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Publishing as Pedagogy: Mapping Student Journals in the Netherlands

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Publishing as Pedagogy: Mapping Student Journals in the Netherlands

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Abstract

Student-run academic journals represent an important but underexplored dimension of scholarly communication, offering early-career scholars opportunities to engage with editorial processes, peer review, and academic publishing. While existing research has documented the pedagogical and professional benefits of student publishing in North American and UK contexts, the landscape of student-led journals in European higher education remains largely unmapped. This thesis addresses this gap by providing the first systematic examination of student-run publications in the Netherlands.

Drawing on desk research, institutional outreach, and twenty-five qualitative interviews with student editors and faculty supervisors, this study maps the ecosystem of Dutch student journals and analyses how they operate, what purposes they serve, and what challenges they face. The research reveals a highly diverse landscape in which publications range from rigorously peer-reviewed academic journals to hybrid formats combining scholarly and creative content, to student magazines focused on community engagement. Despite this heterogeneity, common patterns emerge: nearly all journals operate on volunteer student labour with minimal institutional support, creating shared vulnerabilities around funding, continuity, and technical capacity. The findings demonstrate that Dutch student journals serve multiple overlapping purposes (pedagogical, social, platform-related, and professional) simultaneously, with participants gaining valuable skills in editing, peer review, and scholarly communication. However, journals face continuous challenges including financial uncertainty, knowledge loss through editorial turnover, recruitment difficulties, and limited institutional recognition.

This thesis contributes to scholarship on student publishing by documenting a national ecosystem previously absent from academic literature and developing a typology that captures diverse publication models. The research concludes that while student publishing in the Netherlands thrives through student enthusiasm and commitment, its long-term sustainability requires greater institutional recognition and support.

Keywords: student journals, scholarly communication, academic publishing, Netherlands, higher education

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Introduction

Understanding the world of academic publishing is one of the essential skills an early-career scholar can acquire for a successful academic career. It involves navigating issues such as the prestige associated with different publishers, different types of contributions and audiences, communication with editors, and the whole process of responding to a call for papers. Sooner or later, anyone who intends to remain in academia must participate in this process – first as an author, and, often later, an editor, reviewer, or even editor-in-chief of an academic journal.

But what if there was a cheat code – a way to familiarise yourself with the editorial and publishing process and enter the field already equipped with experience and insight? Student-run academic journals offer precisely such an opportunity. Run by graduate, and in some cases undergraduate, students, these journals provide a unique training ground that allows students to rehearse the full cycle of academic publishing, from reviewing submissions and communicating with authors, to copy-editing, layout, and dissemination.

However, reducing student journals to mere 'training grounds' for future academics would be to overlook the range of intellectual, creative, and organisational work they require. Many student journals publish high-quality research, including contributions from established scholars, and therefore occupy an ambiguous position between pedagogical initiative and legitimate scholarly outlet. Furthermore, freed from some of the constrains of conventional publishing, these journals often include creative formats, such as interviews, essays, reflections, and visual pieces, which further distinguish them from standard academic periodicals. In doing so, they push the boundaries of what scholarly communication can be, promoting experimentation and inclusivity.

My interest in this topic emerged through my experience as editor-in-chief of *TXT*, a student-run journal of the Book and Digital Media Studies programme of Leiden University. However, when I attempted to situate *TXT* within a broader national landscape, I found that while student journals have been widely discussed in academic literature, highlighting their benefits for professionalisation, skill development, and community building, there is little to no systematic research that examines their role in the Netherlands. This gap raises several questions. How widespread are student journals in Dutch higher education, and how are they organised in practice? What purposes do these journals serve for their participants and institutions? What challenges do they face in sustaining their operations? What forms of institutional support, if any, underpin their existence? And finally, what can the Dutch case tell us about the broader roles of student publishing in the contemporary academic landscape?

This thesis addresses these questions by mapping and analysing the ecosystem of student-run academic journals in the Netherlands. It attempts to understand how these journals are organised, what challenges they face, and how they are valued by the various stakeholders involved. Based on literature, desk research, and qualitative interviews with editors and faculty supervisors this research situates

Dutch student journals within global debates on the purposes and future of student-led academic publishing.

The thesis is structured into three main chapters, followed by a conclusion. The first chapter provides a review of relevant literature, situating student publications within broader discussions on scholarly communication and the advantages and disadvantages of such publishing. It traces how student-led publishing has been conceptualised in different disciplinary contexts and highlights key debates around legitimacy, pedagogy, and professionalisation. The second chapter turns to the Dutch context and provides an empirical mapping of student journals and magazines based on publicly available information, institutional records, and desk research. This chapter also develops a working typology of student publications as observed in practice. This mapped overview establishes the scope, diversity, and internal variation of Dutch student publishing and forms the empirical groundwork for the interview phase. The third chapter builds on this groundwork through qualitative interviews with editors and institutional stakeholders. These conversations explore how student-led publications are organised, how participants perceive their purpose and value, and how universities support, or fail to support, these initiatives.

Before proceeding further, a working definition is needed. In this thesis, student journals refer to publications primarily edited and produced by students (undergraduate, graduate, or PhD) that serve as platforms for academic or intellectual work. 'Student-led' means students hold key editorial positions and make main editorial decisions, though faculty might serve in advisory roles. This conceptualisation builds on Chapter 1's analysis of how literature characterises student journals, adopting an inclusive approach that recognises legitimacy as contextual rather than absolute.

Chapter 2 demonstrates that in the Dutch context, boundaries between academic journals and magazines are often fluid. While some publications fully mirror professional academic periodicals with formal peer review and scholarly articles, others adopt flexible formats combining academic essays with interviews, reflective writing, or creative pieces. Some abandon academic writing entirely, focusing on creative or journalistic content documenting student community life. All these publications familiarise students with editorial processes and scholarly communication, though to varying degrees and in different ways. This diversity shapes the analytical framework used throughout the thesis. Chapter 2 proposes a working typology of three forms: academic journals, which follow conventional scholarly structures; hybrid publications, which merge academic and non-academic content; and student magazines, which focus on creative content. This typology captures the range of student editorial practice in the Netherlands without imposing rigid boundaries. By recognising this diversity, the thesis reflects the full spectrum of student-led publishing while acknowledging that all these publications contribute differently to student development and academic community vitality.

This conceptual inclusivity shapes the analytical framework used throughout the thesis. Because of this diversity, this thesis adopts an inclusive conceptual approach that recognises a spectrum of student-led publishing rather than a single defining model. What is essential is that students serve as

primary editors and that the publication engages with academic or intellectual content in some form. Within this broad framework, Chapter 2 proposes a working typology of three forms observed in the Netherlands: academic journals, which follow conventional scholarly structures and often incorporate peer review; hybrid publications, which merge academic and non-academic content; and student magazines, which maintain a looser editorial framework but still engage closely with university life and disciplinary communities. This typology is not meant to establish boundaries but to capture the diversity of student editorial practice in the Netherlands. By recognising this existing diversity, this thesis attempts to reflect the full range of student-led publishing activities, while acknowledging that all these publications contribute, in different ways, to the development of students' editorial, organisational, and scholarly skills, as well as to the vitality of the academic communities they represent.

1. Literature Review

As scholarly communication has developed into a discipline in its own right, increasing attention has been paid to its various aspects and to the different stakeholders engaged in the field. While the majority of undergraduate and graduate students do not pursue careers in academia, for those who do, participation in scholarly communication becomes an important part of their professional development early on, as it familiarises them with research dissemination, peer review processes, and the conventions of their discipline. Consequently, growing attention has been directed toward the publishing activities of this group. Student-led publications represent one of the most common forms of engagement with the publishing world at early career stage, offering most students an accessible entry point without major barriers. The purpose of this chapter is to situate student-run journals within broader debates on scholarly publishing, professionalisation, and pedagogy, and to identify existing gaps in the research on this topic.

1.1 The Landscape of Academic Publishing and Early-Career Scholars

Academic publishing plays a central role in researchers' careers at every stage, functioning both as a mechanism for contributing to scholarly debates and as a site of professional socialisation where emerging scholars learn disciplinary norms and practices. Students are increasingly exposed to these practices during their studies, with the depth of engagement depending on their academic ambitions. While publication records matter for those considering academic careers, teaching, public engagement, and collaborative projects also contribute to professional development, creating multiple entry points into scholarly communities.

For students considering academic careers, early familiarity with scholarly communication can be advantageous. Academia remains competitive, shaped by 'publish or perish' culture – the pressure to maintain publication output for career advancement. This dynamic has been explored extensively: Teixeira da Silva and Nazarovets examine its impact on careers and well-being; Yang and others provide evidence on how institutional rules motivate publication efforts.[1] Early-career researchers are particularly affected by these pressures due to the competition they face at every step of their career-building process and the increasing emphasis on quantitative metrics, such as publication counts, citation indices, and journal impact factors. Recent studies highlight how these dynamics shape early career trajectories: Aprile, Ellem, and Lole examine how early career academics in Australian regional universities navigate institutional pressures while maintaining personal and community values; Fien

[1] Jaime A. Teixeira da Silva and Serhii Nazarovets, 'The publish or perish, publish and perish, publish then perish, and now retract and perish cultures in academia', *Naunyn-Schmiedeberg's Archives of Pharmacology*, (2025); Yang Bingyan, and others, 'Publish or Perish: Up-or-Out Rules and Research Performance of Universities', *China Economic Review*, 89 (2025).

and others discuss the heightened vulnerability of early career researchers during COVID-19; and Mutongoza investigates the negative consequences of publish or perish pressures, including bullying and exploitation of junior academics in a South African university.[2]

While this competitive context makes early engagement with publishing potentially valuable, the more fundamental challenge is that the publishing landscape itself is far from intuitive, and graduate students often lack the knowledge needed to navigate it effectively.[3] Getting an article published is not a straightforward process that is equally accessible to everyone – in academia, journals act as gatekeepers and editors decide whether a contribution is worthy of being seen.[4] Of course, the internet has changed this landscape, and technically anyone can make their work be seen by publishing it online, however, journals still carry a certain prestige which is essential for advancement in academia, and gaining access to that prestige remains an important part of the game.

This is where student-run publishing comes in. It offers students multiple opportunities: from having their paper be published to getting behind-the-scenes editorial experience that can help them in writing and refining their own work. Student journals demystify the whole process by providing a safe space for practice, where students can participate in different aspects of journal publishing through various roles – including editorial, reviewing, organisational, and practical tasks. Their number is also on the rise: Ng and others identify almost a tenfold increase in number of student-led STEM journals in North America from 1995 to 2015, and in Canada, an informal list combined by one of the university libraries includes more than 200 journals.[5] This expansion in the number of publications has led to increased attention to the topic, giving rise to various debates about quality and benefits of such publications.

1.2 Conceptualising Student-Run Publications

When approaching the topic of student-led publishing, one quickly realises just how diverse the landscape really is – ranging from journals that fully reproduce the practices of traditional academic

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[2] Kerry T. Aprile, Pammie Ellem and Lisa Lole, 'Publish, Perish, or Pursue? Early Career Academics' Perspectives on Demands for Research Productivity in Regional Universities', *Higher Education Research & Development*, 40.6 (2020), pp. 1131–45; Samantha Fien, and others, 'Early Career Researchers: Will They Perish Before They Publish?', *Nurse Author & Editor*, 32.1 (2022), pp. 1–8; Bonginkosi Hardy Mutongoza, 'Pressured to Perform: The Negative Consequences of the "Publish or Perish" Phenomenon among Junior Academics', *Scholarship of Teaching and Learning in the South*, 7.2 (2023), pp. 46–62.

[3] Timothy S. Rich, 'Publishing as a Graduate Student: A Quick and (Hopefully) Painless Guide to Establishing Yourself as a Scholar', *PS: Political Science & Politics*, 46.2 (2013), pp. 376–79 (p. 376).

[4] Peter Marcus Kristensen, 'Dividing Discipline: Structures of Communication in International Relations', *International Studies Review*, 14.1 (2012), pp. 32–50 (p. 33).

[5] Kelvin Ng, and others, 'Student-Run Academic Journals in STEM: A Growing Trend in Scholarly Communication', *Science Editor*, 24 October 2017, https://www.csescienceeditor.org/article/student-run-academic-journals-stem-growing-trend-scholarly-communication/ [accessed 3 November 2025]; Mariya Maistrovskaya, 'Barriers and Opportunities in the Discoverability and Indexing of Student-Led Academic Journals', *Journal of Librarianship and Scholarly Communication*, 12.1 (2024), pp. 1–32.

publishing, with double-blind peer review and desk rejections, to more creative formats that resemble magazines and include literary texts such as short stories and prose alongside academic essays and book reviews. Although most of the studies discussed in this literature review do not provide an explicit definition of student journals, they nevertheless describe recurring features. By synthesising these commonly cited elements, we can identify a set of shared characteristics that help form a working definition.

The first key characteristic would be an editorial board consisting mostly of students, who participate on a voluntary basis.[6] PhD students can also be part of the board alongside undergraduate and graduate students, however, they are usually in senior positions, overseeing the editorial workflow and mentoring junior editors.[7] Their presence may be a faculty's way of supervising the journal while also providing it with a certain level of academic legitimacy. For example, one of the most established indexes worldwide, *Directory of Open Access Journals* (DOAJ), has a specific requirement for student journals that want to be included – namely, to have an advisory board with at least two members holding a PhD or equivalent qualification.[8] In undergraduate journals, graduate students and postdoctoral scholars are also often used as expert reviewers, providing experienced and constructive feedback.[9]

Peer review of some kind is considered essential. Many adopt double-blind peer review via platforms such as Open Journal System (OJS), which facilitate the entire editorial process and increase quality of submissions.[10] Bendinskas, Caudill, and Melara go further, arguing that undergraduate research journals, like mainstream journals, 'differ in aims, scope, audience, etc., and many of the usual criteria (e.g., intended audience) may be used to select a journal appropriate for a particular venue. In our eyes, there is only one absolutely essential criterion that an undergraduate research journal should meet–peer review by experts in the field'.[11] This position treats expert-led peer review as the defining marker of scholarly legitimacy and professional respect. However, this criterion proves problematic when applied universally to student publications. As will be demonstrated in Chapter 2, many functioning and valued student journals in the Netherlands operate without formal external peer review. Arsenault, Heffernan, and Murphy describe an alternative approach: the editorial collective model of review, under which submissions are reviewed only by the members of the editorial board.[12]

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[6] Amelia C. Arsenault, Andrew Heffernan, and Michael P. A. Murphy, 'What Is the Role of Graduate Student Journals in the Publish-or-Perish Academy? Three Lessons from Three Editors-in-Chief', *International Studies*, 58.1 (2021), pp. 98–115 (p. 105).
[7] Evelyn Sun, and others, 'Development of a Peer-Reviewed Open-Access Undergraduate Research Journal', Journal of Microbiology & Biology Education, 21.2 (2020), pp. 1–7 (p. 3).
[8] Maistrovskaya, 'Barriers and Opportunities in the Discoverability and Indexing', p. 7.
[9] Sun and others, 'Development of a Peer-Reviewed Open-Access Undergraduate Research Journal, p. 3.
[10] Arsenault, Heffernan and Murphy, 'What Is the Role of Graduate Student Journals', p. 105–7.
[11] Kestutis G. Bendinskas, Lester Caudill, and Luis A. Melara Jr., 'The Case for Undergraduate Research Journals', *Bulletin of Mathematical Biology*, 82.8 (2020), pp. 1-6 (pp. 2-3).
[12] Arsenault, Heffernan and Murphy, 'What Is the Role of Graduate Student Journals', p. 105.

The underlaying pedagogical purpose of student journals is another quality widely understood as essential. These journals are conceptualised as spaces of learning where participants acquire publishing workflow and self-assessment skills, editorial experience, and other transferable competences that will be useful in their future careers.[13] As the journals occupy unique space between traditional journals and term papers, they provide a formative environment in which students can experiment with academic writing and peer review without the high stakes associated with professional publishing.[14] Cox and Kent refer to this aspect of student publishing as learning by doing, in which students not only gain the experience but also give back to the community in form of scholarly production.[15] However, conceptualising them solely within pedagogical framework would be reductive, as it overlooks the fully professional scale of activities involved in running such journals. By reproducing the standards of traditional academic publications, such as peer-review and indexing, student journals can also be seen as early entry points into fully professional publishing culture.

As a consequence of their more pedagogical nature, critics argue that student journals lack academic legitimacy and rigour, and that quality studies should instead be published in 'real' journals.[16] Student editors without any practical experience might not be able to provide meaningful feedback focused on analysis and argumentation, and may instead offer surface-level comments targeting grammatical and phrasing errors.[17] Some, however, believe that graduate students are among the best possible reviewers, as they are well versed in critical reading and have sufficient 'time, care, and attention' to compensate their lack of experience.[18]

1.3 Pedagogical and Professional Benefits of Student Publishing

The pedagogical benefits of engaging in student publishing projects have attracted considerable scholarly interest, as participation in such activities is associated with a range of skills, from editorial and self-assessment abilities to improved communication and interpersonal competence. Depending on the role within the publication's editorial board or committee, students gain behind-the-scenes insight into academic publishing and firsthand experience in editing, reviewing, and publication ethics.

