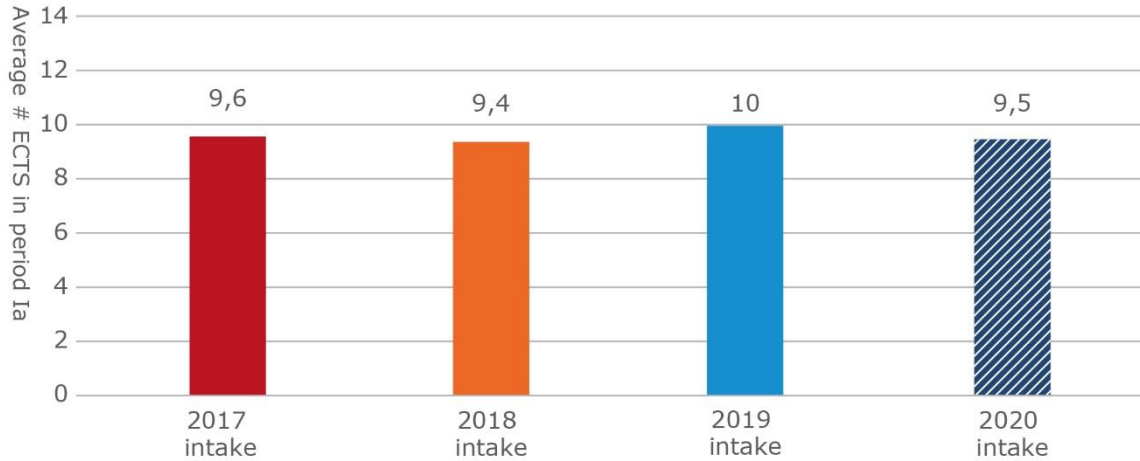
2. Study results for the 2020-2021 academic year

Universities are keeping a close watch on study progress. It is possible to make a cautious estimate of study results at the start of the academic year. The trend of the 2019-2020 academic year is continuing: the study results are comparable to the pre-COVID period. Just like in the 2019-2020 academic year, there are specific degree programmes that are especially impacted by the measures taken, such as programmes with sizeable practical components or practical training modules.

The study results of first-year students are specifically being monitored. After all, these students have been affected by serious restrictions since the start of their degree programme and may see their study results affected as a consequence. However, the available data from universities do not yet suggest that current first-years students are performing more poorly than first-year students in previous years. See, for example, the graph below on first-year students at the University of Groningen.

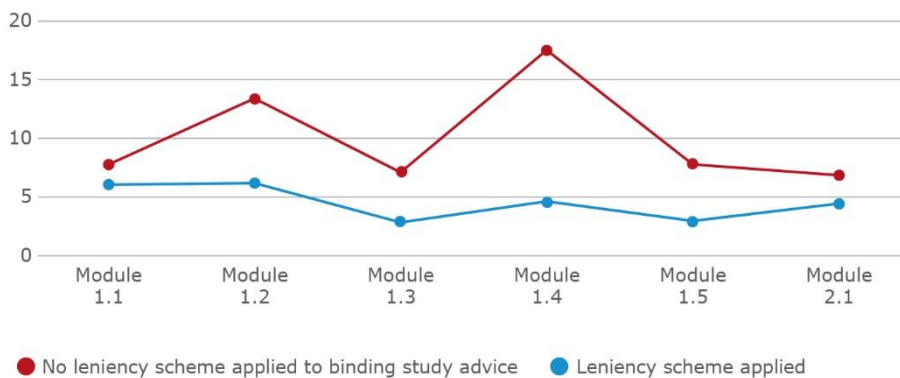


First-year RUG students:
as many ECTS on average as in previous years



In 2019-2020, a general leniency scheme was applied to the binding study advice. At the start of the 2020-2021 academic year, universities noted that the group of students to whom this leniency scheme applied were obtaining fewer credits than students who did not need the scheme. This is shown by the below graph of the University of Twente among other sources.

Average number of ECTS credits obtained
per BSc student per cohort (year 2 students who have re-enrolled)

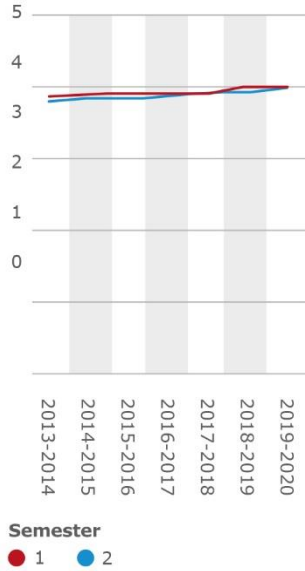


Satisfaction about education

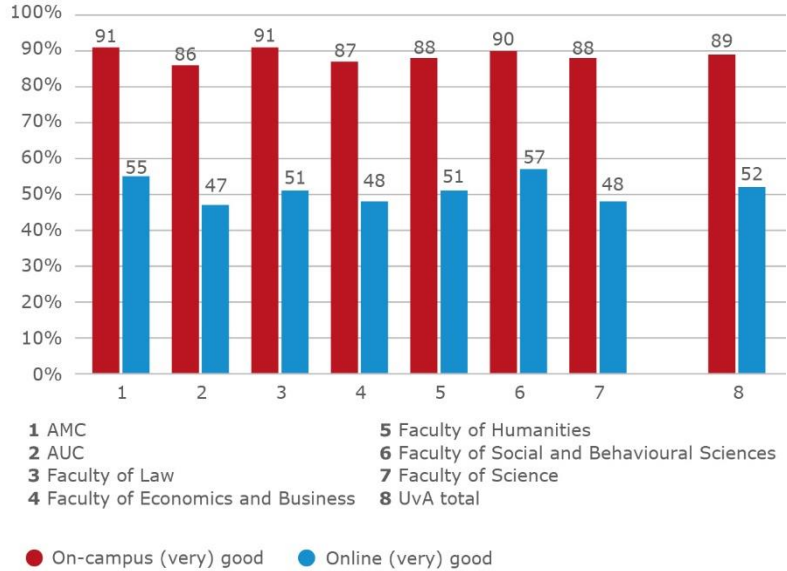
Satisfaction among students is variable and differs per university. Generally speaking, students are equally satisfied about the quality of alternatives offered, as shown, for instance, by the course evaluations of VU Amsterdam. Students rate contact teaching more highly than online teaching, as a University of Amsterdam study demonstrates.



