

**Joining Secondary Education  
Utrecht  
2023-2024**

# Procedure Joining Secondary Education 2023-2024 | Utrecht

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## 01 The procedure

Every year, around 4300 students in Utrecht make the transition from primary school to secondary education. It is important that this transition goes well, because it partly determines the school success of these students. That is why the school boards in Utrecht and the municipality of Utrecht have made agreements about registration and admission to secondary education. These agreements together form the “Joining secondary education” procedure. The procedure was revised in 2023 due to the new [Progression Act](#) and more intensive collaboration in the region. Thanks to this collaboration, the regions of Utrecht South East, Utrecht West, Utrecht South, Stichtse Vecht and Utrecht use the same registration, draw and placement system. Each region retains its own procedure and priority rules. This brochure explains the procedure in Utrecht. The governors have agreed to avoid draws as much as possible by stretching the capacity of the schools as much as possible where necessary.

Various laws and guidelines stipulate what school boards and schools must adhere to when transitioning from primary school to secondary education. Guidelines further elaborate on how the recommendation regarding the choice of secondary school is drawn up and what information the primary school transfers to secondary education during the transition. Additional agreements can also be made regionally and locally between primary schools and secondary schools. These agreements must of course comply with the laws and regulations.

All primary and secondary schools in Utrecht work according to the “Joining secondary education” procedure. The boards of these schools determine the procedure annually. A working group with representatives of school boards, the municipality of Utrecht and the implementing organisation prepares the decisions of the school boards.

The procedure applies to students who transfer from primary education, special primary education or special education to the first year of secondary education in Utrecht. In this procedure we use the term primary education for the different types of education together. The teacher’s manual contains more information about how to implement this procedure<sup>1</sup>.

## 02 What does the primary school do?

## 2.1 The primary school gives a binding recommendation regarding the choice of secondary school

Most children attend the same primary school up to and including year 8. Primary school teachers therefore know a lot about their development, interests, skills, talents and possibilities. Based on this knowledge, the test data from the student monitoring system and the method tests, the primary school will give a provisional recommendation regarding the choice of secondary school between 10 and 31 January (as legally laid down in the Progression Act).

After issuing the provisional recommendation regarding the choice of secondary school, the progression test will be administered in the first weeks of February. The results of the advancement test will be announced no later than 15 March. This result is a so-called 'objective second fact' and a supplement to the recommendation regarding the choice of secondary school issued by the primary school. The law states that the primary school must adjust the provisional recommendation regarding the choice of secondary school if a student scores at least half a level higher on the final test than the recommendation regarding the choice of secondary school. In principle, the recommendation regarding the choice of secondary school is adjusted to the score reflected in the progression test, regardless of the level difference.

In some cases, this may be deviated from if this is in the student's interest of the. The primary school must explain to parents why they do not adjust the recommendation regarding the choice of secondary school to the recommendation that reflects the progression test and record this argumentation in the educational report. The provisional recommendation regarding the choice of secondary school is never adjusted downwards. The primary school is by law obliged to issue the final recommendation regarding the choice of secondary school no later than 24 March.

<b>Example 1</b> The student received a provisional recommendation regarding the choice of secondary school for havo <sup>a</sup> /vwo <sup>b</sup>  Test recommendation was vwo  After adjustment → vwo  School must explain reason for sticking to havo/vwo.	<b>Example 2</b> The student received a provisional recommendation regarding the choice of secondary school for vmbo bb <sup>c</sup> /vmbo kb <sup>d</sup> .  Test recommendation was vmbo kb/vmbo-tl <sup>e</sup>  After adjustment → vmbo kb/vmbo-tl (or vmbo-tl)  Explain reason for vmbo bb/vmbo kb  Explain reason for vmbo kb.	<b>Example 3</b> The student received a provisional recommendation regarding the choice of secondary school for vmbo kb  Test recommendation was vmbo tl/havo  After adjustment → vmbo tl/havo (or havo).  School must explain reason for sticking to vmbo kb.  School must explain reason for changing recommendation to vmbo kb/vmbo-tl.  School must explain reason changing recommendation to vmbo-tl.	<b>Exception</b> Student with recommendation regarding the choice of secondary school pro <sup>f</sup>  Test recommendation: pro/vmbo bb  No adjustment → recommendation remains pro.  <a href="#">Sector council Practical education</a>
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The final recommendation regarding the choice of secondary school is binding. Secondary education must adopt this recommendation and place the student at the educational level recommended by the primary school.

