



university of
 groningen

faculty of economics
 and business

Honours Bachelor Programme Faculty of Economics and Business (HB-FEB)

Programme for Academic Year 2023 - 2024

Coordinators:
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1. The Honours College and the Honours Bachelor Programme

Since its founding in 2009, the Honours College of the University of Groningen gives motivated students the opportunity to extend their studies beyond their regular degree programmes by following additional interdisciplinary courses and activities. Each year first-year bachelor students from all faculties of the University may apply to join the Honours College. If they are admitted, they can follow an honours bachelor degree programme as an additional study programme on top of their regular one.

The specific honours bachelor degree programme for bachelor students of the Faculty of Economics & Business (FEB) is called the FEB Honours Bachelor (HB-FEB). The HB-FEB is organised jointly by the FEB and the Honours College. The programme is open to students from all bachelor degree programmes of the Faculty, who can apply following the procedure outlined in Section 2 under the heading "Selection Procedure and Criteria."

What is the Honours Bachelor Programme?

The aim of the honours bachelor programme is to encourage students to pursue their broader interests beyond their regular degree programme and to further develop their personal and professional skills. To this end, participating students follow a sequence of specialised courses and activities at the FEB that allow them to deepen their knowledge of their study area. In addition to that, they follow several broader courses and workshops offered by other faculties of the University, which introduce them to other areas of study, beyond economics and business. Moreover, students are involved in various activities, organised by the Honours College, which are focused on stimulating their interdisciplinary thinking and sharpening their set of skills.

The HB-FEB Programme is organised jointly by the FEB and the Honours College. The FEB is in charge of the deepening part of the programme, while the Honours College is in charge of the broadening part. The deepening part of the programme is the same for all participating FEB students from the different regular bachelor degree programmes. For the broadening part of the programme students choose different courses within the options offered by the Honours College.

Once admitted in the Honours College, FEB bachelor students will have to complete an additional 30 EC's on top of the standard 180 EC's of their regular bachelor programme. Admitted students start with the programme in Semester 2.2 of their first year of studies and finish it, together with their regular programme, at the end of their third year of studies. The programme does not involve any additional costs. Honours courses and activities are also planned in such a way so that they do not conflict with the students' regular coursework.

Why follow the Honours Bachelor Programme?

Following the Honours Bachelor Programme provides you with further opportunities to prepare for your next step after completing your bachelor studies, whether this involves continuing with a master's degree programme or trying your might in the job market. The different components of the Honours Bachelor Programme will allow you to both expand your knowledge of your subject area and explore your talents in areas that extend beyond that.

The courses, workshops and activities of the Programme will facilitate the development of important research and professional skills. They will introduce you to more advanced material than your regular courses, help you sharpen your critical thinking and learn to work more independently. You will have first-hand experiences in conducting and analysing state-of-the-art research by executing small and large-scale research projects on your own and under the supervision of FEB researchers. Honours classes are also offered in smaller groups and students tend to get more individual attention from their instructors.

In addition to that, the programme will offer you many opportunities to interact more closely with faculty members as well as honours students from the FEB and all other faculties of the University. This should provide you with different ways to engage with a diverse range of perspectives, enrich your own educational experience and excel academically. Furthermore, as part of the programme you will have the option to participate in different projects aimed at analysing major societal and scientific challenges from different angles and get involved in various student-led initiatives.

Upon the completion of your study programme, your status as an honours bachelor student will be formally recognized with an honours certificate attached to your diploma. This certificate is a title that you can formally include on your CV and can improve the chances of your admission into master's programmes.

2. Selection Procedure and Criteria

Who can apply?

In principle, all FEB bachelor students can apply to participate in the Honours Bachelor programme. However, there are some minimal requirements in order for students to be eligible for admission to the programme. These are the following:

- a) You should be formally registered as a student in the first year of a bachelor's degree programme at one of the faculties of the University of Groningen.
- b) You should be progressing in your studies at a satisfactory rate, having already completed 80% of your first semester course credits.
- c) You should have obtained good results in the first course semester with a weighted grade point average of 7 or above.