Overall assessment of course content's quality

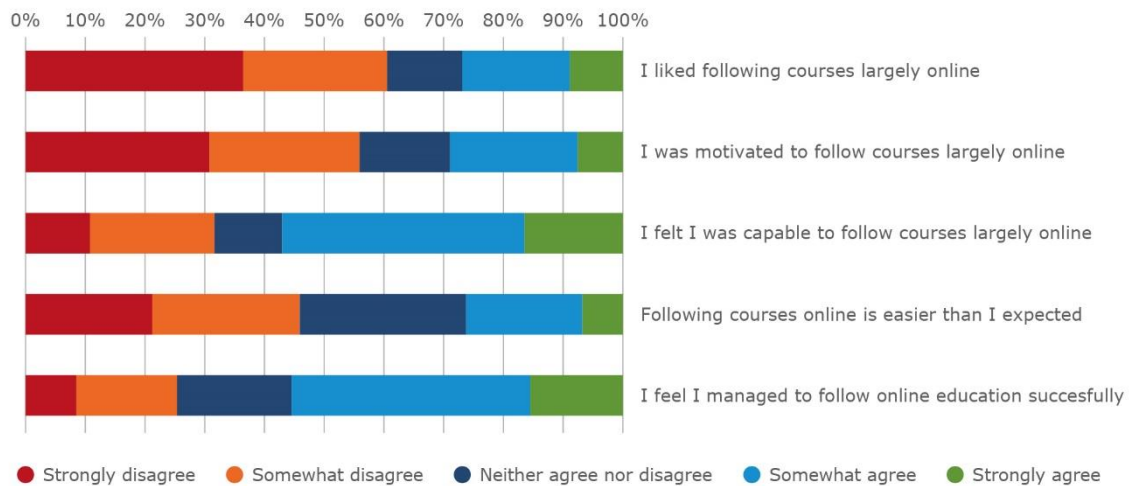


Evaluation of on-campus and online teaching



Although students are generally satisfied, they miss the contact with each other, and online teaching has a negative impact on their motivation. They do, however, feel able to participate in online education. See the example below of a survey among students at Wageningen University & Research.

Attitude, motivation and ability related to online education



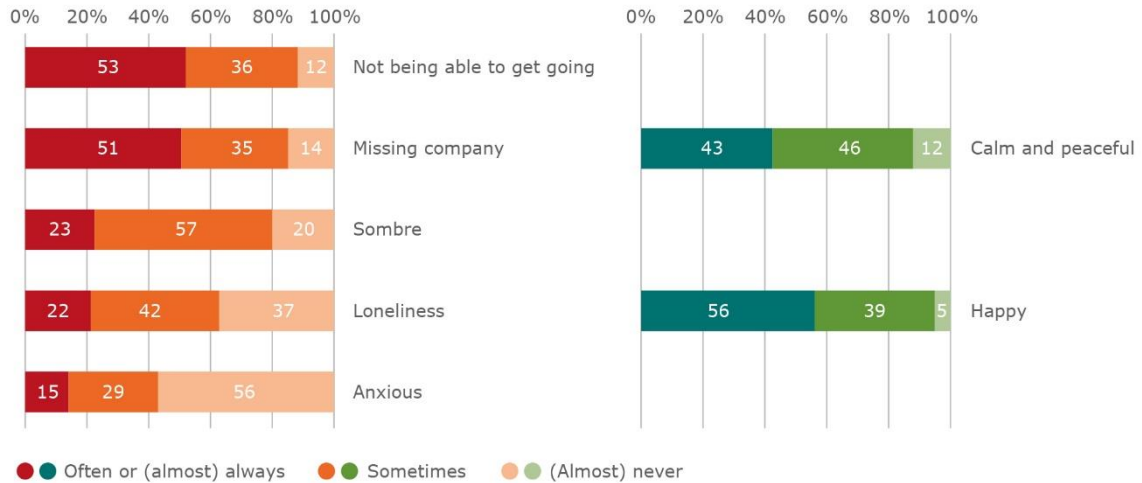
3. Student well-being

Universities have observed a high level of stress among students. Complaints such as loneliness and sombreness are increasingly frequent. Students have trouble with motivation and structure as well as missing social contacts. Universities are taking a variety of steps to support students in these challenging times. You can find examples of this [here](#).



An international survey of student well-being was carried out in 2020. The results below are for students at Radboud University. Students clearly have experienced disruption from the pandemic, but at the same time, a substantial share of students are happy.

General well-being: international students < national students; first-year students < higher-year students.
Sombre/anxious: females > males



At the Open University, nearly 30% indicate that COVID has not hampered their studies, or hardly has. The older the students, the less effect COVID has had on their studies.

% Students whose studies were not or almost not affected by COVID

