

27 OER Aeres University of Applied Sciences; Studying with a Disability

A guide to getting to know your way around Aeres University of Applied Sciences

Chapter 1 Introduction

Aeres University of Applied Sciences wants to facilitate students with a disability in order for them to be able to follow and complete the course of their choice.

A disability can be understood as: every condition that is permanent and could lead to a delaying effect on study progress.

This comprises:

- Visual, auditive and motoric disabilities (blindness or partially sighted, deafness, spastic)
- Disorders related to language, speech and/or math (dyslexia, dyscalculia)
- Chronic and psychiatric diseases (ME/ CVS, MS, anxiety, ADHD)
- Disorders within the autism spectrum (PDD-NOS, Asperger)

This document describes in general terms the support Aeres can offer you. Please note that Aeres does not offer the same type of specialized help that health care institutions can provide. What matter to us, is that you develop towards your chosen profession (or study) and learn to deal with your disability. Where possible, we will provide help during your studies. It is, however, not realistic to assume that you would no longer require specialized help outside of the college.

At Aeres, we hold initiative in high regard. When problems arise, please actively search for help immediately. It is important to be open about the obstacles you might encounter during your studies. By being open about these problems, other will be more understanding towards you.

Chapter 2 What can we expect from each other?

As the nature and severity of the disability differs per person, so will the degree of the restrictions and possible study delays. This is why offering structural facilities and an individual approach are important. In this chapter, the organization and implementation of this type of student care is described in further detail.

2-1 First point of contact

If you need help, you can contact said persons on the intranet.

It goes without saying that everything discussed will be treated with the utmost confidentiality. It might, however, be necessary to inform others order to provide proper guidance.

- *Contact persons Studying with a Disability (SmF)*

Aeres University of Applied Sciences has coordinators Studying with a Disability. Their contact details can be found on the intranet. For Dronten, this is Jan van Diepen and for Almere Lily van Geest for Dronten.

A request for additional guidance must be made with one of these contact persons. They will then organize extra guidance or make any other necessary provisions. These contact persons will also advise your mentor.

- Mentor

Your mentor is the person you should contact when you have any questions related to a disability related to your studies. Examples include: study choices, study planning, study skills, examination regulations, etc. You are responsible for keeping your mentor up-to-date on all factors that could hinder the progress of your study.

- Dean

Within the University, the dean has a general advisory position concerning issues related to your study, finances, funding or study choices. At Aeres University of Applied Sciences, the dean is also the coordinator for Studying with a Disability. If you have any questions concerning registration, please contact the Student Affairs Office.

2-2 Registration procedure

On the Studielink website, you can indicate that you have a disability. It is advisable to do this as soon as possible and to be open about it. This will prevent people from guessing what could be the reason why you behave in a certain way or why you might be absent. Only when a lecturer is aware of that is going on, can he or she take it into account and show understanding.

If you have indicated on the Studielink website that you have ADD/ADHD or if that you are on the autism spectrum, then your contact person (coordinator) will invite you for an introductory meeting. Together, we will go over any possible problems and we will discuss the guidance you have had up to this point (both at school and at home) and how Aeres can be of assistance to you.

We will also go over the attainability of your study and your future profession. Furthermore, we will discuss the objectives and possibilities and we will lay down the agreements in a study contract.

All students who have indicated on Studielink that they have a disability will receive an email from the SmF coordinator during the first weeks of their study. In this email, the coordinator will invite these students to a meeting in which study problems could occur as a result of the disability.

Together, we will search for ways to lessen or prevent these problems from occurring. During this meeting we will, of course, also determine if Aeres is able to accommodate and fulfil the needs of these students.

If, during their time at Aeres, a student is diagnosed or if a chronic illness manifests itself, the student should contact the SmF coordinator or mentor as soon as possible.

2-3 Facilities and adjustments

Aeres University of Applied Sciences offers structural facilities and arrangements to students with a specific disability. It is up to you if you want to use these, they are after all be made to measure, but we feel we should at least mention the following:

- General

The exam committee watches over the level of the courses taught. Leading from this, the exam committee which exam facilities are assigned, such as an alternative examination method. You should at all times consult the SmF coordinator when filing a request with the exam committee.

- Dyslexia

Have you handed in an official dyslexia declaration to the SmF coordinator and have to signed a contract? In that case, you will be granted extra time for written exams during the exam periods.

We also offer other possibilities. Readers and exam papers can, upon request, be supplied in different fonts and sizes. The university is currently considering buying software that can support students with dyslexia. Until we have actually purchased this new software, we can only offer Kurzweil software during exams, but only if students themselves have already acquired it. There is information available about other software that could be of use to you.

- Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD)

All students with a disorder within the autism spectrum, assuming they register on time, are invited for an intake meeting before the start of the study.

As we have learned, it is very important to come to clear agreements together. These agreements will be recorded and signed. See annex 1 for an example of such a contract.

Do you have other, more specific wishes?

Please let your course's SmF coordinator know! We can then look into the possibilities.