Submitting a paper to a student editorial board can be highly beneficial not only for students actively engaged in editing and organisational processes, but also for authors – emerging academics,

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[13] Ibid p.109–10.
[14] Sun and others, 'Development of a Peer-Reviewed Open-Access Undergraduate Research Journal', p. 1.
[15] Michaelene Cox, and Jaimie M. Kent, 'Political Science Student Journals: What Students Publish and Why Student Publishing Matters', PS: Political Science & Politics, 51.4 (2018), pp. 804–10 (p. 804).
[16] Scott F. Gilbert, 'Points of View: Should Students Be Encouraged to Publish Their Research in Student-Run Publications?: A Case Against Undergraduate-Only Journal Publications', *Cell Biology Education*, 3.1 (2004 Spring), pp. 22–23 (p. 22).
[17] Arsenault, Heffernan and Murphy, 'What Is the Role of Graduate Student Journals', p. 103.
[18] Susan Perry, 'Who Do You Think You Are? Reading Authority and Book Reviewing', *Journal of Scholarly Publishing*, 50.1 (2018), pp. 12–15 (p. 13).

who otherwise receive feedback only from a professor in the form of grades and comments. Through communication with student editors and peer review, authors revise their article multiple times, addressing grammatical and syntactic errors, as well as improving structure of the paper, argumentation, and clarity of ideas, ensuring that their claims are well-supported with evidence and that the overall flow of the paper effectively conveys their intended message. Knowing that their work will be read not only by a professor, but also by their peers and potentially professionals in the field, motivates authors to excel, providing a sense of accomplishment beyond what a traditional term paper can offer.[19] The revision process deepens subject-matter understanding, sharpens analytical skills, and hones communication and analytical skills.[20] Having their work published also provides student authors with a public record of their work and resume credential that can help them during application for a PhD programs or jobs, potentially even inspiring them to pursue an academic career.[21] In some fields, having a peer-reviewed publication is considered a prerequisite for applications, increasing publishing pressure faced by students.[22] Finally, early authorship can boost later academic success, as students who publish before graduation are more likely to participate in research afterward.[23]

Benefits to student editors are also substantial and often the main motivation for applying to these positions. First of all, through intensive paper evaluation, students develop critical reading skills and gain familiarity with argumentation, academic style of writing, and citation standards.[24] Learning to provide fair and constructive feedback is another essential skill.[25] Being able to tactfully and precisely point out areas for improvement while suggesting possible solutions is rarely taught in classes and must be acquired through direct experience. Beyond editorial expertise, serving on an editorial board develops a variety of other marketable skills, including recruitment, delegation, team and time management, problem-solving, design, marketing, budgeting, and others.[26] These competencies are valuable both within and beyond academia. Finally, working closely with faculty advisors, peer reviewers, experienced authors, and peers from other faculties fosters mentorship relationships and

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[19] Sharon A. Barrios and Lori M. Weber, 'Beyond the Audience of One: Producing a Student Journal of Politics', *PS: Political Science & Politics*, 39.1 (2006), pp. 107–10 (p. 107).
[20] Cox and Kent, 'Political Science Student Journals', p. 805; Meye Bloothooft, Helena J. M. Pennings, and Marcel A. G. van der Heyden, 'The Utrecht University Honours Program Review Project: Example-Based Scientific Publishing Training Aimed at Bachelor Medical Students', *BMC Medical Education*, 24 (2024), pp. 1–12 (p. 8).
[21] Ibid.
[22] Timothy S. Rich, 'Publishing as a Graduate Student: A Quick and (Hopefully) Painless Guide to Establishing Yourself as a Scholar', *PS: Political Science & Politics*, 46.2 (2013), pp. 376–79 (p. 376).
[23] Cathelijn J. F. Waaijer, and others, 'Scientific Activity by Medical Students: The Relationship between Academic Publishing during Medical School and Publication Careers after Graduation', *Perspectives in Medical Education*, 8.4 (2019), pp. 223–29 (p. 228).
[24] Barrios and Weber, 'Beyond the Audience of One', p. 107.
[25] Ibid p. 107–8.
[26] Arsenault, Heffernan and Murphy, 'What Is the Role of Graduate Student Journals', p. 110.

introduces student editors to the academic community.[27] This involvement provides them with a support network and a sense of belonging, further enriching the educational experience.[28]

Published student journals benefit not only those involved in their creation but also readers and the broader peer community, who can view the journal's articles as examples of exemplary writing and model their own work on these submissions.[29] The wide range of topics presented can inspire the journal's audience, demonstrate diverse methodologies, expand disciplinary knowledge, and enhance student creativity.[30]

The term 'scholarly publishing literacy', originally formulated by Jeffery Beall and further explored by Zhao, refers to the set of skills, knowledge, and critical awareness required for researchers to navigate the scholarly publishing landscape effectively, including selecting appropriate publication venues, evaluating the credibility and quality of journals, understanding open access models, copyright and licensing issues, and applying bibliometric indicators to assess research impact.[31] Participation in student publications can help address the lack of curriculum on this topic, ensuring that students are well equipped for the publishing component of their future academic careers.[32]

1.4 Challenges and Critiques

As briefly mentioned above, student publications also face criticism. Concerns include the variable quality of student editors and peer review, increased workload and stress for both students and faculty, challenges in maintaining continuity across changing editorial boards, limited university funding, and the risk that articles published in journals excluded from most indexing platforms may be unknown outside of the student community and faculty of the university.

Despite the documented pedagogical and professional benefits of student-led journals, 'the value of graduate journals has remained a subject of scholarly debate' with critics emphasising the strain these project place on both students and supporting faculty members.[33] Gilbert, for example, in his extensive critique of student publications, argues that student journals can create unnecessary stress, as students and faculty may feel compelled to complete articles quickly to meet journal deadlines, and early publishing may create competition among students that start publishing and those who do not.[34]

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[27] Mack Mariani, and others, 'Promoting Student Learning and Scholarship through Undergraduate Research Journals', *PS: Political Science & Politics*, 46.4 (2013), pp. 830–35 (p. 831).
[28] Cox and Kent, 'Political Science Student Journals', p. 805.
[29] Barrios and Weber, 'Beyond the Audience of One', p. 108.
[30] Ibid.
[31] Zhao Linlin, 'Riding the Wave of Open Access: Providing Library Research Support for Scholarly Publishing Literacy', *Australian Academic & Research Libraries*, 45.1 (2014), pp. 3–18 (p. 4).
[32] Sarah Hare, 'Library Publishers as Educators: Crafting Curriculum for Undergraduate Research Journals', *Journal of Librarianship and Scholarly Communication*, 7.1 (2019), pp. 1–39 (p. 25).
[33] Arsenault, Heffernan and Murphy, 'What Is the Role of Graduate Student Journals', p. 102.
[34] Gilbert, 'Points of View', pp. 22–23.

He further suggests that 'if the research is good enough, it should be published in a "real" journal', citing the prestige and discoverability offered by indexed publications.[35]

In addition to concerns about increased workload, some scholars have raised concerns about the academic quality and rigour of student-run journals. Critics remain sceptical that unexperienced students will be able to provide constructive feedback on par with reviewers from traditional academic journals.[36] Drawing on Faigley and Witte's taxonomy of revisions, one study noted that student reviewers tend to offer 'surface-level' feedback, such as changes to grammar instead of 'meaningful-level' revisions that engage with the structure of arguments or the depth of analysis.[37] These criticism highlight the tension between the pedagogical student-run journals and the scholarly standards of professional academic publishing. Since student journals often attempt to operate within the same disciplinary field as traditional publications, comparisons with more experienced and prestigious journals are inevitable.

Another set of challenges stems from institutional sustainability and continuity. As editorial boards are composed of students in different stages of their studies, maintaining consistency in vision, editorial standards, and operational capacity becomes increasingly difficult. Faculty advisors often bear the weight of this instability, often feeling an obligation to help students in running their journals.[38] Since student-run journals often exist outside curriculum time, supervising professors have to dedicate their free time and resources, placing further burden on them. Ensuring continuity between successive editorial boards is therefore a persistent concern.

The peer review process, a defining criterion of scholarly legitimacy, also presents a persistent challenge. As *The Case for Undergraduate Research Journals* asserted, an undergraduate research journal must involve peer review by professionals in the field, otherwise they will struggle with respect and recognition for their work.[39] Securing such reviewers, however, has been a struggle even for established journals, let alone for small publication run by unexperienced newcomers to the field.[40] Consequently, this leads to concerns about whether the peer review process genuinely upholds academic standards and rigour.

A further critique centres on visibility and discoverability. While the number of student-led journals have been steadily increasing, many remain absent from major indexing platforms.[41] Most indexes do not have restricting criteria targeting specifically student journals, yet their uncompromising inclusion criteria and emphasis on formal peer review process create a barrier that few student journals

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[35] Ibid.
[36] Arsenault, Heffernan and Murphy, 'What Is the Role of Graduate Student Journals', p. 103.
[37] Ibid.
[38] Ibid.
[39] Bendinskas, Caudill, and Melara Jr., 'The Case for Undergraduate Research Journals', p. 2-3.
[40] 'How to Find Peer Reviewers – An Editor's Guide', *Editor Resources, Taylor & Francis* (n.d.) https://editorresources.taylorandfrancis.com/managing-peer-review-process/how-to-find-peer-reviewers-an-editors-guide/ [accessed 3 November 2025].
[41] Maistrovskaya, 'Barriers and Opportunities in the Discoverability and Indexing', p. 3.

can overcome.[42] As a result, many student publications remain hidden within faculty archives, not reaching its intended audience. This limited discoverability undermines the purpose of publicising student research and reduces any of its potential impact.

Finally, the rise of student journals must be understood within the broader pressures of the publish or perish culture. As one article observed, students are 'conscious of the competition that exists among peers, the declining number of open tenure track positions, and the rapidly evolving nature of scholarly communication'.[43] This awareness can drive students to pursue publication opportunities primarily to strengthen their CVs, potentially reinforcing critics' concerns that student journals contribute more to stress than to scholarly or pedagogical advancement. In conclusion, while student-led journals serve important educational and professionalisation functions, the critiques they face highlight their fragility in the field of scholarly communication. Balancing their pedagogical purpose with academical credibility remains a central challenge that needs to be addressed for their future development.

1.5 Institutional Models and Support Structures

Libraries and universities play a crucial role in supporting and sustaining student-run academic journals. Beyond providing access to publishing platforms and repository infrastructure, academic libraries increasingly act as educators in the scholarly communication ecosystem. Hare describes how libraries develop training programmes and curricular support to improve editorial skills and awareness about academic publishing culture among undergraduate students.[44] This aligns with the concept of scholarly publishing literacy, introduced earlier in the chapter, which is an area often missing from standard curricula. Through various workshops, technical support, mentorship, and other initiatives led by academic libraries, these efforts can help institutionalise student publishing as a recognised and recurring component of academic development.

Outside of extracurricular support, some universities have integrated publishing practice directly into their curricula.[45] This model of learning by doing is quite widespread and, as we will see in the following chapter, is employed to great success by several Dutch universities. Such courses – in which students act as editors and reviewers throughout the semester – demonstrate the positive influence of student publications on improving scholarly publishing literacy. Through the practical application embedded in the course's assessment structure, students receive strong support and direct guidance in understanding editorial guidelines and applying publication ethics. These initiatives show that

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[42] Ibid p. 2.
[43] Barbara Alvarez, Jennifer L. Bonnet, and Meredith Kahn, 'Publish, Not Perish: Supporting Graduate Students as Aspiring Authors', *Journal of Librarianship and Scholarly Communication*, 2.3 (2014), pp. 1–10 (p. 2).
[44] Hare, 'Library Publishers as Educators', pp. 1–39.
[45] Bloothooft, Pennings and van der Heyden, 'Utrecht University Honours Program', p. 2; Sun and others, 'Development of a Peer-Reviewed Open-Access Undergraduate Research Journal', pp. 2–4.

publishing can function not only as an extracurricular enhancement of study but also as a form of structured academic learning.

Another significant support structure is collaboration with university presses. Taylor and Janson illustrate how presses can foster and support academic communities by providing them access to production tools, professional guidance in editorial workflows, and long-term digital management of published work.[46] Such partnerships with established stakeholders in the industry supply both symbolic legitimacy required in the field, as well as technical support and continuity – two of the elements that student publication often struggle with when operating independently. With provided assistance, they can strengthen discoverability and preservation, ensuring that the publication will not disappear once the current editorial board graduates.

Within the Dutch context, institutionalised support for student publishing has been less extensively documented via research findings. However, the Utrecht University Honours Program Review Project offers a notable example: a model in which undergraduate students received structured training in academic publishing and produce a peer-reviewed journal as part of their honours track.[47] Findings from this initiative indicate a correlation between early authorship and increased participation in research after graduation, reinforcing earlier findings that student publishing can influence long-term scholarly career and engagement.

To summarise, the literature identifies several institutional factors that influence the workings and sustainability of student-led publishing projects: faculty mentorship, access to some sort of funding and infrastructure, and potentially integration directly into degree curriculum. When these components are provided, student journals are better positioned for a long-term success. They can ensure continuity between editorial cohorts, as well as visibility and discoverability of their academic contributions. However, if this support is not available to the journal, it can lead to struggles and inability to survive more than a couple of issues.

1.6 Emerging Themes and Gaps in the Literature

Recent efforts to synthesise research on university-based journal publishing reveal both growing scholarly interest and persistent gaps. Nazarovets in a semi-systematic review of 105 publications, identifies financial sustainability, editorial quality, and international visibility as the most frequently discussed challenges facing university journals globally.[48] While her review addresses university journals broadly, when focusing specifically on student-run publications, similar patterns emerge:

[46] Megan Taylor, and Kathrine S. H. Jensen, 'Engaging and Supporting a University Press Scholarly Community', Publications, 6.2 (2018), pp. 1–8.
[47] Bloothooft, Pennings and van der Heyden, 'Utrecht University Honours Program'.
[48] Maryna Nazarovets, 'University Journals: A Semi-Systematic Literature Review of Trends, Challenges and Future Research Directions', *Insights: The UKSG Journal*, 38.1 (2025), pp. 1–26.

research remains geographically concentrated in North America, United Kingdom, and China. The majority of established scholarship comes from North America and United Kingdom, where undergraduate and graduate journals are more firmly institutionalised within intracurricular and extracurricular activities. By contrast, studies examining European contexts, particularly within the Netherlands, are lacking, leaving the broader ecosystem of student publishing activities largely underexplored.

A second gap concerns the conceptual boundaries imposed on student publishing as a genre. Existing literature often assumes a conventional journal model centred on formal peer review and discipline-specific research articles – processes that fully replicate the modus operandi of traditional journals. Yet, as previously noted, many student publications operate in hybrid forms that bear closer resemblance to magazines, incorporating creative and genre-bending formats and combining academic outputs with experimental prose. The lack of sustained attention to these alternative forms risks overlooking the full pedagogical and cultural value of student editorial practice.

There are also notable empirical limitations. Although the growth in the number of student journals has been observed internationally, few studies have attempted a comprehensive mapping of national publishing ecosystems or the conditions in which they operate. Issues such as discoverability, indexing, and institutional perception, which are often cited as challenges, remain underexamined in systematic research, further complicating the possibility of finding solutions to these problems and understanding their deeper causes. Questions addressing the impact, legitimacy, and academic value of student journals thus remain unanswered. By addressing these gaps, this thesis contributes new insights into the role of student publishing activities in Dutch higher education. Through the combined use of mapping and qualitative interviews with different stakeholders, it offers the first detailed analysis of organisational models, stakeholder expectations, and institutional support structures underpinning student journals in the Netherlands. By doing so, this study situates the Dutch case within the wider debate about the benefits and future of student publishing in global academia.

The next chapter addresses these shortcomings by empirically mapping student-run academic journals and magazines across the Netherlands. By establishing the scope and characteristics of the Dutch ecosystem, it provides a foundation for deeper analysis of their challenges, value, and future trajectories.

2. Mapping the Landscape of Student-Run Publications in the Netherlands

To understand the landscape of student publishing in the Netherlands, it is important to first establish the boundaries of what we will be working with in the next chapter. This chapter is therefore dedicated to mapping student journals and clarifying the types and categories involved. First, we introduce the process used to identify relevant journals. Afterwards, we delve deeper into the issue of defining student journals and distinguishing their various categories. In the last part, we attempt to analyse observed patterns and trends among the identified publication, preparing the ground for the analysis in the following chapter. This chapter relies primarily on desk research and insights from the interviews conducted for Chapter 3 are not used here. We present the results of our research and propose the categories that will guide our analysis in answering the subsequent research questions.

