



sirius program

excellence in higher education



Radboud University Nijmegen

Radboud Honours Academy in Nijmegen

Radboud University Nijmegen is a student-oriented research university. Its teaching is geared to students as actively participating members of the academic community. The University also educates students to be critical, independently-minded and engaged individuals, who will eventually assume responsible positions in society with their own views regarding both science and society. The University does not regard students as 'consumers of education' but as individuals who accept an active role and responsibility in both their academic education and personal development.

Radboud University Nijmegen is situated in the oldest city in the Netherlands. It has nine faculties and enrolls over 17,500 students in 107 study programs. Our personal style of teaching ensures that there is plenty of opportunity to work closely with instructors and fellow students in small seminars. One of the main strengths of our research is the way we forge cooperative links across disciplinary boundaries and the continuous exchange of ideas with others working in related areas.

Radboud Honours Academy offers the top ten per cent most talented and motivated Bachelor's students of Radboud University Nijmegen the opportunity to follow a special supplementary program during the second and third years of their Bachelor's program.

Radboud Honours Academy is made up of nine single-discipline Honours programs for students who wish to deepen their knowledge of their own particular field of study, and one interdisciplinary Honours program for students who wish to broaden their knowledge of other disciplines.

The programs are offered in addition to the student's regular course of study. The workload in each program is approximately 850 hours.

Radboud Honours Academy enters into a personal training agreement with every student to set out what the student may expect of Radboud Honours Academy and what Radboud Honours Academy expects of the student.

For Radboud University Nijmegen it is of the utmost importance that excellent students work and study in a high-quality international academic or professional setting. For that reason, all programs at Radboud Honours Academy offer students a traineeship at a renowned foreign university, research institute, company or office. These associated partners of Radboud Honours Academy are not merely offering a trainee post. They will be involved in the composition of each program and the coaching of the students.



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During their Honours program, students are personally supervised by a senior researcher who works closely together with the student in order to achieve what was agreed in the student's personal training agreement. This supervisor will also check the progress made by the student in the course of the program.

Only the best twenty-five per cent of the first-year students in each discipline will be invited to apply for one of the Radboud Honours Academy programs. After a selection procedure, at the most ten per cent of all first-year students will be admitted.

Radboud Honours Academy started in September 2009 with 220 students.

The Sirius Program: Excellence in Higher Education

The Dutch Ministry of Education, Culture and Science (OCW) has created the Sirius Program to allow higher education institutions to experiment with a range of excellence programs between 2008 and 2013, involving their most talented and motivated students. By allowing research universities and universities of applied sciences to challenge their best students, the Ministry aims to gain an understanding of how excellence can best be achieved, and of the obstacles that currently exist. The largest portion of the budget has been earmarked for the Bachelor's program that was launched in 2008 (€ 48.8 million), for which 16 applications have been approved. Excellence is being promoted across the entire breadth of these university institutions, involving at least 5% of all students in each case. There is a lot of diversity, both in the chosen definitions of 'excellence' and 'excellent students' and in the activities being developed. Work is carried out based on performance agreements (high trust). Sirius organizes a learning program in which institutions learn from themselves and each other, and in which knowledge is also made available to the entire sector and the government. The Master's program, with a budget of € 12.2 million, will start in 2010.