- Help from a study coach

Studying at a higher vocational college requires different study skills than you were used to during your previous education. You often don't notice this until your study results are not what you expected them to be. It could be the case that you are not capable to plan your study activities. Or maybe you experience difficulties revising large quantities of text or to write a good report. Of maybe you're not comfortable in your own skin. The study coach will go over the possible causes of your disappointing study results with you to gain an insight into the way you study.

You and your coordinator will then train the skills you need in order to study more effectively, find more enjoyment in the material, achieve better study results and to give you the feeling your efforts are making a difference. As well as individual training, we also offer "Learning how to Study" sessions. If you experience difficulties regarding your study skills, you can make an appointment either with your mentor, or a study coach.

Single, individual meetings are also an option, for instance about concentration problems, motivational issues, fear of failure or anything that might hinder your study progress. Additionally, there is an option to enter into private coaching route at your own expense. Please enquire after the possibilities.

- Other

Are you (temporarily) less mobile and do you have to go, for instance, on an excursion? The janitor can reserve a wheelchair for you and your fellow-students can push you around!

There is a teacher's chair available for students for students with physical limitations. For instance, if you have serious back problems, this could help you during lengthy practicum lectures. If you would like to use this chair, or do you lack aids such as this, please report this to the SmF coordinator.

4 Activities study group

The SmF coordinator provides information and advice to colleagues who wish to know more about dealing with students with disabilities in learning situations. The coordinators incidentally organize activities at school around a specific theme for the entire department or sector.

Some examples of past and future activities:

- In 2015-2016, Aeres participated in the project “*De Werkvloer Op*” (‘Entering the workplace’) from expertise centre Study and Disability, during which the organisation was screened based on the recommendations from the report from the Committee Benchmark. Several different workshops were organized about studying with a disability.

- In 2015, a study coach was appointed in Almere. Dronten already had a study coach.

- In 2016-2017 the SmF coordinator organized an information session in Almere with an autism coach. In this training, the ‘how and why’ concerning autism was explained to those interested. The training was given by Marja Boxhoorn from autismecoach.nl. For further documentation: Birsin Basar has, as experience expert, offered an insight into her problems during her studies at Avant University of Applied Sciences and while searching for a suitable job. In 2010, she published a book entitled “*Ik wil meer onzichtbaar zijn*” (I want to be more invisible) about her experiences.

- With *Studeren op Maat* (tailor-made studying) offers further insight into how graduates can be counselled more effectively and how to prepare them for the labour market.

- In 2017-2018 (and before that in 2013 via Lexima), the SmF coordinator organized information meetings for teachers about dyslexia. During these meetings, the backgrounds of dyslexia were discussed and experiences and tips were shared.

- Since 2017-2018, training sessions about dyslexia are organized annually. During several workshops students are trained to deal with their dyslexia. The registration is free. A training consists of three workshops during the evening.

- In 2017 an e-learning module about autism became available on Blackboard via the HAS.

- During the course year 2016-2017 some teachers have received training on the fear of failure and on how to recognize it. It is our intention to organize annual workshops for students affected by a fear of failure. The study coach will also go over this training during the extra individual guidance. There is a PowerPoint presentation available.

→ Do you have an idea or would you like to take the initiative for a platform to share experiences with other students? Please contact the SmF coordinator!

Chapter 3 Need financial support?

The consequences of a disability might to of such an extend that you could be entitled to a financial provision.

3-1 General

For a detailed overview of all the legal regulations and possible provisions, we advise you to consult the expert centre Handicap and Study: www.handicap-studie.nl

3-2 Study grant

If, for instance, you want to file a request for a 12-month extension of your study grant on grounds of your disability, please contact the SmF coordinat for the procedure.

Any other requests for financial aid should also be made through the SmF coordinator

Chapter 4 Do you have any other ideas?

We would like to challenge you to add any fresh ideas or tips to this guide. Please don't hesitate to contact us!

Annex 1

Example additional contract for extra guidance alongside the standard contract SmF

Contract **(required when using extra guidance)**

Name study coach:	
Name student:	

On (date) we have agreed the following:

The guidance at school will consist of:

As well as the guidance at school, external guidance (especially when autism is concerned) is an important factor on the road to success!

Other agreements with Aeres University of Applied Sciences:

Student agrees to the following:

- The SmF coordinator is not held to confidentiality when colleagues request information.
- The student is obliged to make an effort to perform to the best of his/her ability. Otherwise, there will be no guidance.

When the SmF coordinator deems it necessary to report the disability to an external organization or company, he/she will do so. This, however, is not normal practise and the student will be informed beforehand if this is to occur.

- Due to funding, a maximum of 30 minutes per student, per week is available for guidance from a study coach. (this is not covered by government funding)

- There has to be noticeable upward growing trend, both substantive and on a personal level. As the course progresses, more independence is required regarding the above-mentioned guidance.
- The same rules (of conduct) apply to all students, unless specified otherwise.
- Communication will principally take place between the student and the SmF coordinator. In consultation with the student parents or external guidance may be consulted.

Signature student	
Signature SmF coordinator	