2.1 Methodology and Mapping

The process of mapping student-run publications in the Netherlands developed in an exploratory way, shaped largely by the absence of existing research on this topic. Unlike the more formalised interview methodology described in the following chapter, this stage did not begin with a predefined protocol. Instead, it emerged gradually out of the literature review, which included searches in both English and Dutch across academic databases and university repositories. These searches made it clear that scholarship on Dutch student publishing is extremely limited. The only relevant example I found was the Utrecht study titled 'The Utrecht University Honours Program Review Project: Example-Based Scientific Publishing Training Aimed at Bachelor Medical Students'. The lack of comparable studies meant that no established methodological framework existed to guide the mapping process, suggesting that a flexible and adaptive approach would be more suitable in this case.

For the purposes of this project, I chose to focus solely on the fourteen Dutch research universities. Universities of Applied Sciences were deliberately excluded because their institutional mission centres on professional education rather than scientific research, and because they do not typically host the same kind of academic publishing activities involving bachelor, master's, and PhD students. Although student publications certainly exist in those institutions, including them would have expanded the scope of this thesis beyond what could be managed within a master's project. Their omission nevertheless highlights a promising area for a future, larger-scale research.

To identify student-run journals, I began by contacting the libraries of all Dutch research universities. In most cases, I used either their general library email address or the contact form available on the university website. These channels were selected because they provide a neutral and accessible point of entry, especially in situations where no specific staff member responsible for student publishing or repository management is publicly listed. The only exception was Leiden University: based on a recommendation from my thesis supervisor, I contacted the repository manager directly, as I already

knew the individual's name and role through this personal referral. Since comparable information was not available for the other universities, and no equivalent contacts were indicated on their websites, I relied on the general library contact forms for the remainder of the institutions. Responses varied widely: some universities (UvA, VU, RU, EUR) provided partial lists; others (Leiden, Utrecht) acknowledged difficulty tracking publications; several (Tilburg, Twente) reported no known journals. This variation itself highlights the lack of systematic documentation.

After gathering this information, I organised it in a spreadsheet that allowed me to track each publication's institutional affiliation, genre, editorial structure, and, where possible, online presence. The spreadsheet also served as a practical tool for monitoring which publications I later approached for interviews, thereby allowing the mapping phase to connect directly to the empirical work discussed in the next chapter.

To supplement the information obtained from university libraries, I conducted a manual search using Google with predefined search terms. I combined university names, using both English and Dutch variants, for example 'Leiden University' and 'Universiteit Leiden', with keywords associated with student publishing, such as 'student journals', 'studentenblad', 'universiteitsblad', and 'tijdschrift'. This search uncovered several additional publications, although majority of them had already been identified through the library responses. I also encountered faculty or university journals that did not indicate any student involvement, and these were excluded. To minimise potential bias from my prior search history, I used an anonymous browsing mode, although a variety of factors might still have influence over the results.

Finally, I supplemented my data with two tables personally provided by personal contacts with scholarly interest in the topic, both of whom had previously attempted to compile lists of student journals in the Netherlands. One table included twenty-two publications and the other eighteen.

There are, of course, limitations to this approach. The mapping did not follow a fully systematic search strategy, such as multiple rounds of verification or cross-checking across institutional databases, and therefore it cannot be considered exhaustive. My limited proficiency in Dutch might have also resulted in overlooking publications hosted exclusively on Dutch-language websites. Nevertheless, considering the exploratory nature of this research and the near absence of prior documentation, the overview presented here constitutes the most comprehensive mapping reasonably achievable within the scope of this thesis. Taken together, I believe that the approach used in this mapping phase was the most appropriate for the aims of this thesis. Since producing an exhaustive inventory of all existing student publications was not the primary objective, the number and range of journals identified can be considered sufficiently representative of the broader landscape, even if some titles were inevitably missed. The diversity among the publications located suggests that overall ecosystem likely contains similar types, with only minor variations or locally specific characteristics among those not captured in this study. At the same time, precisely the difficulty of identifying these journals underscores the nationwide lack of systematic cataloguing of student-led publications, regardless of how many exist in

practice. Ultimately, the goal of this thesis is not to produce a definitive count, but to gain a clearer understanding of the kinds of student publications that exist and the roles they play. A full list of the journals identified, along with their institutional affiliations, is provided in Appendix 1.

2.2 Typology of Student Publications in the Netherlands

When I began formulating the main research question for this thesis, I had not yet fully realised the extent of diversity within the field of student publishing. Identifying individual journals is a relatively straightforward task, however, defining what counts as a 'student journal' is far more complex. The creativity, experimental formats, and disciplinary fluidity that characterise many student-led initiatives often blur the boundaries between journals, magazines, and other forms of publication. This raises a number of conceptual questions: How should we distinguish between student journals and student magazines? Is such a distinction even viable in practice? And what criteria must a publication meet in order to be considered an academic journal? In the following section, I outline the main characteristics observed among the publications identified during the mapping process and propose a typology consisting of three broad categories: academic student journals, hybrid publications, and student or faculty magazines. This classification is not intended as a rigid taxonomy, but as a heuristic tool that allows us to make sense of the diversity of the Dutch student publishing landscape.

2.2.1 Academic Student Journals

When beginning to categorise the existing publications, it is logical to start with the group that is most clearly defined: academic student journals. Although definitions of what constitutes an academic journal vary slightly across sources, they share several core elements. Academic journals are generally understood as serial publications that focus on a specialised subject area and contain articles written by different authors, typically presenting original research or scholarly analysis.[49] They are intended for an academic or research-oriented audience and therefore prioritise features such as clear referencing, bibliographies, and methodological transparency. Many definitions also emphasise peer review as a key component, though some classifications distinguish between academic journals more broadly and scholarly, peer-reviewed journals as a specific subset.[50] Despite these nuances, the main properties across definitions include the presence of research-based content, formal citation practices, and a goal

[49] 'Q. What is an academic journal?', *Birmingham City University Library*, 15 May 2025 <https://libanswers.bcu.ac.uk/faq/251361> [accessed 22 November 2025].
[50] 'What's a scholarly journal, academic journal, or peer-reviewed journal?', *Georgia State University Library*, 14 June 2025 <https://answers.library.gsu.edu/faq/78985> [accessed 22 November 2025]; 'What is the difference between Academic Journals and Scholarly (Peer-Reviewed) Journals?', *EBSCO Connect*, 21 October 2025 <https://connect.ebsco.com/s/article/What-is-the-difference-between-Academic-Journals-and-Scholarly-Peer-Reviewed-Journals?language=en_US> [accessed 22 November 2025].

towards contributing to a scholarly community. These shared characteristics provide a useful foundation for identifying which of the student-led publications in the Dutch context can be considered academic in nature.

For the purposes of this thesis, I propose a working definition tailored specifically to student-led publications that nevertheless preserves the main elements that make a journal 'academic'. A publication will be classified as an academic student journal if it meets the following criteria:

1. A structured review process (double-blind, single-blind, or editorial peer review).

To be considered academic, manuscripts must undergo a multilayered process of assessment and revision. In some student journals, peer review is conducted entirely by students, such as *LingUU*, the *Student Journal of Cultural Anthropology (SCAJ)*, or the *Maastricht Journal of Liberal Arts (MJLA)*.[51] In others, review is carried out or supplemented by faculty members, as in the *Erasmus Student Journal of Philosophy (ESJP)* or the *Utrecht Journal of International and European Law*.[52] When the journal is the outcome of a course, as with Leiden Elective Academic Periodical (*LEAP)*, revision takes place under continuous instructor supervision.[53] While the form of peer review varies widely, the presence of a substantive evaluation procedure is essential.

2. A formalised editorial workflow.

Academic journals typically follow a defined sequence for handling submissions: initial assessment, review assignment, revision rounds, acceptance, and publication. Many student journals formalise this process through platforms like Open Journal Systems (OJS). Even in cases where the volume of submissions is low and journals end up publishing most of what they receive, editors still rely on preset guidelines and reject work that does not meet these basic academic standards.

3. Faculty or PhD-level involvement.

Although editorial responsibility rests primarily with the students, most academic journals maintain some form of institutional or academic guidance. This might range from an actively involved academic advisor to a more symbolic liaison who provides continuity as student board members rotate.

4. Publication of academic articles (research papers, essays, theoretical work).

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[51] 'Reviewers', *LingUU*, n.d. <https://linguujournal.nl/en/reviewers/> [accessed 22 November 2025]; 'Frequently asked questions', *Students of Cultural Anthropology Journal*, n.d. <https://www.scajuu.com/faqs> [accessed 22 November 2025]; 'About the Journal', *The Maastricht Journal of Liberal Arts*, n.d. <https://openjournals.maastrichtuniversity.nl/MJLA/about> [accessed 22 November 2025].

[52] 'What is the ESJP?', *Erasmus Student Journal of Philosophy*, n.d. <https://www.esjp.nl> [accessed 22 November 2025]; 'Editorial Policies', *Utrecht Journal of International and European Law*, n.d. <https://utrechtjournal.org/about/editorialpolicies> [accessed 22 November 2025].

[53] 'LEAP: Your first step to a career in academics', *Universiteit Leiden*, n.d. <https://www.universiteitleiden.nl/en/campaign/humanities/leap-elective> [accessed 22 November 2025].

To qualify as academic, a journal must publish original research or scholarly analysis, whether derived from course papers, theses, or independently developed projects. While the depth and originality of bachelor-level work naturally differs from more advanced scholarship, the articles must still present structured arguments, engage with academic literature, and contribute to ongoing debates in their field.

5. A primarily student-run editorial board.
At least half of the editorial board must consist of students. Publications that merely include students alongside a predominantly professional or staff-led team ultimately do not fit the scope of this thesis. For instance, Wageningen University's *Resource* includes students in its editorial structure but is not student-run, making it unsuitable for categorisation as a student journal.[54]

6. An academic audience.
Academic student journals are typically directed toward a readership composed of other students within the discipline, faculty members, and occasionally a broader scholarly community. Because the intended audience possesses some degree of familiarity with the subject matter, authors can write in a fully academic style and assume a baseline level of conceptual and methodological knowledge. This expectation further distinguishes academic journals from student magazines or more public-facing publications, which require broader accessibility and different stylistic choices.

Applying these criteria suggests that a substantial portion of the identified publications can be classified as academic student journals. However, several journals also include content that diverges from strictly academic norms such as for example, creative writing, commentary, interviews, or multimedia features. These hybrid forms demonstrate the genre-blending tendencies of student publishing and point to the need for additional categories beyond the strictly academic, which will be discussed in the following section.

2.2.2 Hybrid Publications

Hybrid publications retain most features of academic journals, yet they warrant a separate category because solely focusing on their scholarly content would overlook the substantial creative components they deliberately incorporate. These journals typically meet the core criteria for academic publications, such as peer-review procedures, structured editorial workflows, and student boards, while

[54] 'About us', *Resource WUR from within*, n.d. <https://www.resource-online.nl/index.php/about/?lang=en> [accessed 22 November 2025]; *Resource i*ncludes two student editors on its editorial board but is led by professional staff, with the editor-in-chief, deputy editor-in-chief, and section editors all being university employees. Students do not hold the key editorial positions or make the main editorial decisions, and therefore the publication does not meet the criteria for being considered student-led as defined in this thesis.

simultaneously offering space for prose, poetry, opinion writing, visual art, and other experimental formats. Their dual nature makes them difficult to classify strictly as academic, yet equally unsuited to being placed among student magazines.

In terms of audience, hybrid publications remain anchored in the academic community, publishing work that presumes a degree of intellectual engagement, but they also reach toward a broader creative readership. They cater not only to students, who are intent on participating in academic discourse, but also to those seeking a venue for artistic expression within an academic setting. Many of these journals emphasise the wide range of editorial experience students can gain by working across genres: editing research articles, curating creative pieces, and managing the balance between scholarly and artistic contributions. In this sense, hybrid journals may function primarily as training grounds, fostering both academic and creative skills while cultivating a sense of community within the faculty or programme.

Although the boundaries between academic and hybrid journals can be blurry, the number of clear examples in the Dutch landscape is relatively small. Leiden University's *TXT* is one of the more explicit instances, consistently publishing creative work alongside academic essays. *Skript,* while primarily corresponding to the characteristics of academic journals, also occasionally includes film reviews when these relate to a thematic issue, while *Ex Tempore* incorporates opinion pieces into an otherwise academic structure. *BAISMAG*, produced by students of International Studies at Leiden, hosts a mix of categories ranging from opinion pieces and reflective essays to photography, recipes, and creative writing.[55] *Soapbox* similarly embraces multiplicity, welcoming both traditional academic articles and genre-bending or experimental contributions that challenge established forms.[56] Hybrid publications therefore occupy a distinctive position in the landscape: academically grounded yet creatively expansive, rooted in disciplinary communities but open to diverse forms of expression.

2.2.3 Student and Faculty Magazines

The third category of student publications became visible only during the process of contacting individual universities and appears to be particularly shaped by local institutional cultures. These publications are typically produced by study associations or student organisations and are closely tied to student life rather than to academic discourse. Although they frequently contain a mix of interviews, opinion pieces, creative writing, and short articles, their content is in large part not connected to the subjects students study, nor does it aim to contribute to scholarly debate. Additionally, this category also includes publications such as *Expanded Field* and *Absint*, which publish exclusively creative work while remaining closely embedded in the academic programmes from which they emerge. These

[55] 'About Us', *BAISMAG*, n.d. <https://baismag.com/about/> [accessed 22 November 2025].
[56] 'About', *Soapbox*, n.d. <https://www.soapboxjournal.net/about> [accessed 22 November 2025].

journals operate primarily as creative spaces for students, often within literature or creative writing departments, and provide opportunities for artistic expression rather than scholarly contribution. Their institutional anchoring and student-led organisation place them closer to this category than to academic or hybrid journals, even though their aims differ from those of study-association magazines. In many cases, the editorial board themselves generate most of the material, rather than issuing open calls for submissions from other students within the department.

Such magazines usually lack a substantive review process. Editorial work tends to focus on correcting grammatical or stylistic errors rather than evaluating arguments, methodology, or academic merit. Despite this, these publications play an important role in community building: they document student experiences, strengthen social bonds within the study association, and offer a platform for expression that is deliberately more informal and accessible than academic journals. Through their involvement, students still acquire valuable skills, such as teamwork, editing, layout design, communication, that may later translate into academic or professional contexts, even if the publications themselves are not academic in nature.

Examples include Vrije Universiteit's *Expanded Field*, an English-language journal dedicated to experimental writing and image/text work that pushes this hybridity further by prioritising creative production.[57] The University of Amsterdam's *Absint* blends scholarship with interviews, short stories, poetry, and literary criticism.[58] The Eindhoven University of Technology provides a clear example of student association-centered publications in this category, as nearly every study association maintains its own magazine, such as *Intermania* (study association Intermate), *The Chepos* (Built Environment study association CHEOPS), and *openME* (Mechanical Engineering association Simon Stevin). University-wide magazines can also fall into this category when they are genuinely student-led. For instance, *Algemeen Nijmeegs Studentenblad* (ANS) at Radboud University is produced by and for students and reports on student culture, university politics, and local issues. Because this thesis focuses on publications that are explicitly student-run, such university-wide magazines were included only when they clearly met this criteria.

While these publications will not form a central part of the analysis in Chapter 3, they must be acknowledged as integral components of the broader student-led publishing ecosystem. This includes both association-based magazines and creatively oriented journals, which focus primarily on artistic expression rather than scholarly contribution. Across these outlets, students do gain valuable experience in teamwork, editing, layout, and project coordination, even if the work does not involve peer review or the evaluation of academic arguments. What distinguishes these publications from academic student journals is not the absence of skill development, but the fundamental difference in purpose, editorial

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[57] 'About Us', *Expanded Field*, n.d. <https://www.expandedfieldjournal.com/about> [accessed 22 November 2025].

[58] 'Geschiedenis', *Absint Tijdschrift voor neerlandistiek*, n.d. <https://sites.google.com/view/tijdschriftabsint/geschiedenis> [accessed 22 November 2025].

standards, and institutional positioning. Many operate under study associations and their content is shaped by creative or community-oriented goals rather than disciplinary research practices. For these reasons, they are recognised as a distinct category within the mapping and will be discussed briefly in the next chapter.

