



Policy Plan 2025-2026

PSB Faction XVI

1 Colofon

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Policy Plan PSB 2025-2026

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3 Introduction

In front of you lays the policy plan of the Faculty Council PSB for the academic year 2025-2026. The participation of staff and students in the matters of the Faculty of Behavioural and Social Sciences (BSS) is ensured by the possibility to take place in the Faculty Council. This consists of nine elected members from the staff and nine elected members from the students. PSB is currently the largest student party in the Faculty Council of Behavioural and Social Sciences at the University of Groningen (RUG). PSB has been representing the interests of all students by being allowed to sit on this council since 2010.

Our policy plans build on the vision of previous factions. In addition, the faction tries to innovate based on its own ideas and those of the current batch of students of the Faculty of Behavioural and Social Sciences.

For the academic year 2025-2026, the PSB will focus on the following policy points:

1. Diversity, Inclusion, and Mental Health
2. Transparency Within Our Education
3. Visibility & Engagement
4. Career and Employability

Kind regards,

PSB Faction XVI 2025-2026

4 Policy points

4.1. Diversity, Inclusion, and Mental Health

4.1.1. A Commitment to Inclusion

Despite the university cutting back on diversity and inclusion efforts, our faction remains committed to prioritizing these values. We will actively participate in the newly established Diversity and Inclusion working group, created after the termination of DIBSS. Through our involvement, we aim to ensure that students continue to have a voice in shaping an inclusive faculty environment. Our presence in this group helps maintain a space where all students—regardless of background—feel heard, supported, and represented.

4.1.2. Supporting International Students

We recognize the specific challenges faced by international students, especially in light of political instability and evolving university policies. Our goal is to provide timely, relevant information—such as changes to the teaching language or budget-related impacts—through our newsletter and social media channels. Additionally, we aim to collaborate with organizations like ESN and other student associations to learn from their experience and offer similar resources that help students navigate life and study in a new country.

4.1.3. Accessible Mental Health Support

To lower the threshold for students seeking support, we will appoint a confidential contact person within our faction. This trusted individual will serve as an accessible first point of contact for faculty-related concerns, and will help guide students to professional resources when needed. We plan to promote this role actively in both English and Dutch. Furthermore, we will explore establishing a wider network of confidential contact persons across different student associations to ensure broader support and mutual collaboration.

4.1.4. Expanding Faculty-Wide Wellbeing Efforts

Currently, most mental health initiatives are concentrated in the Psychology program. We believe it is important to extend these efforts to other fields such as Pedagogy and Sociology. We aim to do this by inviting more staff and students to join the Mental Health Working Group.

To improve visibility and participation, we will promote the group through newsletters, faculty screens, and flyers placed in staff areas. Our goal is to create a faculty-wide conversation about mental wellbeing that is inclusive, active, and ongoing.

4.2. Transparency Within Our Education

4.2.1. Clear Guidelines on Educational Developments

The faction will keep their eyes open for specific concerns of students within different departments regarding unclear topics. We aim to inform ourselves on these topics, then communicate this information back to the students. The first topic that concerns us would be the guidelines on the use and handling of AI. So far, there seems to be a lack of collective agreement on what should be done concerning this aspect. This can easily lead to students not correctly referencing the use of AI, and professors having minimal directions on what to do when encountering these situations. From our perspective, there should be clear guidelines across the faculty/across programs, which would benefit both professors and students in the grading and completion of assignments, and would also facilitate decisions for the exam committee in cases of misuse. Secondly, there has recently been a change in the number of course evaluations per year. Our faction plans to follow the development of the pilot, as well as staff and student reactions following it. We understand the reasoning behind the change, but it is also important to monitor the development of courses without clear yearly updates and feedback from students. It would be nice, for example, for professors to encourage students to still reach out regarding possible complaints, but the lack of anonymity might hinder this, so we will look for other options that students would be open to, such as still employing surveys for them to complete.

4.2.2. Transparency Around Budget Cuts

One highly significant topic for everyone in our faculty is the implications of the budget cuts. There appears to be a sense of uncertainty and concern amongst students about how their studies will be affected. PSB wants to stay versed in the updates on the budget cuts by staying in contact with the student assessor, in hopes of helping students feel more at ease with this topic. All of the information we gain on these matters will then be relayed to the students.

