

A man in a light blue shirt is sitting on a metal railing, looking towards a soccer field. In the background, a player in a green jersey is visible on the field. The scene is outdoors with trees and a brick building in the distance.

# Party Program

**2026-2027**

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# 1 Quality of education

The quality of education at the UT is of the highest priority. DAS wants to ensure that students have more say in improving the quality of our many study programs. Besides ensuring that study programs are feasible to complete and future oriented, it is important that UT diplomas are seen internationally and nationally as high quality.

## 1.1 Reintroduction of teaching assistants

Budget cuts at the UT have resulted in fewer TAs being available for the students. This has increased the workload of teachers, resulting in less personal guidance or quick help for students. The reintroduction of TAs is the most effective solution here. TAs bridge the gap between student and teacher through accessible guidance. Unfortunately, we currently still notice a significant shortage of TAs to reduce the workload of both student and teacher. DAS calls on the UT to actively stimulate the use of teaching assistants so that teachers experience less workload and students can receive their necessary advice on time.

## 1.2 Better distribution of resits

Currently, DAS still hears a lot of feedback from students about the scheduling of resits. Resits that take place months later around the exam week of the next module or in the middle of the summer holidays are, according to DAS, not suitable for a good learning environment. In some cases, these resits cause such busy periods without rest or relaxation that it can be destructive for the subsequent modules. We at DAS find it unacceptable that a snapshot of a module should have so much impact on the following modules or well deserved summer holidays. Therefore, we are committed to reconsidering the structure and planning of these resits and distributing them better.

## 1.3 English Language Proficiency of Lecturers

According to DAS, the English language proficiency is not at the right level for all teachers, despite English being one of the official languages of the UT. Because of this, following and understanding some lectures is difficult. DAS therefore advocates to improve the quality of this official language among these teachers. We are convinced that teachers have the willpower to transfer professional knowledge as well as possible, but that they do not always have the right resources to achieve this. For this, we want to investigate how accessible the language proficiency test is for academic staff and how much emphasis is placed on this for the teachers. In addition to the proficiency in the English language, the Dutch language has recently also become an official language. DAS therefore wants the university to offer enough opportunities for English speaking teachers to learn the Dutch language.

## 1.4 Better and more effective educational quality care

Within bachelor and master education, many surveys are sent after the completion of a module. The response to the surveys is very low, as is the attendance at evaluations. DAS attaches great value to quality improvement within education; for this, the experiences of the students are of great importance. DAS requests a targeted investigation into the effectiveness of these surveys and evaluations. In addition, DAS wants to introduce giving surveys

immediately after exams, in order to increase the response to the surveys, as can already effectively be seen in a number of study programs. Furthermore, DAS also wants to provide better communication between the faculties, so that they can learn from each other. Moreover, it must become clear what feedback has been given and what actions have been taken based on this feedback. In addition, it has turned out that the study pressure for some programs is experienced as too high. DAS considers it important that this is investigated and a suitable solution is found.

### 1.5 Better guidance for graduation assignments

DAS sees that the guidance of graduation assignments is not always sufficient. Waiting weeks for an appointment for a progress meeting is not workable and not good for the process and goal of a graduation assignment. In addition, it happens more and more often that a graduation assignment from a company carries a lot of difficulty. Whereas the UT often likes to see in depth theoretical knowledge in the final report, the company specifically asks for practical solutions that they can deploy on the market. This clash can cause expectations to not be aligned and the consequences of that end up with the student. DAS is committed to strengthening the communication between the possible company, the UT and the student in order to align expectations.

### 1.6 Online lectures

DAS is convinced that students should have online lectures at their disposal when the student has extracurricular activities or special circumstances. One can think of students who, for example, have double scheduled subjects, follow the study from another city or undertake extracurricular activities. Hereby the focus must still lie on physical lectures, where students therefore do have to give a reason why they cannot attend the physical lectures. Since the physical lectures have many advantages in the transfer of knowledge, but also improve in quality when more students are present. Therefore, DAS will take care of making the importance of high quality online lectures known to the University Council.