It should be noted that this typology is based on publicly available information rather than systematic content analysis of all published issues. Some publications categorised as strictly academic may incorporate occasional creative content not prominently featured in their public presentation, while others may have evolved over time. This typology should therefore be understood as capturing journals' primary orientation and self-presentation rather than as an exhaustive catalogue of all content types they publish

2.3 Observed Patterns and Trends

The desk research conducted for this thesis reveals several recurring patterns across the Dutch student publishing landscape. A first and perhaps most striking trend is the predominance of academic student journals. The majority of identified publications present themselves through clearly structured websites that outline their editorial procedures, submission guidelines, and review processes, sometimes mirroring the conventions of fully professional academic journals. Many editorial boards use formal titles, describe multi-stage review workflows, and emphasise transparency in their operations. In some cases, journals that appear strictly academic may in fact operate as hybrid publications; however, unless creative content was explicitly mentioned on their website or supported by a separate call for submissions, such distinctions were not always immediately identifiable without reviewing each issue individually. Closely linked to this formal orientation is the widespread adoption of open access publishing. Nearly all identified journals operate in diamond open access – free to read and free for authors to publish in – which is unsurprising given their student-run nature. Nonetheless, several journals appear to have transitioned to open access only recently, with traces of earlier subscription models or options for ordering printed issues still visible online.

A disciplinary pattern also emerges. Most student journals are concentrated within the field of humanities and social sciences. Law and medical journals form particularly visible subfields, likely reflecting the cultures of publication within those professional disciplines, where early research output can play a significant role in shaping future academic or clinical careers. By contrast, far fewer journals originate from technical or natural science faculties. This distribution can suggest differences in disciplinary publishing cultures, how respective faculties view the pedagogical value of student-led scholarly communication, and how much support they can provide for them.

Another characteristic that emerged during the mapping process is the extensive reliance on social media, particularly Instagram and, to a lesser extent, LinkedIn. Many student journals use these platforms more actively than their official websites, often presenting themselves in a less formal, more

accessible manner. Instagram, in particular, functions as a space where editorial board members introduce themselves, share glimpses of their hobbies, and post updates or calls for submissions in a visually creative, informal style.

Interestingly, very few journals appear to have been founded by academic staff or as extensions of formal coursework. This may indicate that scholarly publishing literacy is not widely prioritised within most curricula. In the few cases where staff-founded publications do exist, such as Leiden University's *The New Scholar*, external funding was required to launch and sustain the initiative, suggesting the lack of institutional structures dedicated to supporting such efforts.[59]

Support for student publishing also varies significantly across universities. Some institutions provide strong infrastructures that enhance the visibility and professionalism of student journals. A notable example is the University of Amsterdam, where many student journals are centralised under *ALPHA* (Algemeen Platform Humaniora Amsterdam), a faculty-level organisation that offers financial support, facilitates coordination, and acts as a liaison between student publications and university governance.[60] *ALPHA* hosts information about eleven publications on its website, demonstrating an institutional attempt at centralisation, even though not all listed journals remain active. This level of structural support contrasts with universities where librarians expressed uncertainty about whether any student journals existed and were, correspondingly, fewer publications could be identified.

Additionally, the majority of the journals appear not to be indexed or at least do not mention any form of indexation on their websites. Indexing matters for several reasons. First, it increases the visibility of a journal, ensuring that published articles reach a wider readership interested in the relevant topics. Indexation also enhances a journal's reputation: being included in recognised databases signals to potential authors that the journal has undergone various forms of verification and can be considered a trustworthy venue for publication.[61] It is not surprising, however, that student journals struggle to meet these requirements. As noted earlier, many indexes demand the presence of experienced scholars on the editorial board, the implementation of a rigorous peer-review process, or the assignment of DOIs – criteria that student-led publications frequently cannot fulfil.[62]

Another notable observation is that most identified student publications primarily platform work by other students rather than seeking contributions from more experienced scholars. For instance, Utrecht University's *LingUU* explicitly states on its website that 'students have ideas worth sharing…

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[59] Myrthe Timmers, 'New academic student magazine kicks off with double issue: 'Had so many good submissions'', *Universiteit Leiden*, 31 August 2023 <https://www.universiteitleiden.nl/en/news/2023/08/new-student-journal-launched-with-double-issue-we-had-so-many-good-submissions> [accessed 22 November 2025].

[60] 'About', *Alpha*, n.d. <https://alphafgw.wordpress.com/about/> [accessed 22 November 2025].

[61] D.J. McPhee, 'Why Does Indexing Matter?', *JAMS*, 5 December 2023 <https://jams.pub/blog/post/why-does-indexing-matter> [accessed 23 November 2025].

[62] Mamta Srivastava, 'Indexing of Journal: Advantages and Challenges', *International Journal of Scientific Research and Engineering Development*, 8.1 (2025), 102–105 (103).

creative theories that should not gather dust in a professor's drawer'.[63] A similar sentiment underpins *The New Scholar*, which highlights the problem that 'so many brilliant ideas from young scholars go unnoticed'.[64] By contrast, the long-established *Leidschrift* publishes work by 'leading historians from both home and abroad'.[65] These differences will be examined more closely in the following chapter, as they shed light on how distinct publications conceptualise their purpose and position within the academic community.

Another observable trend concerns the instability that student-run editorial boards inevitably face. Very frequent editorial turnover leads to difficulty in the maintenance of websites and repositories. Some journals maintain well-updated websites, while others, despite still being active, have shifted primarily to social media platforms or left their official websites outdated. In some cases, journals appear to have been lost during transitions between editorial teams, leaving their status difficult to determine and suggesting that discontinuity is a common vulnerability within this publishing field.

These patterns highlight both the diversity and fragility of student-led publishing in the Netherlands, underscoring the importance of institutional support and documentation for maintaining visibility and continuity. This chapter has mapped the current landscape and proposed a typology that meaningfully captures its diversity. By combining library outreach, manual searches, and previously compiled lists, the mapping produced the most comprehensive overview feasible within this thesis's exploratory scope, despite absent systematic institutional documentation. The three categories identified – academic student journals, hybrid publications, and student or faculty magazines – offer a flexible framework for distinguishing between scholarly initiatives and those serving primarily creative or community-building functions. Observed patterns, such as the dominance of humanities and social science journals, reliance on open-access models, use of social media, and challenges from institutional fragmentation, contextualise current operating conditions. These findings establish conceptual and empirical groundwork for the next chapter, where editor voices illuminate how these publications are sustained, experienced, and what roles they play within Dutch academic life.

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[63] 'LingUU Journal', *LingUU Journal*, n.d. <https://linguujournal.nl/en/> [accessed 23 November 2025].
[64] Annabel Hilgeman, 'An Afternoon at the Knowledge Café: Research-Based Learning and The New Scholar', *leidenlanguageblog*, 5 March 2025 <https://www.leidenlanguageblog.nl/articles/an-afternoon-at-the-knowledge-café> [accessed 23 November 2025].
[65] 'Wat is Leidschrift?', *Leidschrift Historisch tijdschrift*, n.d. <https://www.leidschrift.nl/overleidschrift> [accessed 23 November 2025].

3. Roles, Perceptions, and Experiences: Findings from Qualitative Interviews

Having established the boundaries between different types of student publications available in the Netherlands, we can now delve deeper into the landscape and address our research questions using information directly from the source. This chapter draws on interviews conducted with stakeholders involved in student publishing – editors-in-chief, student board members, and supervising professors. Based on their testimonies, we attempt to answer our main research questions: how student publications operate in practice, what purpose they serve, what benefits participation brings, what challenges they face, and how cooperation between different publications functions, if it exists at all. We begin with a brief overview of the interview methodology, followed by sections corresponding to each research question, and conclude with a synthesis of our findings to answer the research questions.

3.1 Methodology

To complement the desk research conducted in the previous chapter, semi-structured interviews were chosen as the primary research method to gain deeper understanding and obtain perspectives directly from involved stakeholders. This format allows flexibility in both questions and responses, which was essential given that each publication operates differently.

Two sets of interview questions were developed: one for student editors-in-chief and editorial board members, and one for supervising professors and faculty members. For the two PhD-led journals. *Erasmus Journal for Philosophy and Economics* (EJPE) and *Inter-Section*, questions required substantial adaptation. EJPE functions as a fully professional academic journal despite being PhD-run, while Inter-Section's PhD editors are faculty employees publishing undergraduate and graduate work. These differences justified the semi-structured approach, allowing comparable themes to be addressed while accommodating each journal's particularities

The questions for student editors were organised into three thematic areas: introduction and information on the journal's operation; perceived benefits and challenges of participation; institutional support and the publication's place within the wider student publishing landscape. The interviews conducted with supervising professors followed a similar thematic structure, focusing on their involvement with the journal, the pedagogical and scholarly dimensions of student publishing, and the institutional challenges associated with sustaining student-led editorial work. For *EJPE* and *Inter-Section*, the interview questions centred on the journal's professional identity, the nature of PhD-level editorial work, institutional recognition and support, and the challenges and opportunities specific to early-career-scholar-led publishing. These questions allowed for a more precise understanding of how these journals fit into, and differ from, the broader category of student publications analysed in this thesis. The two main sets of questions are included in the Appendix 2.

The selection of participants for the interviews was not deliberate in a strict methodological sense but was largely shaped by the availability and willingness of potential participants. My original plan was to conduct approximately ten interviews with different stakeholders. However, due to the low number of responses to the first round of emails, I continued reaching out to more publications as I identified them. In total, I carried out three rounds of email invitations, and the final number of interviews conducted was twenty-five. The higher number of interviews compared to the initial plan can be explained by several factors. First, some journals took several weeks to respond, resulting in positive replies from publications I had assumed were not interested. Second, as my desk research and the first interviews progressed, I gained a clearer understanding of the diversity of publication types in the Netherlands, as outlined in the previous chapter. This motivated me to include as many different types as possible. Third, I aimed to represent publications from as wide range of universities as possible. Because, during this stage, I relied heavily on information provided by university librarians to identify relevant journals, it sometimes happened that I contacted certain publications later in the process, after interviews with others were already scheduled.

Overall, out of the 71 identified publications, I contacted 43; 29 responded, resulting in a response rate of approximately 67%, and ultimately 25 interviews were completed. It is important to acknowledge potential sampling bias in this interview cohort. Journals that did not respond to interview requests may differ systematically from those that did participate. Publications experiencing severe continuity issues, lacking active editorial boards, or operating with minimal organisational capacity would be less likely to respond to outreach emails or schedule interviews. Similarly, journals in the process of dissolution or experiencing internal conflicts might have declined participation as well. This means that the challenges documented in the current chapter may underrepresent the difficulties faced by the most precarious publications. The findings should therefore be understood as reflecting the experiences of journals that have achieved at least minimal operational stability, not necessarily the full spectrum of student publishing attempts in the Netherlands.

During those interviews, I spoke to 37 people, since in some cases multiple members of an editorial board wished to participate. I interviewed the following journals and magazines (in alphabetical order): *Absint, Aanzet, Blik, The Chepos, EJPE, Erasmus Student Journal of Philosophy (ESJP), Expanded Field, Ex Tempore, Frame Journal of Literary Studies, Groniek, History Collective, Inter-Section, Intermania, LEAP, Leidschrift, LingUU, Maastricht Journal of Liberal Arts (MJLA), openME, Raffia, RU:ts, SCAJ, Skript Historisch Tijdschrift, Soapbox, TXT,* and *The New Scholar.*

The distribution between interviews with students and faculty members was uneven: only 2 of the 25 interviews were conducted with faculty supervisors. Several factors contributed to this imbalance. First, in most cases I used the general contact email provided on the publication's website, which was typically managed by student editors. Second, professors generally have more demanding schedules, making it more difficult for them to accommodate interviews. Third, and as will become clear from the results presented later, very few student journals actually have actively involved faculty supervisors. In

many cases, faculty members are only loosely connected to these publications and are not meaningfully engaged in their day-to-day operations, which likely explains their limited interest in participating in the interviews. Moreover, as mentioned above, two interviews were conducted with PhD-led journals that are fundamentally different from typical student publications: one operates as a fully professional academic journal, and the other functions similarly while publishing student work. We will delve deeper into the characteristics of these journals later.

Additionally, an unstructured interview was conducted with the aforementioned organisation ALPHA. This opportunity came up later in the research process but given ALPHA's role in providing institutional support to many of the publications identified, it offered a valuable chance to better understand the university's perspective within the student-journal ecosystem.

All interviews were conducted with voluntary, informed consent. Participants were provided with a clear explanation of the study's aims in the introductory email and again at the start of the interview. In cases where participants wished to see the questions in advance, these were sent to them via email. Because many interviewees discussed internal organisational challenges, editorial decisions, and financial or institutional difficulties, particular attention was paid to anonymity and confidentiality. To ensure this, none of the participants' names are mentioned in this thesis, and while journals are discussed on the basis of the interviews, no specific statements are attributed to identifiable individuals. At the beginning of each interview, I obtained oral permission to make an audio recording. After each interview, the recordings and notes taken during the process were stored securely and used solely for the purposes of this thesis. Any information shared off the record was excluded from the analysis and does not appear in the findings.

Since the interviews serve as a basis for broader observations and more general reflections on the landscape of student publishing in the Netherlands, I attempted to represent as many different universities as possible in my sample. Nonetheless, several limitations remain. First, despite my best efforts, some universities are not represented – either because no publications were identified or because the identified journals declined to participate. A second limitation lies in the nature of the interviews themselves: participants spoke from their own subjective experiences, and even within a single publication, individual perspectives may differ considerably. These subjective accounts were then met with my own subjective interpretation during the analysis, and the following chapter should therefore be read with this in mind. Where possible, I sought to corroborate interview statements with information available on the journals' websites. Finally, as stated in the introduction of this thesis, I do not approach this topic from a neutral standpoint. As a former editor-in-chief of a student journal, I bring my own experiences and potential biases to the research, which may influence both my expectations and my interpretations of the findings. To counterbalance this, particularly regarding my experience with *TXT*, I interviewed two additional people involved with the journal in order to compare perspectives and ensure that my own experience leaves space for alternative viewpoints.

3.2 Findings

In this subsection, we will delve deeper into the insights drawn from the individual interviews. To facilitate answering the research questions, the section is organised into smaller subsections structured around the research questions rather than around the individual interviews. Short introductions to all journals interviewed for the study can be found in Appendix 3.

3.2.1 Presence and Organisation: How Student Journals Operate in Practice

The interviews conducted reveal a highly diverse organisational landscape in which student publications operate under remarkably different conditions. The journals vary substantially in size, editorial structure, recruitment models, workflows, and peer-review practices. This section will outline the main patterns that emerged from the interview, highlighting both the similarities that are characteristic to student publishing and the striking differences that result from different disciplinary cultures, levels of institutional support, and the historical development of each publication.

One of the clearest findings concerns the wide spectrum of organisational structures. Some journals function with relatively small teams, often consisting of only three to five members. Examples include *RU:ts*, which currently has only three editors, and *History Collective*, which has five members officially on the board, with some of them being away on an exchange. These journals typically operate with minimal hierarchical differentiation, with editors sharing responsibilities informally and stepping in whenever needed. The smaller size of the board is usually the result of a limited pool of students that can participate in the activity or limited interest from the students. At the other end of the spectrum are journals with larger, more structurally divided editorial teams. *TXT, Soapbox*, and *Frame*, for instance, maintain boards of 10 to 20 members with clearly defined and specialised roles such as designers, layout specialists, treasurers, and event coordinators. These publications resemble small publishing organisations and require a degree of internal coordination that more closely mirrors professional journal operations. In these situations, editors-in-chief also usually step in to coordinate smaller teams alongside dedicated team leaders. Between these two extremes lie journals that adopt hybrid structures with a separation between the editorial board consisting of editors-in-chief, operating or managing editors, and sometimes a treasurer, and the rest of the team, which may include editors, designers, people responsible for PR and websites, and so on. Examples include *Expanded Field, Leidschrift*, and *Absint*. What unites all types of editorial boards is the general commitment to collaborative work and a small distinction between hierarchical statuses between the members, with almost all of the journals emphasising that everyone on the team can have a say in the running of the publication.

Recruitment strategies vary considerably. Some publications maintain structured application processes with interviews, while others accept all interested students. Most advertise through university channels at semester start or via social media. *LingUU* and *LEAP* represent exceptions, integrating

recruitment into curriculum: *LingUU*'s manuscript review aligns with research master coursework, while *LEAP* requires course enrolment and paper proposals. Recruitment success also varies. Journals like *Soapbox, Groniek*, and *Skript* reported no difficulties, while *History Collective, Ex Tempore*, and *RU:ts* consistently struggle to attract editors.

Except for *EJPE* and *Inter-Section*, all other boards consist of both bachelor and master students, with some exceptions prioritising one side or another. Since publications are usually tied to a specific programme or department, the editorial boards mostly limit themselves to the students of said department or programme. Notable exceptions are *Frame* and *Raffia*, where team members come from diverse institutional backgrounds.

Turnover is another defining feature across journals. Because most editorial teams consist of bachelor or master students who remain for one to three years, continuity becomes a persistent challenge. A few journals have developed mechanisms to mitigate this: *SCAJ* maintains an advisory board of former editors to ensure knowledge transfer, while *Expanded Field, Raffia*, and *Skript* rely on multiyear involvement of editors who sometimes stay on even after graduating. However, many others emphasised that internal knowledge is easily lost, and that rebuilding organisational routines is often necessary with each new cohort.

