

FACTSHEET

A SMARTER ACADEMIC YEAR

The Dutch academic year is exceptionally long. This contributes to a high work pressure for instructors and students and leaves little time for research and other core scientific duties. The Young Academy compared the Dutch academic year with other countries and makes concrete recommendations for improvement, presented in the report *A smarter academic year*. This fact-sheet lists the most important figures and findings.

Average number of teaching weeks	
The Netherlands	ranges from 26.5 to 35, with a mean and median of 30
International sample	ranges from 21 to 29, with a mean of 24.5

	First teaching week	Last teaching week
The Netherlands	1st week of September	generally 1st week of June
Chalmers (Sweden)	1st week of September	4th week of May
Humboldt (Germany)	3rd week of October	3rd week of July
Bologna (Italy)	4th week of September	4th week of May
Ghent (Belgium)	4th week of September	2nd week of May
Sorbonne (France)	3rd week of September	2nd week of May
St Andrews (UK)	3rd week of September	3rd week of April

Examinations*	<i>Number of periods</i>	<i>Number of weeks</i>
The Netherlands	ranges from 4 to 12; average 5.2	ranges from 4 to 14; average 9
International sample	ranges from 2 to 4; average 2.5	ranges from 4 to 10; average 5.2

* excluding separate resit periods

Number of examination weeks: average	
The Netherlands	9
International sample	5.2

Resit periods	
The Netherlands	3.2
International sample	1.3

Advise of The Young Academy

- (1) adapting the academic year flexibly to the needs of different disciplines,
- (2) reducing the number of teaching weeks and (3) the number of test weeks,
- (4) strictly 'protecting' teaching-free periods, and
- (5) diversifying teaching methods and encouraging student autonomy.

Explanation selected universities

This sample looked at the structure of the academic year in the Netherlands and at six foreign universities. Until January 2021, these foreign universities were all involved in the same ECTS standards. In international rankings, they occupy positions that are similar to, or higher than, most Dutch universities.

The full text of the report is available at www.dejongeakademie.nl