### 1.7 Ensuring enough study and lecture spaces

The location of lectures and exams remains an important point for students. Lectures in unorthodox locations, such as the cinema, are not suitable according to DAS. We believe that the university must provide study worthy lecture spots. In the coming years, DAS will make a strong case for accessible and high quality self study and teaching spaces.

### 1.8 No evening lectures and evening exams

DAS is strongly against evening lectures and evening exams. It cannot be expected that after a strenuous day one still has enough energy left for these energy demanding activities. Students must be given the time to relax, play sports and develop themselves alongside their studies. These kinds of cognitive expectations in the evening greatly counteract this and change the close and unique student culture of the university.

## 2 Ambition

Student engagement is, in DAS's view, the most important way in which students develop themselves outside of their studies. Whether it's through a board position, committee, top-level sports/culture, or a part-time job, everyone should have the opportunity to develop themselves personally, in a way that suits them best. Investing time in your personal development during your studies is also an investment in your future.

### 2.1 More room for personal initiatives

DAS believes that the term ambition means something different to everyone. From student board positions to organising the Campus Run, from pursuing a double bachelor's degree to practicing top-level sports or culture. Regardless of your personal interpretation, everyone should have the space to grow in these areas. The UT should do its best to meet the needs of students. That's why DAS calls for more room for personal initiatives and better support in this regard. DAS also observes fewer active international students. These limiting factors must be investigated to ensure that they too have a fair chance to realise their ambitions.

### 2.2 Encouraging personal development

The UT is known for offering many opportunities for personal development. DAS calls for active encouragement of personal development through better promotion of the available opportunities and facilities within the UT. A concrete example is the website overview listing all associations affiliated with the UT. For active students, this may be obvious, but for less engaged students, it may be less accessible. Nevertheless, this website is a good example of how we have already managed to increase visibility for personal development. DAS will continue to promote personal development in student life and inform everyone about the opportunities available at the UT. This way, everyone gets a chance to find their own path to develop themselves through extracurricular personal growth.

### 2.3 Emphasising the importance of student boards and teams

Student boards and teams are a great example of how students can develop themselves in a broad sense. Students from completely different backgrounds come together to achieve a societal goal. The UT should stimulate and facilitate this as much as possible. This can be done through resources such as training and the right networks. The output of student teams is widely used to promote the UT and serves as a strong calling card.

However, we have recently seen a decline in applications for student boards and teams. DAS sees this as a disappointing development and believes the root causes should be investigated. Only then can we look for solutions to the underlying issues.

### 2.4 Support for start-ups

The university invests a lot of money and resources in start-ups to give them a strong start. UT partner Novel-T offers guidance to start-ups and interested parties. However, DAS would like to see even more support for young start-ups from within the educational system. Think of elective modules such as the minor Innovation and Entrepreneurship.

The UT is the most entrepreneurial university in the Netherlands, and we must maintain that!

## 2.5 Minors for self-development

To combine education and personal development, DAS believes it is important that there are sufficient opportunities to follow minors that align with extracurricular activities, such as the board minor or the minor Learning to Teach. In the board minor, students get the chance to link their board experience to academic theories and reflection. This increases the learning outcomes of a board year and strengthens the connection between practice and education.

DAS sees these kinds of minors as valuable tools to support the development of active students. They not only offer recognition for efforts outside of the study program but also contribute to the motivation to take on a board year in the first place. At a time when the number of applications for boards and student teams is declining, such educational programs can be an important incentive to become or remain active.

That is why it is important that the board minor and similar minors are widely recognised across all programs. The experience and skills students gain during a board year are relevant to every field of study. Additionally, DAS advocates for sufficient capacity within these minors so that all intrinsically motivated students have the opportunity to further develop themselves. This can be achieved by scaling up popular minors and making the offerings more transparent.

## 2.6 StOF

When students are actively involved outside their studies, they may be eligible for a grant. Starting next year, this will be called the Student Support Fund (StOF) at the UT, replacing the current Financial Support for Special Circumstances (FOBOS) regulation. The exact details of this new policy are still being developed.

A lot seems to be changing, and DAS believes it is important to ensure that active students can continue to develop themselves outside their studies in the future. That is why we will push for a thorough evaluation of the new policy in the coming year, to assess its impact on active student life.