Our main goal is for PSB to facilitate and to better the communication between the faculty and the students. We plan on updating our Social Media platforms after meetings. Stories will be put up on Instagram with the information that can be shared, which will then be combined into highlights for each topic. We also plan on making use of the PSB newsletter to give regular updates. Lastly, we would like to offer updates in more physical forms as well, such as information flyers, or flyers promoting the rebranded walk-in hours before they are due to happen. All of the updates will be done in both English and Dutch, in order for us to be inclusive towards both international and native students.

4.2.3. Strengthening Communication Channels

Our main goal is for the communication from the faction to the students to be better and clearer, so students know what topics are being discussed within Faculty Board meetings and in the hopes of also informing students of what the Faculty Council and PSB does throughout the year. In order to further this goal, we would like to make this information available in both English and Dutch so that all students in the faculty may be able to understand these updates well.

4.3. Visibility & Engagement

4.3.1. Growing Our Social Media Presence

While PSB has already made improvements in its social media presence, the faction believes there is still room to grow. We aim to further develop a consistent and engaging online platform to better inform students and create more opportunities for interaction. The faction will focus on more ways to keep the social media accounts active and improve engagement. This will be done through making posts, stories, and reels on Instagram. Reels are an effective way to share information with students, making it both accessible and interactive to keep them engaged. Besides this, the faction wants to create more personalized content. In this way, our followers will recognize our content and faction sooner, as well as helping to increase engagement. Since we will focus more on social media this year, we decided to add one more person to the function of social media manager.

4.3.2. Enhancing Engagement Through Structured Planning

The faction will implement a 'year planning' to better structure its activities and increase visibility. This will also help organize mental health initiatives in collaboration with study associations.

Additionally, the faction will focus on more specific promotion for the various activities organized throughout the year. By planning dates in advance, we make it easier for both members and students to participate, ensuring better engagement and accessibility.

4.3.3. Promoting Inclusivity Through Social Media

Social media plays a big role in how we connect with students, so we want to make it more accessible and engaging for everyone. One of our goals is to translate important content, like the website, campaign flyers, and posts during election week, into both Dutch and English. This way, more students can stay informed and feel included, no matter their language background. We will also start adding Dutch translations to our social media captions to make our communication more approachable. Most importantly, we are going to focus on growing our social media presence overall, so that students actually see what we are doing and can get involved more easily. Making things more accessible and visible helps create a more inclusive and active faculty for everyone.

4.3.4. Strengthening Communication via the Newsletter and Walk-In Hours

We will continue the newsletter, which will be launched for the first time in block 2b of the year 2024-2025. Since it is still new, there is a lot of room to improve and figure out what works best. This gives us the chance to test different formats and content ideas so we can make it as useful and engaging as possible for students. The newsletter will help keep students in the loop about what the faction is working on, upcoming events, and ways to get involved, making it easier to stay connected and have a say in what is happening at the faculty.

We will also rebrand the Walk-In Hours to make them more inviting, interactive, and engaging for students. One idea is to invite familiar faces, like board members or staff that students know, to join in. This could help boost attendance and make the atmosphere more relaxed and open. We are aiming to host these once every block, and we will plan ahead so that staff, boards, and the faction can join a few times a year. We also want to introduce themed sessions, like a Q&A on current political issues or open meetings focused on education. To help spread the word, we will, for example, put up signs in the cafeteria and around the GMW buildings. The goal is to create a space where students feel comfortable to stop by and share their thoughts.

4.4. Career and Employability

4.4.1. Improving Visibility of Career Opportunities

We see a faculty-wide problem with students' knowledge of career possibilities and the bridge between study and career. Because of this, we want to help students by showing them ways they can get acquainted with the working field. One of the ways we want to accomplish this is by keeping contact with study associations on these specific topics. All of the study associations organize various career-related events. We can help the study associations by promoting these events.

Additionally, we want to create a clear schedule for each study program, which we can post on our social media pages and place on our website. This way, students can easily see which career events related to their study are organized throughout the year.

4.4.2. Advocating for Stronger Institutional Support

Another way we want to be more involved in employability is by staying in contact with various working groups within the faculty. Through this, we can look for ways to assist these groups and promote their initiatives through our platforms.

This is also a topic we want to raise with the Faculty Board, as results from the National Student Survey (NSE) have shown this to be a recurring concern for several years. Several key questions can be asked: Do students see the career events being offered? Is the faculty itself placing enough emphasis on employability? What could be improved?

As the Faculty Council, we aim to maintain a strong focus on this topic throughout the year. Even in the face of challenges such as budget cuts, we want to ensure that the faculty continues to offer as many career-related opportunities as students need.