The organisational differences described above translate into equally varied operational workflows based on the three models described in the previous chapter: academic journals, hybrid publications, and student and faculty magazines.

Academic journals adopt structures that fully resemble 'real' academic publishing with formal submission rounds, several stages of editorial and peer review, revision cycles, and other formal conventions such as DOIs, referencing norms, and strict thematic orientation. They include, for example, *LingUU, ESJP, RU:ts, MJLA, Inter-Section, The New Scholar,* and *SCAJ*. Unlike the hybrid publications, these journals also strictly publish academic articles, with some exceptions for formats such as interviews or book reviews, which are common in traditional academic publications as well. While most of them solicit their publications solely from students and are essentially made 'for students by students', emphasising the need for dedicated student-only publishing space, others publish a mix of both beginner and experienced scholars. *Groniek,* for example, has separate sections for both categories, while *Leidschrift* publishes a mix of both with a strong preference for experienced scholars. *EJPE* on the other hand accepts submitted papers by PhDs and up, once again reaffirming its identity as a professional academic journal.

A second group of hybrid publications includes journals that combine academic articles with creative or experimental content. Journals such as *Raffia, Blik, Soapbox*, and *Frame* fall into this category. Their workflow is usually different depending on the type of content, and academic articles usually go through the same process of editorial and peer review as with the previous category. It should be emphasised that these journals are categorised separately not due to a lesser degree of academic rigour, but because they integrate creative and scholarly modes of writing and offer a broad spectrum

of formats, including academic articles, interviews, book reviews, short essays, visual material, and occasionally multimedia work. *Frame*, for instance, includes a 'Gallery' section for non-traditional academic writing, while *Soapbox* positions itself as a platform for emerging researchers working across cultural analysis and creative scholarship. With the exception of *Raffia*, which has a team of writers who produce content for the magazine, all other publications have similar submission processes with calls for papers and creative works.

Finally, several publications operate primarily as association or creative magazines, focusing on community engagement and artistic expression rather than academic publishing. Examples include *Intermania, openME, The Chepos, Expanded Field*, and *Absint*. Except for *Expanded Field*, in all other publications team members are the ones producing content for the magazine, with editorial review focusing on stylistic and grammatical errors rather than the content, which can range from short prose to personal reflections.

Peer review, or the lack thereof, is one of the strongest differentiating factors across student journals. At the most rigorous end, journals like *ESJP, EJPE, Inter-Section*, and *MJLA* employ multi-stage or double-blind peer-review systems involving faculty members or specialist reviewers. *LingUU* aligns its publication schedule with the timelines of a compulsory research master course, integrating reviewing into the students' training. *Inter-Section*, run by PhDs, maintains a hybrid system in which editors work intensively with authors before sending articles to external experts for peer review. A second category comprises journals that use the editorial peer review model. *Skript, Groniek, TXT, Ex Tempore*, and *Leidschrift* rely on their editorial boards to evaluate submissions. Here, peer review functions less as an external quality check and more as an internal editorial process, often with opportunities for authors to revise and resubmit.

Submissions are accepted through a variety of mechanisms. Journals that publish themed issues usually issue calls for papers (e.g., *Soapbox*, *TXT, The New Scholar, Frame*), while others operate on a rolling basis (*Aanzet, History Collective, LingUU*). Some journals, such as *Leidschrift, Groniek*, and *Ex Tempore*, directly invite experts in the field to submit, and others rely on teacher nominations (*ESJP, Blik, Ex Tempore*). *MJLA* allows students to submit their own papers, but only those graded 8 or higher are considered.

A unifying theme across nearly all interviews is the reliance on volunteer student labour. With very few exceptions, such as the stipend provided to the editor-in-chief of *openME* or the course-based model of *LEAP*, editors and board members work without financial compensation. This voluntary basis contributes to fluctuating levels of engagement, uneven distribution of workload, and frequent burnout among editors-in-chief. Several editors described the emotional labour involved in keeping a publication afloat, particularly when teammates lose motivation or when deadlines coincide with exam periods. Journals with larger teams (*Frame*, *Soapbox*) sometimes manage to share workload more effectively, while smaller teams (*RU:ts*, *History Collective*) experience significant strain.

3.2.2 Purpose and Mission of Student Journals

While the editorial processes and specific workflow choices differ across publications, the majority are united by a core set of purposes that motivate their existence. Most journals pursue multiple aims simultaneously, with some serving as their primary mission and others functioning as secondary or complementary goals. Across the interviews conducted for this research, four broad purposes emerged consistently: a pedagogical purpose; a community-building and social purpose; a platform function; and a professional or disciplinary purpose. Although these categories help to conceptually organise the testimonies of editors and supervisors, in practice they often overlap and interact with each other, shaping the different roles student journals play within their respective academic environments.

A first and most prominent purpose is pedagogical. Nearly all interviewees, regardless of publication type, emphasised that the journal serves as a learning space for both editors and authors. This pedagogical role manifests in different ways. Some journals were explicitly founded as training initiatives. *TXT*, for instance, is a journal affiliated with Leiden University's Book and Digital Media Studies programme. Its editorial board changes every year with the arrival of a new cohort, which gives students the opportunity to experience the practical side of what they are taught in class. However, when reflecting on this purpose, the interviewed board members emphasised that the pedagogical foundation of the journal made it feel less professional. Because the board changes annually, continuity between individual boards is almost entirely lost, and new members must learn everything on their own. While this offers a valuable learning experience, it reflects negatively on the journal's professional aspect. *LEAP*, presented as a teaching innovation project, structures each submission around an intensive sequence of feedback rounds, review reports, and revisions, with faculty supervision ensuring that students learn how to transform a good course paper into a publishable article. Publications such as *ESJP, SCAJ,* and *RU:ts* follow similar models, positioning the journal as a vehicle through which students can learn the norms, expectations, and tacit conventions of academic communication.

Other publications deliver this pedagogical purpose more informally, offering learning-by-doing rather than structured training. Unlike *LEAP* or *LingUU*, where editorial work is embedded in coursework with explicit learning objectives and faculty guidance, these journals provide no formal instruction in reviewing or editing. Students learn these skills organically through practice, peer observation, and trial-and-error as they work on manuscripts. Editors from *Skript, History Collective, Blik, Ex Tempore*, and *Soapbox* emphasised that participating in a journal teaches students to evaluate arguments, offer constructive feedback, understand the value of revision, and coordinate a publication process from start to finish. Even when this occurs outside the context of a course, the journal becomes, as several interviewees phrased it, a 'safe environment' in which to learn skills that are rarely taught elsewhere in the curriculum. For PhD-led journals such as *EJPE* and *Inter-Section*, the pedagogical role shifts towards early-career training. Their editors described the work as essential preparation for

professional academic life, providing experience in manuscript evaluation, reviewer management, and editorial decision-making – skills that doctoral programmes often except but rarely explicitly teach.

A second purpose that emerged strongly from the interviews concerns community-building and the social dimensions of student publishing. Journals frequently operate as social spaces that foster belonging, interdisciplinary exchange, and creative collaboration. This purpose is particularly visible in hybrid and creative journals such as *Expanded Field, Absint, Blik*, and, to some extent, *Soapbox*. Editors from *Absint* described the journal as a 'literary playground', a place where students across cohorts and programmes come together around shared creative interests. *Expanded Field* emphasised the collaborative nature of its team, noting that much of the journal's energy stems from students wanting to create something together rather than solely to publish texts. Even in academic journals, social dynamics remain essential. Several teams characterised their editorial board as a group of friends, and many noted that the journal survives year to year because the sense of community compensates for the lack of institutional support. In this sense, social cohesion is not merely a pleasant by-product but a structural necessity, contributing directly to continuity amid rapid editorial turnover. It should be noted that while interviewees emphasised peer community and collaborative work, the journals also facilitate professional networking with faculty, reviewers, and established scholars – a dimension discussed more fully in section 3.2.3 on benefits to participants.

Closely connected to, but distinct from, these first two purposes is the platform function. Journals provide visibility and recognition for work that would otherwise remain unseen, whether academically oriented or creatively driven. Many interviewees highlighted that excellent course papers often 'gather dust' or disappear into closed institutional systems. Journals such as *Aanzet, Skript, The New Scholar, Inter-Section*, and *LingUU* see themselves as solving this problem by offering students a chance to share their research in open access with a wider audience. Editors described moments of pride and empowerment when students see their work published and circulated, sometimes for the first time in their careers. Hybrid and creative journals similarly act as platforms, albeit for different types of contributions. *Absint, Expanded Field, Soapbox*, and *Blik* highlight their role in showcasing poetry, short stories, visual art, and experimental writing. For these publications, the platform function extends beyond the university: *Blik* and *Soapbox* noted that cultural institutions occasionally consult their issues to track emerging artistic interests and trends among students in Eindhoven and Amsterdam. Whether academic or creative, the platform function represents a form of validation, transforming student work from individual assignments or personal projects into contributions that can be shared, cited, or displayed.

Finally, a smaller subset of journals frames their purpose in explicitly professional or disciplinary terms. These publications position themselves not primarily as training grounds but as legitimate academic outlets. *Frame, Groniek, Leidschrift*, and *Soapbox* aim to contribute directly to scholarly conversations within their fields. Their editorial teams emphasise rigorous standards, external peer review, and in some cases the inclusion of established scholars. For them, the journal's value lies

in its ability to maintain a level of academic credibility that places student editors in a position of disciplinary responsibility. The clearest example of this professional orientation is *EJPE*, which, despite being student-run, functions as a recognised disciplinary journal with international submissions, formal peer review, and DOIs.[66] Its editors stressed that they do not consider the journal a student publication in any meaningful sense, rather, they see themselves as early-career scholars contributing to their field through professionalised editorial labour.

To sum up, the purpose of student journals in the Netherlands cannot be reduced to a single function. Across the interviews, pedagogical aims were mentioned nearly universally: editors from virtually every publication, whether academic journals like *LingUU* and *ESJP* or creative magazines like *Expanded Field*, described their work as a learning experience, emphasising skill development in editing, reviewing, publishing processes, and academic communication. Community-building and social belonging emerged as the second most prominent theme, with journals such as *Absint, Leidschrift, Frame*, and *openME* explicitly highlighting the communal and collaborative aspects of their work, often describing their editorial boards as social spaces or friend groups. The platform function was emphasised particularly by journals focused on student-authored content, including *Skript, The New Scholar, History Collective*, and *RU:ts*, which positioned themselves as solutions to the problem of excellent student work 'gathering dust'. Finally, a smaller subset of publications, notably *EJPE, Groniek, Frame*, and to some extent *Soapbox* and *Inter-Section*, framed their purpose in explicitly professional or disciplinary terms, positioning themselves as legitimate scholarly outlets contributing to academic conversations. These categories are not mutually exclusive: most journals described serving multiple purposes simultaneously, with their missions intertwining pedagogical aims, the cultivation of community, the creation of platforms for student expression, and contributions to disciplinary knowledge.[67] Their adaptability also explains their diversity: no single model dominates because, ultimately, student journals respond as much to the motivations of their current editors as to the broader academic landscape in which they operate.

3.2.3 Benefits for Participants

[66] The specific process by which *EJPE* registers DOIs was not explored in detail during the interview. Generally, DOI registration for academic journals requires coordination with either university libraries, institutional repositories, or external registration agencies, though the level of institutional support for this varies considerably across Dutch universities.

[67] It should be noted that this analysis is based on qualitative interviews using open-ended questions rather than structured surveys with predefined response categories. While this approach allowed for rich, contextual understanding of how journals conceptualise their purposes, it does not permit precise quantification of how many interviewees chose each function. Future research using more structured quantitative methods could provide statistical data on the relative prevalence of these purposes across the student publishing landscape.

Just as student journals serve multiple purposes simultaneously, the benefits that participants acquire from them are equally diverse. While the previous section examined the functions journals aim to fulfil, as in their stated missions and organisational goals, this section focuses on what participants actually gain from their involvement, as described in the interviews. These two dimensions naturally overlap: a journal with an explicit pedagogical purpose will likely produce pedagogical benefits, and community-building functions tend to generate social benefits for participants. However, the distinction matters because participants often gain advantages beyond what journals formally set out to provide, and individual experiences can vary significantly even within the same publication. Editors and supervising staff repeatedly emphasised that engagement with these publications gives far more than a line on a CV. Students gain a combination of technical, professional, social, and personal advantages that are difficult to access elsewhere in their studies. While these benefits differ depending on a journal's structure and aims, they consistently fall into several broad categories: skill acquisition, network-building, personal development and identity formation, academic and professional opportunities, and social belonging. Together, these categories help to explain why student journals continue to engage with publications despite the workload and instability described in earlier sections.

One of the most frequently mentioned benefits relates to skill acquisition. Editors described their work as a unique opportunity to develop competencies that are typically absent from formal university curricula. These include editorial skills, such es copy-editing, reviewing, implementing style sheets, and revision work, as well broader skills of communication and writing. Students involved in peer review noted that their ability to give constructive and unbiased feedback improved drastically. Additionally, through the work on other papers they learn how identify weaknesses and improve their own writing through a form of 'self-review'. Many interviewees noted that understanding the publication process 'from the inside' gave them much more confidence in their own writing academic work. Editors learn project management, team coordination, working with deadlines, maintaining communication channels, and using digital tools such as Canva or InDesign. Members of *SCAJ* described their journal as a 'safe space' to learn operational and organisational skills: conducting meetings, dividing tasks, negotiating disagreements, and presenting professional communication to authors. Many journals emphasised that the opportunity to acquire new skills is 'up for grabs' to anyone and its extent depends only on the investment and ambitions of individual members.

Some journals also offer training that directly supports professionalisation within publishing or academia. Editors from *Soapbox* illustrated this clearly: several former team members have used their experience as a stepping stone into careers in academic publishing or cultural criticism. They attributed this transition partly to the editorial skills acquired through the journal and partly to the confidence gained in making independent editorial decisions. Likewise, the editors of *Inter-Section*, who are all PhD students, emphasised that editorial experience equips them with competencies increasingly expected of early-career scholars, such as experience with peer review processes, editorial workflows, and scholarly communication. Through their involvement, they motivate undergraduate and graduate

students to develop the skills needed to write and edit their own work and to acquire experience and responsibilities that actively further their own professionalisation and future career prospects.

A second major benefit emphasised by participants involves network-building. Even in journals with minimal faculty supervision, editors often interact with professors, researchers, and teaching staff more frequently than the average student. These contacts might occur through advisory roles, requests for expertise, or invitations to serve as reviewers. Several editors noted that the journal increased their visibility within the department by making them recognisable to lecturers who might otherwise know them only as names on an attendance list. In some disciplinary journals, professional networking extends beyond the university. *Frame*, for example, maintains relationships with external reviewers and academic authors, allowing editors to build connections with established scholars. Team members of *Raffia* can use the journal's podcast as a platform to engage with scholars or activists whose work interests them. For journals in creative fields, visibility functions differently: teams from *Blik* and *Expanded Field* reported that cultural organisations and museum professionals occasionally interact with their issues or public events, opening pathways for future collaboration or artistic work.

Beyond technical skills and networking, journals also offer significant identity and confidence-building benefits. Many interviewees described the experience of publishing a paper, or helping someone else publish one, as transformative. Students spoke of feeling 'legitimate' for the first time when their work appeared in print or online. Editors repeatedly mentioned the pride authors expressed when their ideas were taken seriously by peers. This sense of validation is particularly valuable for undergraduate students, whose academic work is often confined to internal assessment rather than shared publicly. The process of editing also strengthens students' sense of academic identity: several participants remarked that reading and evaluating the work of others helped them see themselves as part of an intellectual community rather than as passive learners. By engaging with a wide range of authors and topics, editors gain exposure to multiple academic disciplines and to interdisciplinary community work – experiences that, according to *LEAP's* supervisors, are frequently absent from a department-oriented education system. In this way, journals function not just as pedagogical tools but as spaces where students come to view themselves as capable contributors to academic or creative fields.

These experiences often translate into tangible outcomes, particularly in the form of future opportunities. Editors and authors reported that journal involvement strengthened their applications for master's programmes, internships, and research positions. For some, the impact was even more substantial. Members of *RU:ts* mentioned examples of students who secured competitive PhD positions partly because their published work demonstrated early scholarly potential. At *Inter-Section*, editors explained that authors sometimes returned months later to share that their accepted article helped them succeed in graduate applications. Such outcomes demonstrate that student journals can play a direct role in shaping academic trajectories, especially in disciplines where writing samples, research experience, or publications are valued. Even when publication does not directly lead to career

advancements, the accumulated experience of writing, editing, teamwork, communication becomes a form of professional capital that graduates can utilise to their benefit in numerous contexts.