## 4. Student representation

DAS believes that student representation in university governance is essential for the quality of education and for the functioning of the university as an institution. The University of Twente (UT) has established several councils and committees to facilitate student representation. The different forms of participation are briefly explained below.

### Intercity Student Consultation (ISO)

The Interstedelijk Studenten Overleg (ISO) is a national student representative body. ISO serves as the umbrella organization for all university and university of applied sciences councils in the Netherlands. It represents the interests of all students to policymakers in The Hague.

### University Council

At the university level, the UT has a University Council (UC). The UC consists of both student representatives and staff representatives. This council has a say in university policy at the central level. It does so by providing solicited and unsolicited advice to the Executive Board. In addition, the UC has voting rights on the implementation of university policy.

### Faculty Councils

Each faculty at the university has a Faculty Council (FC). It functions largely in the same way as the University Council, but at the decentralized level within its own faculty. The FC has rights of consent and advice regarding faculty-wide policies, including education and examination regulations and other matters that affect the faculty as a whole.

### Programme Committees

Finally, there are the Programme Committees (OLCs). These have a structure similar to the other representative bodies but focus specifically on issues and problems within individual degree programmes. The OLCs also play an important role in drafting quality agreements, which are made in cooperation with the Ministry of Education.

#### 4.1 Expanding DAS's involvement

Over the coming years, DAS aims to continue growing, not only in terms of the number of seats it holds and the number of affiliated associations, but also in terms of engagement. Active cooperation with the ISO is of great importance to DAS in this regard. Through this collaboration, DAS can represent students at the national level as well, which is essential when policies are being developed in The Hague.

Within the University of Twente, DAS seeks to further expand its involvement by gaining representation in more Faculty Councils and Programme Committees, as well as by broadening its support base. In this way, students can be better represented at the faculty level, and more students can become directly involved in university governance and participation.

### 1.9 More attention for participation councils(also for staff)

DAS believes that student participation and representation are still not sufficiently embedded within the student community. In recent years, the university has made significant efforts to increase the visibility and awareness of representative bodies. Although the provision of information to students has improved considerably and more students are becoming involved in representation, DAS believes there is still room for further development. Situations continue to arise in which students are not adequately involved in decisions that directly affect them.

In addition, university staff often experience difficulties in balancing representative duties with their other responsibilities, partly due to an already high workload. DAS is concerned about this issue and therefore advocates for better support and facilitation for staff members who contribute to representative bodies and to the university as a whole.

### 4.2 Professionalisation of participation councils

DAS believes it is important that all representative bodies are adequately supported in carrying out their responsibilities. Although various courses and training opportunities are already available for members of the University Council, Faculty Councils, and Programme Committees, awareness of and participation in these opportunities remain limited, particularly within decentralized representative bodies.

DAS therefore advocates increasing the visibility and accessibility of these training opportunities. In addition, DAS calls for centrally organized training programs for Faculty Councils and Programme Committees, particularly in the areas of legislation and regulations, finance, and educational quality, to further strengthen the effectiveness of representative bodies.

## 5. Inclusivity

### 5.1 Kick-In

In the past academic year, several associations were once again denied the opportunity to register as introduction groups during the Kick-In. DAS considers this an unacceptable development that must not be repeated. Excluding (sports) associations goes against the fundamental principles of the university. Every incoming student has the right to become acquainted with all aspects of student life in Enschede during the Kick-In. Excluding part of the association landscape does not align with this principle. Sports, culture, and social activities are also important for students' well-being and contribute to a social safety net, which has positive long-term effects. DAS aims to work towards a suitable solution in which all aspects of student life are represented during the Kick-In, ensuring that every student can find a place within the association landscape that suits them.

In addition, major changes are being implemented this and next academic year regarding the Kick-In and its structure. It is important that all students continue to have the space to find their place within the University of Twente and to become acquainted with all facets of student life in Enschede. Decision-making and the underlying reasoning must be communicated transparently and in full, so that this opportunity remains accessible to every type of student.

### 5.2 Community feeling on the UT

DAS believes that a strong feeling of community is beneficial for students in the university. Everyone should feel at home at the University of Twente, with a shared spirit in which connection and inclusion are central. While integration is often mainly linked to language policy, DAS believes the issue goes further than that. It is about bringing all students together within the university community.

