

Employers Meeting

Date: Thursday, 13 February

Location: Academy of Architecture, Amsterdam

Are you aware of the climate curriculum at the Academy? Does your office have a climate curriculum?

- Many employers were unaware that the Academy's curriculum focuses on climate change and biodiversity.
- Offices do not have a structured climate curriculum but recognize its growing importance in practice.

For employers: Who are you / what's your office called / are there students from academy are working for you? What's their function?

- Students perform similar tasks to colleagues at their level.
- Employers aim to expose students to projects of different scales and topics.
- Mixed opinions on student wages:
 - Some employers do not pay first-year students, citing uncertainty about skill level (common in Italy).
 - Others emphasize paying students fairly to build confidence.
 - Question raised about legality—Academy clarified that students, having a bachelor's degree, should be paid according to the labor agreement (CAO).

How does the employer/mentor help their student to get the education for the BEP?

- Employers discuss with students what is needed for BEP certification.
- Some students receive necessary experience naturally through projects.
- Employers expect students to take responsibility for their own learning.

How's the work environment and levels of stress at the office? How does your office promote well-being of employees and work-life balance?

- Some students have flexible hours (e.g., longer days followed by shorter ones).
- Employers notice fewer students taking time off before deadlines than in the past.
- Academy working on providing more space for rest, but deadlines remain unchanged.
- Employers and students should align expectations by sharing deadlines in advance.

Why are students sometimes offered three part-time contracts only to be let go afterward?

- Small offices find hiring full-time students financially risky.
- Difficulty in finding and retaining skilled employees.
- Challenge in maintaining knowledge within the office when students leave.

What do employers expect from Academy students?

- High responsibility from the start: engage with stakeholders, develop an entrepreneurial mindset.
- Regular feedback through interventions and coaching programs.

- Students should take initiative and responsibility.
- Employers appreciate students' technical knowledge.

What do employers expect from the Academy?

- More clarity on employer responsibilities, especially when office staff changes.
- Prefer practice coach visits, even to distant offices.
- Language barrier is an issue; Dutch lessons available but not always accessible for students.
- Some employers feel Academy demands flexibility from students/employers but does not reciprocate.
 - Example: Students cannot miss lessons, but Academy does not allow flexibility for employer-requested participation events.
 - Academy responded that planning ahead is the student's responsibility, but last-minute schedule changes by teachers make this difficult.
- Request for training in calculations for reused materials.
 - Academy: Previously offered software course had low interest. Could reconsider if demand increases.
- Interest in a centralized map showing all architectural plans in the Netherlands.
- Request for an elective course in entrepreneurship to help students transition into full-time work.

Are employers and students interested in a job fair?

- Employers react positive on the idea

Alternative ideas

- Idea proposed: Collaboration between 3–4 offices for student rotations to cover all BEP requirements.
 - Benefits: Reduces stress for students, retains knowledge within offices, increases chances of long-term employment.
 - Academy supports but cannot take ownership—willing to facilitate discussions.
 - Positive reactions from both employers and students.