



CBE 23003319 Admission to degree programme

DECISION

in the matter of A., hereinafter also referred to as the Appellant,

and

the Admissions Team on behalf of the Admissions Board of the Research Master's degree programme Islands and Sustainability Erasmus Mundus (ISLANDS) of the Faculty of Spatial Sciences, hereinafter also referred to as the Defence,

regarding the decision taken by the Defence on 29 March 2023.

I. Description of the disputed decision

The decision taken by the Defence on 29 March 2023 in which the Appellant was informed that he cannot be admitted to the Master's degree programme Islands and Sustainability Erasmus Mundus (ISLANDS) at the Faculty of Spatial Sciences.

II. The hearing

The appeal was heard in open court on Thursday 29 June 2023, where Appellant did not appear and sent no notice, and where the Defence appeared, represented by V., admissions officer.

III. Origin and course of the proceedings

The Appellant submitted a request for admission to the Master's degree programme Island of Sustainability Erasmus Mundus (ISLANDS) of the Faculty of spatial Sciences. His request was denied in a decision dated 29 March 2023.

On 31 March 2023, the Appellant appealed against this decision to the Board of Appeal for Examinations via CLRS. No settlement meeting was held. However, the Defence did send an explanation of the disputed decision on 1 May 2023, after which the appeal was heard by the Board of Appeal on 29 June 2023.

IV. The parties' positions

The Appellant's position, as set down in the appeal, can be summarized as follows. The Appellant is aware that the Bachelor's degree certificate obtained by him, is not equivalent in level to the degree certificate necessary to be admitted to the degree programme. However, he is extremely motivated and highly qualified to pursue the ISLANDS programme. The Appellant's main goal in recent years has been to follow this programme, as the Gambia does not currently have any specialists in this field, which the country does need in the future.

Finally, the Appellant requests the Board to reverse the contested decision and still grant him admission to the ISLANDS programme.

The Defence defended itself as follows in the statement of defence and at the hearing. The admission requirements for the ISLANDS Master's degree programme are clear and are listed on the University of Groningen website and on the website of the ISLANDS programme itself. The Defence uses several sources to compare and thereby assess prior degrees: Nuffic, Eccetis (previously: Naric), and CEP. According to these sources, the level of the by the Appellant's degree gained degree certificates at the University of Gambia is not equivalent to a Dutch Bachelor's degree. However, this is one of the admission requirements. The Defence therefore concludes that it had no other choice but to deny the Appellant admission to the ISLANDS Master's degree programme.

The Defence requested that the Appellant's appeal be declared unfounded.



V. Review

The Board of Appeal points out that the content of the appeal must be tested against Article 7.61.2 of the Higher Education and Research Act (WHW). The question is whether the disputed decision was made in all fairness. A content-related assessment falls outside this assessment framework.

The admission requirements for the ISLANDS Master's degree programme of the Faculty of spatial Sciences are clear and cognizable and are set out on the UG website as well as on the website of the ISLANDS degree programme itself, as well as in the degree programme's OER. The Defence has made it sufficiently plausible that the level of the degree programmes followed by the Appellant are insufficient to qualify for admission. The three sources used, Nuffic, Ecctis, and CEP, all indicate that the certificate obtained by the appellant is not equivalent in level to a bachelor's degree obtained from a Dutch research university. However, this is one of the admission requirements.

The appellant's motivation for wishing to pursue this degree programme is positive in essence, but cannot lead to admission.

The Board judges that the Defence's decision is based on proper grounds. The contested decision can therefore be upheld.

VI. Decision

The Board of Appeal for Examinations declares the Appellant's appeal unfounded.

A Thus established 4 July 2023 by Dr E. van Wolde, Chair, Prof. M.H. ten Wolde and S.P.M. van der Linden members, in the presence of Ms M.E.A. Donkersloot, Secretary.

Chair

Secretary

In accordance with the General Administrative Law Act and Article 7.66 of the Higher Education and Research Act (WHW, Wet op het Hoger onderwijs en Wetenschappelijk onderzoek), the Appellant has the right to lodge an appeal against this decision to the national Higher Education Appeals Tribunal (CBHO, College van Beroep voor het Hoger Onderwijs), P.O Box 16137, 2500 CN The Hague, within six weeks of the decision being sent.