Finally, the interviews highlighted the social benefits of participating in student journals. As noted in section 3.2.2, many journals explicitly aim to build community, here, the focus shifts to how individual participants experience these social dimensions in practice. Several teams emphasised that the journal offers a rare form of community that differs from both classroom environments and study associations. Editors often form close friendships due to the collaborative nature of the work and the shared sense of responsibility. Participants from *Frame* and *Expanded Field* described the editorial meetings as social spaces where creative or intellectual interests bring people together. At several other publications the sense of belonging was mentioned as one of the main reasons editors commit to the journal despite the workload. *Raffia*, although operating online, makes a deliberate effort to organise offline events that allow members to get to know one another and build closer connections. Community-building is not merely an incidental outcome but a central part of what sustains these publications. As discussed earlier, many journals operate with little institutional backing, therefore, strong internal cohesion becomes essential for the journal's survival.

Taken together, the benefits of participating in student journals are extremely varied. Students gain practical skills, build professional networks, experience personal growth and confidence, improve their academic and career prospects, and find social communities that enrich their university experience. These advantages help explain why students continue to invest significant time and energy into maintaining journals, often with minimal external support.

3.2.4 Challenges Faced by Student Journals

While the benefits of participating in student journals are substantial, editors also emphasised the significant obstacles that shape their work. Many of these challenges are systemic and structural rather than accidental, and they contribute to the overall fragility of student publications and the overall landscape. The difficulties encountered by student journals can be grouped into several recurring themes: funding insecurity, heavy workloads, continuity issues due to editorial turnover, recruitment obstacles, uneven faculty engagement, and administrative and technical burdens. Together, they illustrate that student publishing in the Netherlands is a highly motivated but precariously sustained endeavour.

Funding is unequivocally the most frequently cited challenge for the publications: almost half of the interviewees mentioned financial insecurity as one of the most urgent issues. Journals typically rely on one or several budget sources: faculty or study-association support, subscriptions, donations, sponsorships from external sources, or grants. Since faculty allocations or study-association funds are approved on a year-to-year basis, individual publications are often in precarious positions, unsure

whether they will receive sufficient financial resources to sustain the running of the publication. With ongoing budget cuts in education, their position becomes even more fragile.[68]

Since almost all of the publications run on volunteer labour and are non-profit, their costs usually go toward maintaining websites and covering printing expenses. Most publications that do not receive supplementary funding from their department or study association rely on subscribers to recoup some of their printing costs. However, with rising printing expenses, most of them do not break even and must either raise their prices or try to offset their financial losses through other sources such as grants or donations. One journal's editor-in-chief admitted that she had to fund an issue of the journal from her personal finances, as the issue was very important to her and to the journal, and there was no way to receive financial support from the university. Hybrid and creative journals, which often rely on print runs or events, are particularly vulnerable – some had to reduce the number of issues or discontinue physical prints altogether due to rising production costs.

A few journals pursue alternative financial models, though these come with their own downsides. *Frame* and *Groniek*, for example, continue to rely partially on paid subscriptions, but editors noted that subscription income is modest and administratively demanding. By contrast, some journals, such as *EJPE, Skript,* and *Frame*, have benefited from the availability of diamond open access funds, which cover technical infrastructure. However, these funds are usually competitive, not widely known, and often require faculty support. Financial vulnerability therefore remains one of the most significant obstacles limiting growth, stability, and professionalisation of student publications.

Closely linked to the financial strain is the challenge of workload. Several editors mentioned that at times, especially around the release of an upcoming issue, the amount of work required can be quite strenuous. This is exacerbated by the voluntary nature of student journals: people are not expected to fulfil strict obligations, which often means that students in senior positions end up reprimanding other team members, and some individuals take on more work simply because they feel more responsible for the outcome. However, it should be noted that none of the interviewees perceived the workload as unmanageable. According to them, most issues stem from their own planning mistakes and are otherwise preventable or very short-term. Moreover, many editors emphasised that, due to the collaborative nature of teamwork, there is usually someone else who can take on a task, and student boards generally try to support one another as much as possible.

A third, and arguably structural, challenge involves continuity and knowledge transfer. Due to the lack of institutional backing, most publications must rely on the multiyear involvement of students who preserve and pass on the traditions and know-how of the journal. In most editorial boards, students

[68] 'FAQ about budget cuts in higher education', *University of Amsterdam*, n.d. <https://www.uva.nl/en/current/budget-cuts/budget-cut-faqs.html#What-is-going-on> [accessed 9 December 2025]; 'Update: Executive Board responds to government cuts', *Universiteit Leiden*, 7 October 2025 <https://www.staff.universiteitleiden.nl/news/2024/09/executive-board-responds-to-government-cuts> [accessed 9 December 2025].

can stay for several years, ensuring that someone is always available to maintain continuity between boards. However, in publications such as *TXT* and *The Chepos*, where the board changes early, the preservation of knowledge must rely on external support, such as supervising faculty members or manuals written by previous boards. *Absint* has attempted to mitigate this issue by working on an extended manual for board members. Nevertheless, this challenge also affects boards where members remain for multiple years. An editor from *Inter-Section* noted that she was 'thrown into the process' as it was ongoing and had to learn everything on the go, which can create additional strain for students. Even journals with stronger organisational structures struggle: editorial guidelines may exist, but tacit knowledge, such as how to negotiate with faculty, maintain reviewer networks, or manage publishing software, often disappears when experienced editors leave. Continuity therefore depends heavily on the commitment of particular individuals, making journals vulnerable to sudden collapse. *Expanded Field*, for example, had to be revived after a lapse caused by graduating teams, and the interviewed representative of *Raffia* suggested that she might have to remain on the board long after graduating to ensure that the journal continues. This issue affects not only knowledge transfer but also the history of the journal itself. Editors from *Blik* mentioned the loss of access to electronic versions of earlier editions, making it impossible for them to maintain a complete archive on their website.

Recruitment is a persistent challenge for many journals. Several editors attributed recruitment difficulties to students' perceptions of time commitment, the lack of tangible institutional incentives to participate in extracurricular activities, or a general trend of declining involvement in student associations that started after the Covid pandemic. An editor from *Leidschrift* noted this general decline in student participation in associations and extracurricular activities, while *Blik* and *Raffia* specifically mentioned difficulties in finding Dutch-speaking members to join their teams. Editors of *SCAJ* suggested that for students who do not intend to pursue an academic career, participating in a journal may seem redundant, especially since teachers often do not emphasize the relevance of publishing for future career paths. Editors at *RU:ts* similarly observed that students may not see the value in joining the journal if they do not plan to remain in academia. In the case of the *History Collective* journal, the interviewed editor felt that students do not want to join the board because they will lose the ability to publish in the journal, highlighting that the importance of the journal within the faculty does not correlate with a high level of interest in participation. Interestingly, even *EJPE* is struggling to staff its core team: although the journal is primarily run by PhD students from the Erasmus School of Philosophy and participation was once considered almost expected, recent financial issues have reduced the number of members, and some potential contributors simply choose not to join.

Beyond organisational issues, many journals struggle with technical and administrative burdens. Maintaining websites, updating submission platforms, performing layout work, or managing migrations to Open Journals and similar platforms are tasks for which students usually have no prior training. *Leidschrift* has to reconcile the move to Open Access with their older audience who is not as familiar with internet publications. Some journals rely on individual editors with specialised skills, creating

dependencies that become problematic when those individuals graduate. *MJLA* also recognises an issue in its reliance on large tech corporations, using platforms such as Google for storing information and WhatsApp for communication.

Finally, many journals mentioned issues with the number of submissions they receive. Several journals confirmed that they essentially have to publish almost everything they receive and are not at liberty to refuse submitted articles. At times, they have to extend deadlines on their calls for papers or reach out to faculty members to ask whether they have any high-quality student papers 'in the drawer' that might fit the publication. *Aanzet*, for example, mentioned that they don't produce themed issues because they would struggle to receive enough submissions. This issue mostly concerns publications that limit their submissions to a specific department or university.

3.2.5 Institutional Support

Another point of interest concerns relationships with faculty and the unevenness of institutional support. Journals exist along a spectrum. At one end, some enjoy strong faculty involvement. *LEAP* benefits from close supervision and structured integration into coursework, while *Inter-Section* relies on institutional backing because its editors are employed PhD candidates. As a result, they are more familiar with the university system, such as knowing whom to contact in the library to register articles in the repository or obtain DOIs. However, being integrated into formal workloads does not mean they are free from challenges. Supervisors of the *LEAP* course, for example, noted the difficulty of running an interdisciplinary programme. Faculty logistics do not account well for faculty-level education, so they must rely on their own efforts to promote the course. *RU:ts* benefits from having a PhD candidate active on the board, as she can act as a liaison with the faculty.

Student editors from many journals described their faculty relationships as falling somewhere in the middle: lightly supervised, occasionally consulted, but mostly autonomous. In most cases, institutional support is provided in the form of an advisory board. *LingUU*, *Ex Tempore*, and *ESJP*, for instance, benefit from faculty advisors who can intervene, if necessary, yet day-to-day operations remain overwhelmingly student-run. In the case of *EJPE*, an advisory board composed of well-known scholars provides credibility in the field and enables the editors to reach out to experts for peer review or specialised questions. For *History Collective*, professors are involved only in the final review stage, to ensure that the issue is presentable and meets university academic standards. Editors acknowledged the advantages of autonomy but also noted that the lack of structured support can leave them without guidance when facing complex editorial or organisational dilemmas.

At the other end of the spectrum, several journals, reported feeling largely ignored by their faculties. These teams expressed frustration that their work is institutionally undervalued despite contributing to student development and departmental visibility. Some journals, such as *Aanzet*,

mentioned that while they have an advisory board on paper, the members are not actually involved, and any participation appears to have occurred many years ago.

Another common form of support is financial. Universities typically provide some funding to cover the basic running costs of journals, such as printing or website maintenance, to keep them operational. However, obtaining this funding is often extremely difficult. Members of *SCAJ* noted that one board member spent nearly two years attempting to secure university funding without success. *Raffia* depended on the Centre for Women's Studies for its budget, but when the centre closed, the journal lost its funding entirely. Although *Expanded Field* still receives faculty funding, the interviewed editor believes the faculty would be willing to provide more if current budget cuts did not prevent it.

In most cases, students do not know who is responsible for financial decisions. At the University of Amsterdam, however, funding is handled by ALPHA, an organisation that supports student associations and magazines in the Faculty of Humanities. ALPHA acts as an intermediary between students and the faculty: managing and advising on funding, assisting with organisational issues, and facilitating connections between groups. Funding levels vary by journal: those earning income through subscriptions or sales receive supplementary support. ALPHA also helps with logistics, for example, currently serving as treasurer for a journal without a functioning board. Established 26 years ago to bridge the gap between the faculty and student-run organisations, ALPHA provides a more approachable student-led structure. It organises events such as an 'acquisition evening' to inform journals about funding opportunities. A new magazine is joining this year due to departmental budget cuts, suggesting a potential growing number of groups seeking support. Some magazines, such as the faculty magazine *Babel*, remain outside ALPHA, but the organisation already oversees eight magazines and twenty-one study associations. Given this scope, journals must communicate their needs proactively. ALPHA generally works reactively, offering assistance without influencing direction as magazines value their independence and largely operate autonomously.

The findings in this section are based primarily on student editors' accounts of their relationships with faculty and institutional structures, supplemented by two interviews with faculty supervisors and one interview with ALPHA representatives. While the limited number of faculty interviews reflects the reality that most student journals operate with minimal faculty involvement, it also means that claims about institutional support are largely filtered through student perspectives. Faculty members' own views on their roles, constraints, and motivations for engagement remain largely unexplored in this study. The patterns described should therefore be understood as student editors' experiences of institutional support rather than a comprehensive institutional analysis.

3.2.6 Cooperation and Cross-Journal Relations

When asked about cooperation with other student journals, most interviewees reported that such interactions are limited or non-existent. Despite the large number of student publications across Dutch

universities, cross-journal relationships tend to be minimal, informal, and sporadic. This fragmentation mirrors the broader lack of centralised infrastructure and reflects both practical constraints and differences between the journals.

While most editors mentioned networking as a benefit of participating in student publishing, this networking generally remains within the journal's own community and faculty rather than extending to other publications. Many student editors reported not knowing of any other student journals in their faculty or only being vaguely aware of them. Even in the case of *EJPE* and *ESJP*, two publications linked to the Erasmus School of Philosophy, editors noted that they do not collaborate because their aims and target authors differ entirely. Even journals grouped under the same organisation do not necessarily cooperate frequently. *Absint*, for example, mentioned occasionally checking what other journals under ALPHA are doing to ensure alignment but not communicating with them regularly. Some journals reported receiving invitations to launch events organised by publications in their field.

Time scarcity plays a major role: editors already feel strained by their own responsibilities and do not have the capacity to organise cross-institutional activities. Second, there are no institutional incentives or mechanisms encouraging cooperation. Universities do not maintain central registries of student journals, nor do they facilitate contact between editorial teams. Without a centralised structure, collaboration depends entirely on individual initiative, which is difficult to sustain given the annual turnover of student boards. As a result, attempts to build networks often lose momentum once key organisers graduate.

There are, however, notable exceptions. *Expanded Field* organised the Day of Writing and Publishing, a networking initiative in which local journals were invited to sell their issues and connect with one another. The event also featured speakers from the publishing industry. While *Expanded Field* does not collaborate closely with other student journals, this event facilitates some degree of networking, the journal *Frame* specifically mentioned receiving an invitation.

Another notable case is the informal collaboration between several history journals, specifically *Aanzet, Leidschrift, Skript, Ex Tempore, Groniek*, and *History Collective*. Editors described an informal borrel initiated by *Aanzet* around two years ago, where editorial teams met to discuss shared challenges. At that time, they explored the idea of jointly transitioning to the Open Journals platform, since individually they did not meet all criteria (for example, peer review requirements).[69] Ultimately, they did not pursue the joint move, as each journal found its own solution. The editor of *Aanzet* confirmed plans to organise another similar networking event next year.

The absence of sustained cooperation has notable implications. It reinforces the fragmentation of the student publishing landscape, prevents journals from sharing knowledge that could ease administrative or technical burdens, and perpetuates inequalities between well-supported and under-

[69] Details about this meeting are based on the recollection of one former participant interviewed for this research. Since none of the current editorial board members were present at the event, specific details could not be independently verified by other participants.

supported publications. A handful of interviewees expressed interest in creating a national network for student journals, ideally one that could facilitate resource sharing, joint training sessions, and the exchange of best practices.

3.3 Discussion

This discussion synthesizes the findings presented in Chapters 2 and 3 to address the research questions outlined in the introduction. The first question asked how widespread student journals are in Dutch higher education and how they are organised in practice. Chapter 2's mapping identified 71 publications across the fourteen research universities, revealing a landscape more extensive than previously documented but largely invisible within institutional structures. The analysis below examines what patterns emerge within this diversity.

Taken together, these insights paint a picture of a landscape that is both vibrant and structurally uneven. Addressing the question of how student publications are organised in practice, the findings confirm that heterogeneity is not merely an analytical category but the defining feature of the field. Student journals in the Netherlands differ in format, scale, editorial workflow, and disciplinary orientation to an extent that makes any universal definition difficult. Yet several patterns can be identified. Nearly all operate on volunteer labour with minimal institutional support, creating shared vulnerabilities around funding and continuity; most position themselves along a spectrum between pedagogical training and professional contribution rather than at one pole exclusively; disciplinary culture strongly shapes organisational choices, with humanities journals dominating and tending toward experimental formats; and social cohesion consistently functions as infrastructure, meaning that journals survive through editorial commitment and friendship rather than institutional backing. These commonalities suggest that while heterogeneous, Dutch student publishing operates under shared structural conditions that distinguish it from more institutionalised models in North American and UK contexts, as explored below.

The three-category typology developed earlier – academic journals, hybrid journals, and student or faculty magazines – proved highly useful for making sense of these differences. The interviews reveal that these categories are not only descriptive but deeply connected to each publication's mission. Journals that prioritise research-based content and peer review tend to organise themselves more formally, whereas hybrid and creative publications deliberately stretch the boundaries of what scholarly communication can be. Their structures reflect conscious editorial philosophies: some emphasise discipline-specific contribution, others emphasise experimentation, and others emphasise accessibility and student voice. This confirms that student-run publications do not represent a single model but a collection of distinct editorial cultures.