- d) You should have a good command of the English language in terms of reading, writing and speaking.
- e) You should be able to convincingly explain your motivation and suitability for the programme.

Admission to the Honours College requires a good level of English proficiency, as all courses and activities are conducted in English. Students following an English-language bachelor programme are considered to automatically satisfy this requirement. Students following a Dutch-language bachelor programme can document their English proficiency either by having a grade of 6 or higher in their secondary school diploma or by providing any other certificate indicating that they have achieved a comparable level.

First-year students of the Faculty who are performing well in their studies after the first semester and are on track to meet the above requirements will be receiving an invitation letter to submit an application in the beginning of the second semester. Having received an invitation letter to apply for the Honours Bachelor programme, however, is not necessary in order to submit an application. Any student who wants to apply for the programme and thinks that satisfies the selection criteria is encouraged to apply.

All student applications will be reviewed and evaluated in the same way independently of whether they received an invitation or not to apply. Students who do not meet the above-mentioned minimum requirements will have to clarify that in their application and provide an explanation.

Application Process and Required Documents

If you would like to be considered for admission to the Honour Bachelor programme, you need to submit an online application by filling the application form prior to the application deadline, which is typically in the beginning of March of every academic year. As part of the application form you need to provide the following information:

- a short curriculum vitae,
- some basic information about your studies and your progress in your degree programme,
- an overview of all your exam results and course grades in your bachelor degree programme available until the application date, including intermediate grades. In addition to that, you can optionally submit a transcript of records from your secondary education or your high school diploma.
- A motivation for applying in the form of short responses to the following three questions:
 - a) What aspects of the programme attract you the most?
 - b) What could be your contribution to the programme?
 - c) When did you last challenge yourself to get outside your comfort zone?

- At least one personal reference letter from a qualified expert, such as a high school teacher or a (former) employer demonstrating your suitability for the programme. Ideally, that letter should be written in English. If not possible, you can submit a translation.

In addition to the required reference letter from a qualified expert, it is allowed to ask staff members from your faculty to serve as a second reference for your application. This person will not have to write a formal recommendation letter. Instead, after receiving their consent, you can provide their name and contact information as part of your application. The Honours College can contact that staff member directly, if necessary, for additional information regarding your application.

More information about how to apply for the programme, the link to the application form and the current application deadline can be found on the Honours College website:

www.rug.nl/education/honours-college/bachelor-programme/applicationprocedure-deadlines

Selection Procedure

The selection of all students who are admitted to the Honours Bachelor programme is made centrally by the Admissions Board of the Honours College for the whole University. The admission decisions of the Board are formally made after a careful assessment of the application material of each student considering both their academic performance as well as their personal motivation, and to what extent those are in line with the criteria stated above.

After submitting their application material, student applicants will have follow-up communications with the FEB programme coordinators, who review their application material and their eligibility. The typical steps in the procedure are the following:

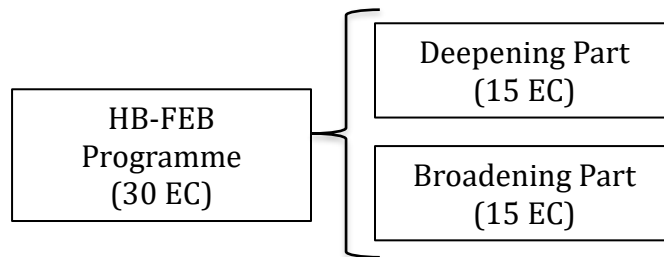
1. Within a short period after the application deadline it will be decided whether you are eligible for the next round in the procedure based on your submitted application.
2. If you are not selected for the next round, you will be informed as soon as possible.
3. If you are selected for the next round, you will be notified about the next steps. This will involve submitting a short video to present yourself and your motivation for applying.
4. As the number of positions in the Honours Bachelor programme available for FEB students is limited to about 50 per cohort, in case there are too many qualified applicants the allocation of positions may need to be made based on a lottery.