True integration can emerge when people understand each other and are open to each other's different backgrounds and cultures. At the same time, it is essential that everyone can find their place within this community, where both students and staff can develop in a way that suits them in a safe environment. The community should be motivating and welcoming, and a place where people feel proud to be part of the University of Twente.

### 5.3 Maintaining English-language information provision

As of 1 January 2025, both Dutch and English are official languages at the University of Twente. While this is desirable for certain programmes and forms of communication, it is important that reports relevant to other study programmes, representative councils, students, or lecturers remain available in English as well. This ensures that they are accessible to everyone and that transparency is maintained.

## 3 Well-being

Student life is very busy. In addition to their mandatory studies, we at DAS, on this entrepreneurial university campus, also focus heavily on extracurricular activities. Increased pressure due to the financial situation of many students, combined with the wide range of associations, has led many students to push their limits. Moreover, more and more students are seeking help for their mental health issues. DAS believes that the university must safeguard the well-being of its students and do everything it can to ensure that students feel at home wherever that is not yet the case.

### 5.1 Student Psychologist

Student well-being is a key pillar within the university. In today's society, it is essential to pay more attention to this, as more and more students are struggling with mental health problems. Many students experience high academic pressure, stress due to their financial situation, and the challenge of combining their studies with a job, sports, or extracurricular activities.

One solution could be to offer affordable, professional help through a student psychologist. Although this help is already available at the university, in practice it often proves insufficient. Students often have to wait weeks for an appointment, are entitled to only five sessions, and due to capacity issues, the sessions are often short and lack depth. So while help exists, the question remains whether it truly meets students' needs.

The shortage of psychologists has negative consequences for student well-being. DAS recognizes the importance of expanding support for mental health issues but also wants to create more awareness for prevention. This could be done through mental health campaigns and training sessions. Additionally, study advisors could be deployed more frequently, and clear communication is needed about what a student psychologist and a study advisor can and cannot offer. This would help identify signals earlier and provide appropriate help more quickly.

Furthermore, alternative options should be explored to support students with mental health issues, especially since the current demand exceeds what student psychologists can provide. It is important to respect students' privacy in this process, as this is often appreciated in conversations with a student psychologist.

### 5.2 Mental Health Awareness Campaigns

In recent years, many awareness campaigns have been conducted at UT regarding student mental health. In today's society, this remains essential. DAS therefore believes it is important that such campaigns continue, so that students remain aware of possible solutions for their mental health problems.

### 5.3 Healthcare on Campus

In recent years, several issues have come to light regarding the campus general practitioner. Due to the severe shortage of GPs in Enschede and the requirement to be registered with a

GP in the municipality where you live, many students have little to no choice and are almost entirely dependent on the campus GP. Precisely because students have limited options, it is all the more important that the quality of healthcare on campus is guaranteed. Students must feel safe, heard, and taken seriously by their GP. They must also be able to trust that the care is professional and adequate—something that unfortunately is not always the case.

DAS therefore believes it is of great importance that an independent investigation (separate from the campus GP) is launched into the quality of healthcare on campus and student satisfaction with these services. Campus healthcare appears to be significantly lagging behind national standards.

## 4 Facilities

The university offers essential facilities and services, however, the maintenance and development of these are under pressure. To remain sustainable, it is important that the university continues to innovate and takes a critical look at the optimization of the maintenance of its own facilities.

### Improved and centralized communication

The communication between the UT and its students can be a lot better. A lot of information is hard to find; Regulations and documents often have to be searched for on different sites with specific search terms.

DAS understands that the route to this information seems logical to employees, but students often do not exactly know where and/or what to look for. Also, the use of abbreviations can be difficult for new students who do not yet know them. It therefore seems logical to DAS if the UT investigates this together with a working group consisting of students to give each other insight into this information process in order to improve communication.

### Sports and Culture

In recent years, the costs for practicing sports and culture at the university have risen significantly. A diverse and accessible offer of sports and culture is fundamental to the UT identity. Sports and Culture contribute greatly to the development and well being of both students and employees. According to DAS, it is therefore essential that this sector is maintained in times of increasing study pressure and budget cuts.