The first research question asked how student publications are organised in practice; the patterns discussed above address this question by revealing both diversity and shared structural

conditions. The second question concerned what purposes these journals serve. The findings confirm that these purposes are varied and often overlapping: pedagogical, social, platform-related, and professional. Almost all editors described editorial work as a learning experience: one that teaches skills rarely offered through formal coursework. This aligns with wider claims about student publishing as an important site of skill development, particularly around academic communication, reviewing, and project management. At the same time, the pedagogical role can create organisational tensions. Where boards rotate annually, students gain valuable experience through the necessity of learning everything independently, but the journal loses continuity, creating a cycle in which each team must rebuild processes that could otherwise be stable. In other words, the very feature that makes these journals effective learning environments, the need to figure things out without inherited knowledge, simultaneously threatens their operational stability and professional development over time.

The pedagogical benefits described by editors align closely with what Beall and Zhao conceptualise as 'scholarly publishing literacy', as mentioned in the literature review chapter.[70] Editors reported learning not only how to evaluate arguments and provide feedback but also how to understand article selection, assess publication quality, navigate copyright issues, and comprehend the broader infrastructure of academic communication. Notably, different types of journals cultivate different dimensions of this literacy. Academic journals such as *LingUU* and *MJLA* emphasize formal peer review processes and editorial decision-making, directly preparing students for traditional scholarly communication. Hybrid publications like *Raffia* and *Blik* expand this literacy to include creative and experimental modes of dissemination, familiarising editors with alternative formats that are increasingly valued in digital scholarship. Even magazines focused on student community, such as *The Chepos* and *Intermania*, develop competencies in audience awareness, visual communication, and accessible writing. This supports the literature's claim that student journals address gaps in formal education, though it also suggests that the pedagogical value of these publications extends beyond preparing students for conventional academic careers and into broader professional and creative contexts.

The social and community-building functions emerged more strongly than expected. Many editorial teams described their journal as a third space, where students from different cohorts or disciplines meet, collaborate, and form friendships. This not only enhances students' sense of belonging but also influences academic identity formation. While existing literature acknowledges social benefits, such as networking, mentorship, and a sense of belonging, these are typically discussed as secondary outcomes or by-products of editorial work rather than as central motivating factors. Such social benefits are well-documented in literature but are often treated as secondary. The interviews suggest that, for many Dutch publications, they are in fact central. Particularly in larger programmes, journals fill institutional gaps by providing spaces for connection that the curriculum does not.

[70] Zhao, 'Riding the Wave of Open Access', p. 4.

The platform function also emerged clearly. Many journals explicitly aim to showcase work that would otherwise remain unpublished, such as excellent course papers, creative pieces, or interdisciplinary projects. This reflects broader concerns in scholarship about the visibility and value of student work: although students regularly produce high-quality material, it often disappears into closed systems. Journals that prioritise student-only submissions position themselves as correctives to this problem.

The varied peer review practices documented in this study directly engage with ongoing debates about the academic legitimacy of student publications. As discussed in the literature review, Bendinskas, Caudill, and Melara argue that expert-led peer review is the 'one absolutely essential criterion' for undergraduate research journals to achieve scholarly credibility.[71] Yet the Dutch landscape reveals that many functioning and valued student journals operate without external peer review, relying instead on editorial collective models or faculty-supervised internal review. This raises important questions about how legitimacy is constructed and perceived in student publishing. Journals like *EJPE* and *Frame*, which employ rigorous external peer review, position themselves as professional academic outlets and are recognised as such within their disciplines. By contrast, journals such as *Skript* and *Groniek* use editorial review but maintain strong reputations within their fields, suggesting that legitimacy can also be built through consistency, longevity, and integration into disciplinary communities. The critique raised by some scholars that student reviewers provide only 'surface-level' feedback did not emerge prominently in the interviews. However, it must be acknowledged that editors themselves may not be the most reliable judges of feedback quality. Authors who received the reviews would be better positioned to evaluate whether the feedback meaningfully improved their work. This limitation points to the need for future research that includes author perspectives alongside editorial ones.

What these findings reveal is a fundamental tension: student journals that attempt to replicate professional standards risk being judged inadequate by those standards, while those that embrace their pedagogical identity may struggle for recognition as legitimate scholarly outlets. It is important to distinguish between different types of legitimacy here. From the student perspective, these journals clearly provide valuable pedagogical and community-building functions. Whether they also hold legitimacy as scholarly outlets within their broader disciplinary communities, which is a question better assessed by established scholars in those fields rather than by student participants, remains more ambiguous and likely varies considerably across publications. This tension cannot be resolved by imposing a single model but rather by recognising that different publications serve different purposes within the broader ecosystem of scholarly communication. The Dutch case suggests that legitimacy is contextual and that the pedagogical and community-building functions of student journals may be just as valuable as their contributions to disciplinary knowledge, even when formal peer review is absent.

[71] Bendinskas, Caudill and Melara Jr., 'The Case for Undergraduate Research Journals', pp. 2–3.

The interviews confirm that student journals resist simple categorisation. Nearly every publication described in this study serves multiple purposes simultaneously: they are training grounds and community spaces and scholarly platforms. Rather than fitting into single-purpose models, these student journals demonstrate how pedagogical, social, and scholarly functions are deeply intertwined in practice. Journals that prioritise skill development also build communities; those that maintain rigorous academic standards also provide learning environments; and platforms focused on student expression simultaneously contribute to disciplinary conversations.

These findings additionally reveal that legitimacy in student publishing is constructed differently than in professional academic journals. While some publications gain recognition through rigorous external peer review, other journals maintain strong reputations through consistency, longevity, and integration into their disciplinary communities. What matters is not whether these journals are 'legitimate' in an absolute sense, but rather what kind of legitimacy they seek and how it should be assessed. Journals positioning themselves as professional scholarly outlets require the markers of professional legitimacy. Those operating primarily as pedagogical spaces or community platforms, such as *EJPE* or *Frame,* require markers of professional legitimacy: external peer review, indexing, and recognition within their disciplinary fields. Those operating primarily as pedagogical spaces or community platforms, such as *TXT* or *History Collective*, require different forms of validation: evidence that they successfully develop students' skills, foster community, and provide meaningful learning experiences. These represent different forms of legitimacy rather than competing claims to the same standard. The Dutch case therefore suggests that student publishing encompasses multiple categories within scholarly communication: some function as legitimate scholarly platforms evaluated by disciplinary standards, while others function primarily as pedagogical or community-building initiatives evaluated by educational outcomes. Both are valuable, but they should be assessed according to their stated purposes rather than judged uniformly against professional publishing standards.

The third research question asked what challenges student journals face. Across interviews, recurrent themes included financial precarity, technical responsibilities, recruitment difficulties, and heavy dependence on volunteer labour. These observations closely reflect existing critiques of student publishing, particularly those regarding sustainability and academic legitimacy. Limited funding and rapid turnover create constant organisational strain, especially for smaller teams. Several editors described burnout or a sense of carrying disproportionate responsibility simply to keep their publication alive. This fragility also affects how journals perceive themselves: even when they employ peer review or rigorous workflows, many editors feel their work is not taken seriously by faculty or by authors, reinforcing the broader hierarchical separation between ‘real’ and ‘student’ publishing.

One notable finding that diverges from concerns raised in the literature is the absence of stress-driven competition or unhealthy publishing pressure among Dutch student journal participants. Gilbert's critique of student journals emphasises that they can create unnecessary stress by compelling students

to meet deadlines and by fostering competition between those who publish early and those who do not.[72] Similarly, literature on 'publish or perish' culture suggests that students are increasingly aware of competitive pressures and may pursue publication primarily to strengthen their CVs. In the Dutch context, however, editors consistently described their work as voluntary, fulfilling, and driven by their own motivation rather than career anxiety. When workload challenges were mentioned, they were attributed to planning issues or temporary peaks around publication deadlines, not to systemic pressure. These findings suggest that the relationship between student publishing and academic pressure is not universal but shaped by national educational cultures, labour market structures, and institutional norms. While the concerns raised by Gilbert and others remain valid in contexts where early publication is increasingly expected, the Dutch case demonstrates that student journals can function as low-pressure spaces for experimentation when embedded in different cultural conditions.

The fourth question concerned what forms of institutional support, if any, underpin student journal existence. The findings confirm substantial variation between universities. Some provide meaningful infrastructure or access to publishing platforms, while others appear largely unaware of the student-run journals active within their faculties. Most journals function independently, without systematic training, financial backing, or long-term technical support. This limited institutionalisation reinforces both the creativity and the fragility of the field. Students enjoy autonomy and freedom, but they also bear the full weight of sustaining their journals. The few cases where courses or academic departments are more directly involved demonstrate how stabilising structured support can be. They also highlight that such models remain exceptions rather than the norm. The findings regarding curriculum integration reveal important interchange. Full curriculum integration, as seen in *LEAP*, provides stability, quality standards, and reduce volunteer burden through course credit and faculty supervision, but it also limits flexibility and requires significant faculty resources. *LingUU*'s partial integration by aligning review processes with a compulsory course without fully embedding the journal, appears to balance these tensions by creating reliable reviewer pools while preserving editorial autonomy. These variations suggest that sustainability cannot depend solely on student enthusiasm but requires some form of institutional commitment, whether through curriculum integration, dedicated support organisations, or consistent faculty mentorship.

The limited involvement of academic libraries in supporting Dutch student journals represents a significant departure from models described in the literature. Hare and others emphasise that libraries increasingly act as educators in scholarly communication, providing training programs, technical infrastructure, and mentorship to student editorial teams.[73] Taylor and Janson similarly describe university presses and libraries as crucial partners that offer both symbolic legitimacy and practical continuity.[74] In the Dutch context, however, library support appears primarily technical rather than

[72] Gilbert, 'Points of View', pp. 22–23.
[73] Hare, 'Library Publishers as Educators', pp. 1–39.
[74] Taylor and Jensen, 'Engaging and Supporting a University Press Scholarly Community', pp. 1–8.

pedagogical: libraries assist with repository access, DOI registration, and occasionally platform migration, but few journals reported receiving structured training or ongoing mentorship from library staff. This absence may partly explain the technical and administrative burdens editors described, as they must learn platform management, metadata standards, and digital preservation practices without systematic guidance.

The ALPHA model at the University of Amsterdam represents a notable exception and a potentially unique institutional innovation not documented in existing literature. As a student-run intermediary organisation, ALPHA provides financial management, organisational advice, and networking opportunities to multiple journals and study associations within the faculty. This structure offers several advantages: it remains accessible and student-centered while still providing stability and institutional knowledge that individual journals lack. ALPHA's reactive rather than directive approach preserves editorial autonomy while offering support when needed. However, its dependency on faculty funding and its limitation to a single faculty also illustrate the precarity of such models. The contrast between ALPHA and the library-centered support structures described in North American literature raises important questions about institutional responsibility for student publishing. Should universities develop centralised support mechanisms, or does the student-led nature of organisations like ALPHA better serve the needs of student publications? The Dutch case suggests that effective support structures need not be library-based but do require some form of institutional recognition and resourcing to ensure sustainability.

Finally, cooperation between journals proved more aspirational than actual. Many editors expressed curiosity about other journals and interest in collaborating, sharing skills, or building a network. Yet, with a few exceptions, journals work through their challenges individually. Part of this isolation stems from a lack of institutional structures that would facilitate communication; part seems to reflect the same autonomy that editors appreciate. There is a tension here: collaboration could strengthen continuity and reduce duplicated effort, but formal networking might also standardise workflows and remove some of the exploratory, improvisational learning that many editors value.

Taken together, this study reveals that Dutch student publishing is best understood not as a marginal or amateur activity but as a distinct ecosystem that operates at the intersection of pedagogy, scholarly communication, and student culture. These publications are neither simply training grounds for future academics nor fully professional scholarly outlets but rather occupy a productive ambiguity that allows them to serve multiple functions simultaneously. They provide spaces for skill development, intellectual community, creative experimentation, and public engagement in ways that formal curricula and professional journals cannot easily replicate. At the same time, their value remains largely invisible within institutional structures: universities benefit from the intellectual vitality, community building, and reputational contributions these journals provide, yet offer minimal recognition or support in return. The challenges documented throughout this study, such as financial insecurity, knowledge loss through turnover, technical burdens, recruitment challenges, reflect not the failure of individual publications but

a structural undervaluation of student-led intellectual work. The future of student publishing in the Netherlands depends on whether universities recognise these publications as valuable sites of learning and community or continue to treat them as peripheral activities sustained entirely by student enthusiasm.

Finally, the overarching question asked what the Dutch case can tell us about the broader roles of student publishing in the contemporary academic landscape. These findings illuminate what the Dutch case reveals about student publishing beyond North American and UK contexts, where most existing literature originates. Several features appear culturally or institutionally specific. The strong presence of study associations provides organisational infrastructure for funding, meeting spaces, and recruitment that many journals depend on. The relative accessibility of Dutch higher education and prevalence of extracurricular intellectual culture might explain why journal participation is framed more as community engagement than career building. The fragmentation observed might reflect decentralised Dutch higher education, where faculties operate autonomously with limited university-wide coordination. Linguistically, Dutch-language journals face smaller audiences and indexing challenges, while English-language journals access broader networks but may feel less locally rooted.

While this thesis has illuminated many aspects of student-run publications in the Netherlands, the field remains too broad to capture fully in a single study. Future research could investigate more systematically the financial and institutional support provided by universities, both historically and in contemporary practice, to better understand the structural conditions that sustain or constrain these journals. Exploring the perspectives of other stakeholders, such as faculty liaisons, advisory boards, or librarians, could reveal additional layers of influence and support. Likewise, examining the experiences of contributors themselves would provide insight into how these publications shape student learning, engagement, and professional development. Finally, integrating quantitative approaches alongside qualitative methods could offer broader generalisations and help map trends across the student publishing landscape, complementing the rich, context-specific findings presented here.

Conclusion

This thesis set out to map and analyse the ecosystem of student-run academic journals in the Netherlands, addressing a notable gap in scholarly understanding of how these publications operate, what purposes they serve, and what roles they play within Dutch higher education. Through a combination of desk research, systematic mapping, and qualitative interviews with student editors and faculty supervisors, this study has provided the first comprehensive overview of student publishing activities across Dutch research universities.

The first chapter situated student journals within broader debates on scholarly communication, professionalisation, and pedagogy. The literature review revealed that while student publishing has attracted considerable scholarly attention internationally, particularly in North America and the United Kingdom, research remains geographically concentrated and usually centres on publications which closely resemble traditional academic journals. The chapter identified key themes uniting all student-led publications, including the pedagogical benefits of participation, the challenges of legitimacy and sustainability, and the importance of institutional support structures. This literature provided a framework for analysing the Dutch case and examining how these journals navigate questions of purpose, legitimacy, and sustainability in practice.

Chapter 2 addressed the absence of systematic documentation of Dutch publications by mapping student journals and magazines across the fourteen research universities. This exploratory process revealed substantial diversity in publication types, editorial structures, and institutional positioning. To make sense of this variety, the chapter proposed a working typology of three categories: academic student journals, which follow conventional scholarly structures and often incorporate peer review; hybrid publications, which merge academic and creative content; and student or faculty magazines, which focus primarily on community engagement and creative expression. The mapping process also identified several recurring patterns, including the predominance of humanities and social sciences journals, widespread adoption of open access models, heavy reliance on social media for visibility, and significant variation in institutional support across universities. These findings established both the scope and internal diversity of the Dutch student publishing landscape, forming the empirical foundation for the interview-based analysis that followed.

In the third chapter, we drew on the insights from the twenty-five interviews with student editors, editorial board members, and faculty supervisors to explore how student publications function in practice. The interviews revealed that these journals serve multiple overlapping purposes simultaneously: pedagogical, social, platforming, and professional. Nearly all participants emphasised the learning opportunities provided by editorial work, particularly in developing skills rarely taught in formal curricula, such as peer review, constructive feedback, project management, and scholarly communication literacy. Social and community-building functions emerged as equally significant, with many journals operating as third spaces where students form friendships, build interdisciplinary

networks, and develop a sense of belonging within their academic communities. The platform function was described as empowering for both authors and editors, offering validation and tangible outcomes that strengthen students' academic identities. Operational practices varied widely, from small informal teams to large structured editorial boards, and from rigorous double-blind peer review to editorial collective models. Institutional support proved highly uneven, with some publications benefiting from strong faculty involvement and financial backing while others operated largely independently with minimal recognition. The chapter also documented the fragmentation of the student publishing landscape, with limited collaboration or networking between journals despite shared interests and challenges.

Taken together, these findings demonstrate that Dutch research universities have a vibrant and vigorous student publishing community, which includes a variety of publications ranging from fully professional double-peer-reviewed journals to less formal journals that act as ways of self-expression and ways to document student life. What unites all publications, despite their differences, is a strong sense of responsibility and enthusiasm for the work. Participating in student-led initiatives acts as a stepping stone not only for academic careers, by providing students with the possibility to practice skills relevant in academia, but also for all other sorts of employment, since they provide a variety of other transferable skills that are difficult to obtain within the boundaries of the official curriculum. Despite all of this, the publications remain largely invisible within university networks and structures. While some publications are well known and respected within their universities, in most cases students themselves have to do everything to sustain the individual publications and make sure they do not quietly die out as the world of academic publishing quickly moves forward. The future of student publishing in the Netherlands depends on whether universities recognise these publications as integral to student development and academic culture or continue to treat them as peripheral activities deserving minimal support. This research provides a foundation for that recognition, proving that student-led publishing is an activity deserving of significant attention and support within university communities and on a national level.