Soon after finishing the selection procedure, we will let you know whether you have been admitted to the Honours College. This will be happening before the official start of the Honours Bachelor programme, which will be taking place in early April with a welcoming ceremony organised by the Honours College in the Academy Building.

3. Programme Description

FEB bachelor students who are admitted by the Honours College start with their HB-FEB Programme in block 2.2 of the first year of their studies. The program consists of two parts, a deepening part offered by the FEB and a broadening part offered by the Honours College. Together the two parts involve 30 ECs with the deepening part making up for 15 ECs and the broadening part for 15 ECs, as highlighted in Figure 1 below.

Figure 1. The Two Parts of the HB-FEB Programme



Here we provide a brief outline of the courses involved in the deepening and broadening parts of the programme. More details about each of these courses can be found at the University course catalogue (Ocasys).

3.1 The Deepening Part of the Programme

The deepening part of the programme consists of a sequence of dedicated courses and activities offered solely for honours students of the FEB. These courses provide a more in-depth treatment of topics covered in regular bachelor courses and related more closely to the current research frontier in economics and business. Jointly, these courses and activities correspond to 15 additional ECs:

A. Honours Horizons (1 EC):

This course is designed to acquaint students with scientific research and its role in tackling broader societal challenges. By engaging in a number of individual or group activities students will explore open research questions in economics and business, and learn to present research insights to a wider audience.

B. Honours Research Seminar I (5 EC):

This is the first in-depth seminar course which introduces students to research methods in the context of topics already covered in their regular bachelor courses in economics and

business. The focus is on how to use quantitative data and modelling to answer research questions.

C. Honours Research Seminar II (5 EC):

This is the second in-depth seminar course which introduces students to research methods in the context of topics already covered in their regular bachelor courses in economics and business. The focus of this course is how to compose and present original research proposals.

D. Honours Research Practical (2 EC):

Students are paired with a FEB researcher and participate in an ongoing research project over the course of one semester. The matching of students with researchers is based, to the extent possible, on expressed preferences for a specific topic or supervisor.

In their third year, students have a choice between the following two courses:

E. Honours Research Practical Extension (2 EC):

After successfully completing the Honours Research Practical course for 3EC, students have the option to continue their involvement in the research project of their supervisor over another semester for an additional 2 EC to gain more hands-on knowledge about how to conduct research.

F. Honours Professionalization Seminar (2 EC):

This course aims to bridge the connection between established knowledge from research and applications of that knowledge in practice. The course is also designed to help students strengthen their professional development and help them practice important skills in a real-world context ahead of the completion of their bachelor studies.

3.2 The Broadening Part of the Programme

The broadening part of the programme consists of courses and activities offered by the Honours College for all honours students of the University. The broadening courses extend beyond economics and business, and allow participating students to broaden their knowledge in other areas of study as well as to develop different personal and professional skills such as writing or debating in an interdisciplinary academic context. Jointly, these courses and activities correspond to 15 additional ECs.

A. Broadening Part Introduction (1 EC):

The introduction to the broadening part of the programme involves a series of events where honours students learn about the interdisciplinary nature of the program and engage in various activities to practice working in diverse teams. These workshops take place in various

forms during the first blocks of the programme and aim to prepare students for subsequent courses in the curriculum.

B. Professional Life Skill Modules I & II (2 EC each):

In these modules honours students learn and practice various skills, which contribute to their personal and professional development. Different modules are focused on different skills, such as debating or academic writing. Students can select which modules to follow based on their reported preferences. Each module corresponds to 2 EC. The most recent list of skill modules is available on Ocasys.

C. Broadening Module (5 EC):

Every year, each of the faculties of the University offers one or more broadening modules, which provide an overview of specific knowledge areas covered by each faculty and also relate to current societal affairs. Students can choose to follow one of these modules based on their reported preferences. The most recent list of broadening modules is available on Ocasys.