Despite the increasing costs for students, DAS increasingly hears worrying feedback about the facilities from the students. Frequently used outdoor accommodations are neglected and poorly maintained by the UT, such as the tennis courts and the UTrack among others, which are characteristic of the UT. This is in contrast to the increase in costs for the student to make use of these facilities. Moreover, financial policy like this is destructive; negligent or postponed maintenance on these facilities inevitably leads to higher repair or replacement costs later. On top of this, complaints are often reported directly to the utilizing associations, which themselves cannot exert influence on the maintenance. When these complaints are reported to the UT, direct action rarely follows.

### Student housing

DAS is increasingly worried about the student housing on the campus, with the failure of heating in the middle of the winter as a low point. Also, the incidents of falling ceiling tiles in the sports center and the Waaier do not belong at the UT. These kinds of incidents lower student well being and even general living conditions. We at DAS believe that student housing should not be cut back on, especially in times of financial difficulty. Sustainable maintenance and investments can ensure that students get a real feeling of home on the campus.

## 9. Sustainability

Our university is the most entrepreneurial university in the Netherlands, and we generally approach issues with a focus on societal impact. Sustainability is a theme that aligns closely with this perspective, but it currently receives insufficient attention. DAS believes that the University of Twente must not lose sight of this issue, even in challenging times, and should develop a stronger and more centralized sustainability policy.

### 7.1 Better Communication and Policy on the UT

Currently, the university is not sufficiently transparent about the progress of its sustainability policy. Although it is communicated that efforts are being made toward sustainable solutions, concrete results and clear insight into progress are often lacking. DAS therefore believes that the university should communicate more clearly about the actions being taken, the goals being pursued, and the results achieved. This would make it easier to understand what is working, enable more effective evaluation, and help the UT community understand how they can contribute themselves. It is also important that sustainability policy remains a priority, even in challenging times.

### 7.2 Utilizing students' expertise and initiatives

Our university is rich in knowledge and expertise across a wide range of disciplines that can be used to tackle sustainability challenges. DAS believes that the skills and knowledge of students should be utilized more often and more effectively in improving the university itself. This is not only valuable and educational for students, but also beneficial to the university. Ideally, DAS would like to see this approach of integrating student expertise into university policy applied more broadly, not only in the area of sustainability.

Students are already making significant efforts to make their own environments more sustainable. One example is the Pakkerij, which is eager to become more sustainable but currently receives 100% non-renewable electricity from the university. The university should encourage sustainable initiatives and actively support students in their efforts of improving sustainability.

## 5 Politics

More and more often, The Hague determines what our education looks like. Policy decisions regarding student financing, accessibility, and quality of education have a direct impact on students. DAS closely monitors these developments and continues to advocate for the interests of Twente students, especially when national regulations put pressure on the freedom to study.

### 8.1 Critical Reflection on Partnerships

As a university, it is important to continuously reflect critically on existing partnerships and whether they still align with the current spirit of the times. DAS does not believe in blindly severing ties with certain types of companies or universities, but does believe it is important to continuously assess whether all collaborations still align with the university's values and standards.

### 8.2 Investing Public Funds in Private Activities

The government is pushing for market-based or cost-covering rates for services such as sports and culture. Although this is still tolerated for now, DAS views this development with concern. For us, sports and culture are not commercial services, but a fundamental part of student life and the identity of the UT.

Sports and culture contribute to the well-being and personal growth of both students and staff. Precisely because these activities are accessible to everyone, they make UT a special place. A shift toward market-based or cost-covering rates would mean that participation becomes less self-evident or even unattainable for many students. That is why we urge UT to actively and appropriately oppose these developments.

### 8.3 Balanced Internationalisation Act

The Balanced Internationalisation Act focuses on regulating the number of international students. At DAS, we value the contribution of international students to the quality and diversity of UT. We are concerned that the law unnecessarily restricts international openness and the range of educational offerings.

For a technical university like UT, internationalisation is indispensable. That is why we believe the university must retain the space to grow responsibly and invest in proper support and housing. Internationalisation must be preserved wherever it contributes to a strong, inclusive campus. DAS stands for an international UT where students from all over the world can thrive.