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Appendix 1

1. Aanzet (Utrecht University)
2. ABC journal (University of Amsterdam)
3. Absint (University of Amsterdam)
4. aE journal (TU Delft)
5. Algemeen Nijmeegs Studentenblad (Radboud University)
6. Amsterdam Law Forum (Vrije Universiteit)
7. Amsterdam Medical Student Journal (University of Amsterdam)
8. Argus (Utrecht University)
9. ARTillerie; een kunsthistorisch spervuur (Radboud University)
10. Babel (University of Amsterdam)
11. BAISMAG (Leiden University)
12. Bestuurskundige Berichten (Leiden University)
13. Blaadje van Archaeopteryx (Utrecht University)
14. Blik (Utrecht University
15. The Chepos (Eindhoven University of Technology)
16. Cimedart (University of Amsterdam)
17. Cognitive Neuroscience Journal (Radboud University)
18. De Moon (Radboud University)
19. Departementsblad BioSCOPE (Utrecht University)
20. Echo (Utrecht University)
21. Eindeloos (University of Amsterdam)
22. Erasmus Journal for Philosophy and Economics (Erasmus University Rotterdam)
23. Erasmus Journal of Medicine (Erasmus University Rotterdam)
24. Erasmus Student Journal of Philosophy (Erasmus University Rotterdam)
25. EUC Student Academic Journal (Erasmus University Rotterdam)
26. eurovisie (University of Amsterdam)
27. Ex Tempore (Radboud University)
28. Expanded Field (Vrije Universiteit)
29. Frame (Utrecht University)
30. Groniek (University of Groningen)
31. Groningen Journal of International Law (University of Groningen)
32. Heroïne (University of Amsterdam)
33. History Collective (Erasmus University Rotterdam)
34. Honours Review (University of Groningen)
35. Intermania (Eindhoven University of Technology)
36. Inter-Section (Leiden University)
37. Journal of Neuroscience & Cognition (Utrecht University)
38. Junctions (Utrecht University)
39. Juncto (Utrecht University)
40. KAT blad (University of Amsterdam)
41. Kunstlicht (Vrije Universiteit)
42. LEAP (Leiden University)
43. Leiden Arts in Society Blog (Leiden University)
44. Leidschrift (Leiden University)

45. LingUU (Utrecht University)
46. LUCAS Graduate Journal (Leiden University)
47. Maastricht Student Journal of Psychology and Neuroscience (Maastricht University)
48. Maastricht Student Law Review (Maastricht University)
49. MaRBLe (Maastricht University)
50. Medusa (Leiden University)
51. Noorderlicht (University of Amsterdam)
52. openME (Eindhoven University of Technology)
53. Panoramic: The Leiden Art Review (Leiden University)
54. Pantheon// (TU Delft)
55. Raffia (Radboud University)
56. RU:ts (Radboud University)
57. Science for Sustainability Journal (Vrije Universiteit)
58. SCOPE (Utrecht University)
59. Simulacrum (University of Amsterdam)
60. Skript (University of Amsterdam)
61. Slovo (University of Amsterdam)
62. Soapbox (University of Amsterdam)
63. Splijstof (Radboud University)
64. Students of Cultural Anthropology Journal (Utrecht University)
65. Supremum (Eindhoven University of Technology)
66. The Maastricht Journal of Liberal Arts (Maastricht University)
67. The New Scholar (Leiden University)
68. Twijfel | Wijsgerig Faculteitsblad (Erasmus University Rotterdam)
69. TXT (Leiden University)
70. Utrecht Journal of International and European Law (Utrecht University)
71. Utrecht Student Journal (Utrecht University)
72. WRITER'S BLOCK MAGAZINE (University of Amsterdam)

Appendix 2

Questions for student editors

1. Could you start by briefly introducing yourself and your role in the journal/magazine?
2. How did this publication begin, and what do you see as its main purpose today?
Prompt: For example, more of a pedagogical project, a student community platform, or a serious academic outlet?
3. How is the journal/magazine structured? How many people are involved, and what are their main responsibilities?
4. Could you walk me through how a typical issue comes together from idea or submission to publication?
5. What kind of work do you publish and how do you balance academic pieces with more creative or informal content?
6. Who is your main audience?
Prompt: Are you trying to reach other students, scholars, or a more general readership?
7. What kind of support do you receive from your department, faculty, or university — financial, technical, or advisory? Do you have a faculty supervisor or contact person?
8. From your perspective, what do students gain from participating?
9. What are the main difficulties you face in running the publication?
Prompt: time, continuity, funding, recruiting new members, etc.
10. Are you aware of other student journals or magazines in the Netherlands?
Do you see yourself as part of a wider student publishing community or are you more of a standalone unit?

Questions for supervising professors

1. Could you briefly introduce yourself and your role with the student journal?
2. How did you become involved with this journal?
In your view, what is the main purpose of the publication – pedagogical, scholarly, or community focused?
3. What kind of guidance do you provide to the editorial team?
How closely are you involved in content selection, peer review, or other editorial decisions?
4. Do you see it as a legitimate scholarly outlet, or primarily a learning experience for students? How is the journal perceived by the students?
5. What skills or experience do students gain from participating?
6. What are the main challenges from an institutional perspective (e.g., continuity, funding, recognition)?
How is editorial knowledge or institutional memory transferred between student cohorts?
7. If you could improve one aspect of the journal or student support, what would it be?
What do you consider the journal's most significant contribution to students or the department?

Appendix 3

Aanzet

Aanzet is a historical magazine published by the Utrecht Historical Student Circle (UHSK) since 1982, appearing three times per year. The magazine offers Utrecht history students the opportunity to transform their research papers or theses into popular-scientific articles in both Dutch and English. Each issue contains four student articles alongside sections such as 'The Passion of...' (faculty interviews), 'How history you?' (research methods), 'Imagery' (historical objects/images), 'Inzet' (opinion pieces), and book/media reviews.

Absint

Absint is a bimonthly magazine on Dutch studies published by students of the Dutch Language and Culture programme at the University of Amsterdam, founded in 2011. The editorial board of approximately twenty people consists of editors-in-chief and content-producing editors who do not accept external submissions. Each edition features a different theme and includes interviews, short stories, poems, book reviews, and essays, describing itself as a 'literary playground' for those learning to write and publish.

Blik

Blik is a student-led academic journal for audiovisual culture at Utrecht University, founded approximately 19 years ago and originally published in Dutch before transitioning to English. The editorial board of eight people includes two editors-in-chief, secretary, treasurer, website manager, PR executive, and two graphic designers, publishing three issues per year. Each issue contains 4-5 academic pieces (graded papers nominated by teachers), creative works, interviews, essays, and a professors' column, employing editorial peer review.

The Chepos

The Chepos is the professional magazine of Study Association CHEOPS at Eindhoven University of Technology's Department of the Built Environment, published in English since its 52nd edition. The committee of 6-7 students from the Built Environment studies produces two issues per year, with each member writing an article and recruiting additional contributors. The magazine focuses on interesting projects, architecture, urban planning, construction, real estate, departmental news, and association activities, with editorial review conducted among board members.

Erasmus Journal for Philosophy and Economics (EJPE)

The *Erasmus Journal for Philosophy and Economics (EJPE)* is a peer-reviewed bi-annual academic journal supported by the Erasmus Institute for Philosophy and Economics, functioning as a fully

professional outlet within the field of philosophy and economics. The journal is run by a small editorial board of PhD students from the Erasmus School of Philosophy. EJPE strives to be an accessible outlet for early-career scholars by offering no submission fees, free copy-editing, and open access, while maintaining rigorous standards including desk review and expert peer review.

Erasmus Student Journal of Philosophy (ESJP)

The *Erasmus Student Journal of Philosophy (ESJP)* is a double-blind peer-reviewed journal that publishes philosophical papers by students from the Erasmus School of Philosophy and the Humanities Programme of Erasmus University College, founded in 2011. The journal's 12-person editorial board publishes one to two issues per year following rigorous academic journal processes. Teachers nominate papers for consideration, which then undergo three rounds of editing and external peer review by professors with relevant expertise.

Ex Tempore

Ex Tempore is the official historical magazine of Radboud University's History department, resulting from a 2011 merger of two earlier journals (*Ex Tempore* and *Verleden Tijdschrift*). The editorial board of approximately 11 students publishes three themed issues per year with approximately 75% contributions from experienced scholars and 25% student papers. The journal employs editorial peer review with a grading system (A-C) and positions itself as an accessible platform for both students and professors to publish open-access content.

Expanded Field

Expanded Field is an English-language journal for creative writing and image/text experimentation, established in 2017 by Dr. Erin La Cour and affiliated with the Department of Language, Literature, and Communication at Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam. After a period of inactivity, the journal was recently revived by a student-led team consisting of 3 core board members and approximately 20 team members covering roles in copy-editing, submissions, design, and marketing. The journal accepts creative submissions from everyone regardless their affiliation.

Frame

Frame is a biannual journal of literary studies founded in 1984, initially published in Dutch and now fully in English, affiliated with Utrecht University. The editorial board of approximately 10 members, including 2 co-editors-in-chief, publishes both established scholars with PhDs (main section, peer-reviewed), graduate students (masterclass section, editor-reviewed), and experimental works in a 'Gallery' section. The journal recently received an NWO grant to transition to Diamond Open Access and maintains diverse international board membership.

Groniek

Groniek is a historical journal published by Stichting Groniek three times per year, founded over 50 years ago and composed of an editorial board of history students at the University of Groningen alongside students from related fields. The journal primarily publishes papers by experienced scholars while maintaining a supplementary section for students and early-career researchers, employing editorial peer review by the editorial board. *Groniek* maintains a year-long embargo period before making content open access and publishes articles in both Dutch and English on niche historical themes.

History Collective

History Collective is a platform for showcasing history students' work at Erasmus University Rotterdam, founded in 2022. The journal publishes student papers on a variety of historical topics through an open rolling submission system and employs several rounds of editorial peer review with professors conducting a final review to ensure academic standards. The publication aims to provide an accessible introduction to the academic world while boosting students' confidence and CVs.

Inter-Section

Inter-Section is a peer-reviewed, open-access journal founded in 2015/2016 focusing on contributions from undergraduate and graduate students at Leiden University's Faculty of Archaeology, with an editorial board consisting exclusively of PhD candidates. The journal emerged from a perceived need for a less intimidating practice space for student publishing and works extensively with student authors through multiple stages of editing before sending papers to external peer review by field specialists.

Intermania

Intermania is the magazine of study association Intermate at Eindhoven University of Technology, serving the bachelor program Technical Innovation Sciences and related masters, published for 31-32 years. The magazine appears twice per year and functions primarily as entertainment for association members, with a committee of 4 people producing content by soliciting articles from other association committees, columnists, and students working on theses. Articles are predominantly comedic and community-focused, though some academic content appears in the form of introduction to bachelor projects, master theses, or PhD research summaries.

Leiden Elective Academic Periodical (LEAP)

LEAP is a peer-reviewed journal founded in 2021 through a teaching innovation grant, operating as a credit-bearing course at Leiden University's Faculty of Humanities under the supervision of Dr. Nanne Timmer and Dr. Astrid Van Weyenberg. The course accepts 15 students who must submit a proposal and existing paper, then guides them intensively through transforming course papers into publishable articles over one semester. The journal aims to bridge research and writing while introducing students

to practical aspects of academic publishing and interdisciplinary dialogue that are typically absent from standard curricula.

Leidschrift

Leidschrift is an academic historical magazine published by Stichting Leidschrift since 1984, originally founded by professors in Leiden's History Department as a stepping stone for students to familiarize themselves with academic publishing. The editorial staff of 13-14 students from Leiden University, along with one faculty member, publishes three themed issues per year primarily featuring articles by leading historians from home and abroad, with a secondary section for student contributions. The journal employs editorial peer review and maintains a formal committee structure including positions for advertising, social events, symposium organization, and website maintenance.

LingUU

LingUU is the official peer-reviewed student journal of linguistics at Utrecht University, founded in 2017 to provide a platform for undergraduate, graduate, and PhD students to publish their papers. The journal uniquely integrates reviewing into the compulsory 'Research skills seminar' course for first-year research master students, ensuring a steady supply of trained reviewers each year while aligning the publication schedule with the academic calendar. The editorial team consists of 2 co-editors-in-chief, manuscript editors, design members, PR members managing website and Instagram, and treasurer positions, publishing one issue per year in both online and limited print formats.

Maastricht Journal of Liberal Arts (MJLA)

The *Maastricht Journal of Liberal Arts (MJLA)* is a peer-reviewed undergraduate journal at University College Maastricht, active for 17 years and publishing one issue annually. The journal accepts only papers from UCM students that received grades of 8 or higher, subjecting them to multiple editing rounds including student peer review, faculty comments, and professional proofreading. The editorial board consists of bachelor students who remain for multiple years in a hierarchical structure with proper editorial terminology, supervised by a faculty member who ensures academic standards without making executive editorial decisions.

New Scholar

The *New Scholar* is an interdisciplinary peer-reviewed journal at Leiden University's Faculty of Humanities, founded through an initial 2.5-year grant with the mission to enable pioneering academic collaborations across disciplines. The journal welcomes submissions in multiple languages from bachelor to master students across the faculty and is open to new media formats including video essays, posters, and infographics alongside traditional academic articles. Student editors from across the faculty

work under the facilitation of a faculty member who guides the process and provides training on academic journal operations.

openME

openME is the magazine of study association Simon Stevin at Eindhoven University of Technology, serving the Mechanical Engineering program and published for 57 years, transitioning from Dutch to fully English. The magazine produces three issues per year with content organized into three main topics: Education (faculty news, well-being), Career (companies, career opportunities), and Interest (miscellaneous topics). The editor-in-chief, who is also chairman of the association, takes a gap year to run the magazine with complete creative freedom, managing both editorial and layout responsibilities alongside a committee of 6-8 people.

Raffia

Raffia is a bilingual (English and Dutch) online magazine publishing articles, columns, and reviews around themes of gender, diversity, and feminism, affiliated with Radboud Gender & Diversity Studies and founded in 1989. Originally a paper magazine published until 2015, Raffia transitioned online after the Women's Institute closed and funding ceased, though it occasionally produces special printed issues. The editorial board of 5 people oversees a team of 10-20 writers and editors (bachelor, master, and PhD students) who produce at least one article per week, employing in-house editing with two editors per article.

RU:ts

RU:ts is a linguistics journal at Radboud University founded in 2018/2019 by research master students to provide a platform for publishing student papers that may not meet the standards of professional academic journals. The journal accepts submissions from Radboud bachelor and master students in linguistics for papers written in Dutch or English about internships, theses, or course papers, employing student peer review before online open-access publication. The current editorial team receives financial support from the university for publication and publication parties, with one PhD student serving as long-term editor-in-chief to maintain continuity.

Skript Historisch Tijdschrift

Skript is a historical journal founded in 1979 at the University of Amsterdam to bring student research to the public and familiarize students with the publishing process. The editorial board of 10-12 editors produces four issues per year employing editorial peer review, with all pieces read by 3-4 different editors. The journal publishes articles, interviews, book reviews, and occasionally film reviews, primarily sourcing content from the ‘Skript Prize’ for best historical bachelor's theses in the Netherlands and an Essay Prize for first-year UvA students.

Soapbox

Soapbox is a student-run publishing platform founded in 2018 that promotes scholarly, artistic, and interdisciplinary work engaging with cultural artifacts and contemporary phenomena within the humanities, affiliated with UvA, NICA, and ASCA. The journal operates with 18 board members across various functions, publishing one peer-reviewed print issue per year via call for papers with double-blind peer review, and accepting shorter pieces for the website on a rolling basis. *Soapbox* has gained significant popularity with recognition from faculty and scholars, winning design award and selling internationally.

Students of Cultural Anthropology Journal (SCAJ)

SCAJ is a biannual journal at Utrecht University founded in 2019 by students who wanted to create a platform for sharing anthropological papers beyond the graded context. The core editorial board of 5 people is supported by an advisory board of 4 former members who ensure continuity, publishing only anthropological papers through blind review alongside maintaining a less formal blog for creative writing. The journal accepts submissions only from students, with current board members unable to publish in the journal.

TXT

TXT is an annual academic journal affiliated with the Book and Digital Media Studies MA programme at Leiden University and published by Academic Press Leiden, with the editorial board changing completely every year with each new cohort. The journal's primary purpose is pedagogical, serving as a teaching tool to help students learn how to make a journal, experience cooperation, and develop practical publishing skills.