D. Summer School + Atelier (5 EC):

After completing their broadening module, honours students will follow a summer school programme and work on a related group project in the associated atelier. As part of the project students will learn how to approach a problem relevant to science or society from different perspectives and how to find their own way of dealing with it, with vision and an eye to the future.

E. Honours Festival (0 EC):

The Honours Festival is a yearly event, open to the general public, which takes place before the Honours Graduation Ceremony. All third- year honours students have to participate in that event and present their atelier projects in various interactive activities.

Table 1. Overview of the HB-FEB Program

		Year 1				Year 2				Year 3			
		I.a	I.b	II.a	II.b	I.a	I.b	II.a	II.b	I.a	I.b	II.a	II.b
Deepening Part (15 EC)	Honours Horizons (1 EC)												
	Honours Research Seminar I (5 EC)												
	Honours Research Seminar II (5 EC)												
	Honours Research Practical (2 EC)												
	Research Practical Extension (2 EC)												
	Honours Professionalization Seminar (2 EC)												
Broadening Part (15 EC)	Broadening Part Introduction (1 EC)												
	Life Skills Module I (2 EC)												
	Life Skills Module II (2 EC)												
	Broadening Module (5 EC)												
	Summer + Atelier (5 EC)												
	Honours Festival (0 EC)												

Choice among Two Courses

Choice among Different Modules

- Mandatory Deepening Courses
- Mandatory Broadening Courses
- Choice among Two Courses
- Choice among Different Modules

3.3 Making Choices among Courses

While some of the above courses are mandatory and students need to take them in order to complete the Honours Bachelor programme, in many cases there is room to choose courses among alternatives. This is particularly the case with the different professional and life skill modules and broadening modules where students will be able to choose which particular course to follow among a list of available courses based on their submitted preferences. Within the deepening part, there is also the option to choose in the third year whether to follow the Honours Professionalization Seminar or to complete the Honours Research Practical Extension or even to do both courses.

In the latter case the students need to make this choice at the end of their second year in the program, after having largely completed the Honours Research Practical course. This should allow students to make this choice after having had some first experience working with their supervisor on their research project. By extending their research practical, the students will be able to fully engage in a research project related to their interests, which could provide the foundations for a bachelor thesis or a co-authored research paper. This will be particularly useful for students who are considering following a career in academia or policy and who would be interested in applying for a research master programme. Students who are interested in doing the extended practical should preferably indicate that early on so that they can make plans with their supervisor to work on a more extensive research project from the start.

Table 1 above presents a schematic overview of the HB-FEB Programme with the full course structure and timeline. It also indicates the courses for which there is a choice.

4. Additional Information

Teaching and Examination Regulations

The HB-FEB Programme is subject to the Teaching and Examination Regulations of the Honours College of the University of Groningen. These requirements are monitored by the Board of Examiners of the Honours College.

Good Standing Requirement

Students following the honours programme are required to maintain a good standing in their regular bachelor programmes. Failure to do so may lead to dismissal from the Honours Bachelor programme.

Special Facilities for Honours students

The Honours College normally provides all honours students with additional options in terms of study space, meeting rooms and computer facilities, which they can use if needed.

Costs of Participation

There are no extra tuition fees for following the HB-FEB programme. However, admitted students are expected to cover out of their own pocket any travel costs and additional material costs. For students that take the international trip for their summer or winter school programme, there may

be options to cover part of the expenses of the trip. In exceptional circumstances, where financial limitations may prevent a student from following specific activities of the HB-FEB programme, the Honours College could help the student to find a solution for this problem.

Honours Certificate

Students who complete the HB-FEB programme receive a special honours certificate attached to their regular degree. Students admitted to the programme who do not finish the regular degree will not receive this certificate, but only a transcript of the HB-FEB courses in which the student has participated.

5. Contact Information

The FEB Honours Bachelor programme is coordinated by:

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Prof. Dr. Milena Nikolova

The Research Practical and the Honours Portfolio activities are coordinated by:

Dr. Gwenny Ruël

Administrative support for the programme is provided by:

Ms. Hanneke Tamling

For inquiries or further information regarding the programme, you can send an email to:

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