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File Tutorial Quality
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Dear prof. dr. H.G. van Dissel,

Dear prof. dr. P.J. van Baalen,

The issue of tutorial teachers has been very pertinent for the last few years at our faculty. Students have submitted complaints about inefficient tutorials, which affects their quality of education. This is communicated through different platforms such as the Sounding Board, emails to the FSR and complaints to the co-ordinators, including concerns of student members of the OCs. The FSR would like to use this opportunity to present our proposals of how to mitigate these problems.

Three things will be discussed in this proposal, which the FSR FEB strongly believes can be worked upon, to realize immediate results:

1. BKO degree timing
2. Mock evaluation
3. Hiring process

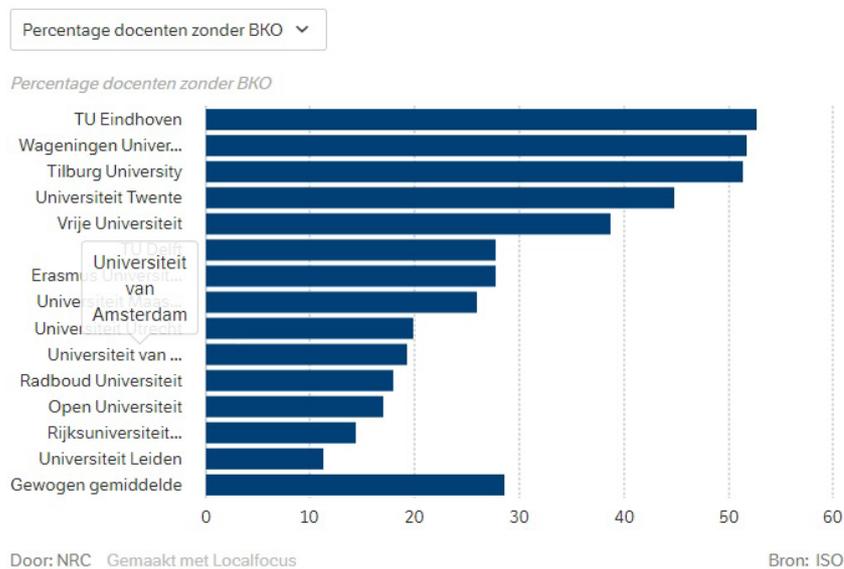
1. BKO degree timing:

The Basis Kwalificatie Onderwijs (BKO) is a very important portfolio for all academic staff who are in a position of teaching. The legitimacy comes from an agreement of 14 Dutch universities, who agreed to use the BKO program as a mandatory requirement for all teaching staff who teach more than 160 hours per year, of which the UvA was a member. According to the “**Universitair kader Basiskwalificatie Onderwijs (BKO) voor wetenschappelijk medewerkers van de Universiteit van Amsterdam**”, “The training plan is tailored to the individual situation of the teacher and takes into account previous education and experience, his / her own style and the professional situation in which the teacher will be employed. Demonstrated previous





experience is taken into account (shortened path).” (p. 8). If understood correctly, the latter refers to BKO light. As is evident, it is very important for teachers to prepare and pass this degree at the earliest possible timeframe, because it improves the quality of education imparted by teachers for the students. As was mentioned in the meeting with Prof. van Baalen and Dr. Silvia Dominguez, there are two or three windows of opportunity to partake in this program. The sooner it is done, the better it is for all parties involved.



Source: <https://www.nrc.nl/nieuws/2016/09/04/bijna-30-procent-docenten-universiteit-geen-diploma-4130471-a1519613>

The graph shows that almost 20% of teachers at UvA do not have a BKO.

More importantly, the following table which was requested from the faculty reiterates the point mentioned above. Almost 20% of academic staff do not have any teaching qualification, which directly affects students' academics. On the other hand, we are very pleased to see the percentage declining from 26.42% to 17.33% over the last 3 years.

