

*Position paper December 2015
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Study places

In times of covid-19, the situation regarding study places is different than in times without a pandemic. At the end of this position paper, the current corona situation is discussed, this part is irrelevant after the pandemic.

Regular situation sketch

Especially during exam weeks, there is a shortage of (study) places at the TU Delft. As the number of students continues to grow, the need for extra places will only increase. With the development of further education buildings, there will be considerably more workplaces in the future. Additional places will also be created within the current facilities. Besides quantity, the TU pays attention to the quality of current and future workplaces. A study workplace guide has been drawn up with the Student Council, which strongly advises on how current study landscapes should be renovated and how the new places should be designed.

The Student Council also has insight in the distribution of (types of) workplaces over faculties, whereby the FSR's supervise the actual filling in and quality of the places. In addition, the SC can influence which faculties should be used during exam weeks to meet the high demand.

ORAS's vision

For every student, there must be a place to study on campus at the right time and with the right facilities. ORAS has three objectives to achieve this:

- Increasing the quantity of study places
- Improving the quality of the study places
- Making good use of existing study places

The needs of the students regarding study places must be constantly monitored in order to be able to respond with the right resources. This need should be actively measured by, among others, faculty student councils (FSR) and surveys.

Quantity

The number of spaces must be increased with the growing number of students through a combination of:

- Creating new places. This is happening with the development of new education buildings such as Pulse and Echo. But also by using unused classrooms for extra study places in addition to the regular places.
- Extending opening hours. The Learning Strip (Library, Aula, Pulse, IO) offers space for many workstations and therefore has long opening hours, especially during exam weeks. ORAS intends to have Echo and other education buildings developed to fit in with these generous opening hours, regardless of whether they belong to the Learning Strip or not. It is also important that students can study at these buildings during holidays and weekends.

Quality

Complying with the study workplace guide is important to guarantee the quality of new and existing study places. The workplace guide assesses whether a workplace meets the quality requirements. Renovating study places is also done using this guide.

Utilisation of existing study places

Making good use of existing workplaces is the third goal besides increasing quantity and improving quality. This can be achieved by measuring the utilisation and findability of study places. By providing up-to-date overviews and data back to students, the utilisation of study places can be increased. ORAS has been working on this project for the past few years.

Covid-19 situation sketch

During the pandemic, the number of study places offered has decreased. The university has determined that zoning of student groups is important. This means that contact between students from different faculties should be prevented. In addition to this central measure, faculties determine their policy for their students. Here, the trade-off between education and more study places is made. The same zoning regulation applies to the generic education buildings 35 (Drebbelweg) and Fellowship. However, an exception is made for Pulse and Library.

ORAS believes that we as a university are unnecessarily restricted by this regulation for generic buildings in comparison to other universities. Especially since there is no demonstrable evidence that the scheme works. Also, ORAS believes that making an exception for more than half of the generic education buildings is undermining the logic behind zoning.

In times of the lockdown in 2021, the university will only be open to the 'vulnerable' student. This is a marginal occupancy in Library. This number of spots is for the 'vulnerable' student who has been referred through the study advisor. The low number of registered vulnerable students is often used as an argument for not scaling up.

ORAS believes that TU Delft should communicate more invitingly about this number of study places and how they can be used. ORAS believes that the university is not doing enough to make registration more accessible. Furthermore, the university could learn lessons from other universities and should therefore constantly monitor how they deal with national regulations.