Totaal

		2015	2016	2017
Basiskwalificatie (BKO)	Onderwijs	103	108	121
Seniorkwalificatie (SKO)	Onderwijs		3	3
Geen		37	30	26





This is why pushing for the earliest BKO program, would result in a continual increase in quality of teaching. **It should be mandatory that a tutorial teacher must enroll in the next possible BKO time slot from the time they begin teaching.** Additionally, the participants in BKO light should be incentivized with compensation, as an additional measure.

2. Mock evaluation:

The FSR FEB proposes a system of due diligence which can be termed as “mock evaluation”: basically a practice tutorial class that is evaluated by existing professors that give feedback and can request another mock if the quality is unsatisfactory. In our opinion, this mock evaluation should be a mandatory requirement before starting to teach tutorials. It is of utmost importance that this should be done **before** their tenure begins, and it is a singular evaluation mechanism. Some additions can be made to this process to replicate a dynamic classroom. For eg., getting student volunteers to participate, other tutorial teachers could also take part in it to learn and provide feedback on the teacher’s methods of imparting information, and having a board to judge the recruits. This board could consist of a senior professor, a member of the administration and student representatives as well.

Furthermore, for the teachers who have scored low on the student evaluations and/or have received complaints about their teaching should be invited to another evaluation in the same manner as stated above. This would be to maintain efficiency and keep track of teacher’s performance. This also mimics “jaargesprekkens” (annual consultations) which are usually done for lecturers annually.

3. Hiring process:

As was mentioned, prospective recruits present their research to be a teacher. Although research is very crucial, the FSR believes it is also very important for them to present their teaching skills. Many subjects such as Macroeconomics are heavily based on research, but for students to understand the concepts at a fundamental level, effective teaching skills are





necessary. What the current process overlooks is the fact that a researcher may have the required knowledge, but may not be a good teacher. This is a complaint that many students face every year; a teacher who has a lot of knowledge, but has difficulty explaining it. The FSR recommends setting guidelines for new recruitments. Currently, the whole procedure is very opaque, and deserves more transparency. Every job, or jobs at the same category (for eg. Student assistants, Tutorial teachers, Professors) should have a detailed outline which delineates the requirements for that job/category. This would mean explaining the hours devoted to teaching and researching, minimum educational qualifications, previous research and desired teaching qualities. These guidelines must shift importance to teaching, but may not neglect research from today's status quo. This can be referred to, when hiring new recruits. A positive effect of this is the simplicity it entails, instead of having to scour through individual contextualizations for the job. The participants of the selection committee should include members of programme committees, to ensure quality.

a. Lack of teaching criteria for freelancers

Freelancers are hired by the FEB to teach certain subjects/courses. However, there are no criteria which outline what their qualifications are. The status quo currently is that section heads hire freelancers based on their network and interactions in the academic community. As a faculty which continually pushes for excellence and embraces broad views from different people, this status quo results in constricted choices for students, whose academic experience is at the hands of the section heads. Furthermore, the lack of selection criteria is unprofessional. It results in favoritism and high opportunity costs. Better suited freelancers may miss an opportunity to teach at the UvA FEB, because they do not know the section heads. Proper advertisement and a thorough selection process for such positions is crucial to improve the quality of teaching. **The management should come up with guidelines for hiring freelancers, which should be perused by the section heads to make decisions accordingly.**

These steps are presented as an effective way to improve the current situation of tutorial teaching; it is not personally directed at the teaching staff that fills these positions. This can





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be seen as a hypothetical guideline for the upcoming years to make sure that teachers who do fill this position perform efficiently, so that they can become teachers and students can have a better learning experience.

We look forward to your response to this advice and if there are any questions, do not hesitate to contact us. On behalf of the FSR FEB 17-18,

Atma Jyoti Mahapatra

E&R committee FSR FEB

Christof Bischofberger

Chairman E&R committee FSR FEB