In Utrecht, it has been agreed with all school boards that primary school recommendation is in principle multiple and only in a few cases where it is more appropriate, single<sup>2</sup>. The exception to this are the level recommendations for practical education and vwo. A multiple recommendation is more in line with the wish for later determination and with the test result of the progression test.

<sup>a</sup> Senior general secondary education

<sup>b</sup> Pre-university education

<sup>c</sup> Block or day release at prevocational secondary education level

<sup>d</sup> Gaining practical knowledge while in prevocational secondary education

<sup>e</sup> Theoretical learning pathway at prevocational secondary education level

<sup>f</sup> Employment-oriented education

In the case of a multiple recommendation, only the lowest level of this recommendation is binding for the secondary education school. Students with a multiple recommendation can register for the higher of the two education levels but ultimately, the secondary school determines at which level the student is placed. Schools that only offer one type of education from the multiple recommendation are therefore not obliged to place students with a multiple recommendation if only the highest recommended type of education is offered at the school in question. If it turns out that the student cannot cope with the highest level of the multiple recommendation, the school cannot offer the student an alternative course of study. Example: schools that only offer vmbo-tl are not obliged to admit students with the recommendation vmbo-kader<sup>g</sup>/vmbo-tl. The school boards have an agreement that secondary schools will only consider students with a multiple recommendation admissible if they offer the lowest education level of the multiple recommendation at their school.

If a draw is required (see under 3.1.3), this will be done based on the multiple recommendation, with the exception of vwo<sup>3</sup>. The draw categories are:

- vmbo-bbl<sup>h</sup>/vmbo-kbl<sup>i</sup>;
- vmbo-kbl/vmbo-tl;
- vmbo-tl/havo;
- havo/vwo;
- vwo;

For students with a single recommendation, this recommendation is considered the lowest level of the multiple draw category. For example: students with a vmbo tl recommendation are drawn in the vmbo tl/havo draw category.

## 2.2 Registering for secondary education

Students are registered<sup>4</sup> from the moment the final recommendation has been determined until 31 March. This is stipulated in the Progression Act. An exception applies to registration at vso<sup>j</sup> schools. This takes place between 1 and 15 March 2024. Each student makes a preference list of schools for secondary education based on primary school recommendation, with the school of highest preference being number 1. The primary school discusses the student's school of preference with the student and parents<sup>5</sup>. Students with a recommendation for vmbo-tl, havo or vwo are advised to include six preferred schools in Utrecht on their preference list. Students with a recommendation for vmbo-bbl/vmbo-kader and vmbo-kader/vmbo-tl are advised to include two schools in Utrecht on their preference list. Schools from the region can always be added, but these will be in addition to the number of preferences recommended above. If there is a school on your preference list that offers a placement guarantee, there is no need to indicate more preferences after the school in question. The placement guarantee applies to all students, regardless of place of residence. It therefore does not matter whether the school with a placement guarantee is a school in Utrecht or a school in the region. Please note: at some schools the placement guarantee only applies to the 1st preference, see [naarhetvo.nl/scholen-met-plaatsingsgarantie](https://naarhetvo.nl/scholen-met-plaatsingsgarantie) to see which schools are involved. It is important to provide multiple choices because there may be over-registrations, which may require a draw for an educational level at multiple schools.

The primary school takes care of the registration on behalf of parents<sup>6</sup> via Onderwijs Transparant after having received permission from the parents. Onderwijs Transparant is a digital registration system<sup>7</sup>. Parents will receive confirmation of the registration by email. The order of preferences will be decisive for the placement (and possible draw).

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<sup>g</sup> Gaining practical knowledge while in prevocational secondary education

<sup>h</sup> Block or day release at prevocational secondary education level

<sup>i</sup> Gaining practical knowledge while in prevocational secondary education

<sup>j</sup> Special secondary education

The school of first preference will be the first to process the application. To this end, the school of first preference must have the educational report and any other relevant documents. Via an authorisation form for registration, parents give permission for the primary school teacher to inform the school of first preference that it is the school of first preference and to send the educational report and any other relevant documents to the school of first preference.

### **2.2.1 Registering with a school that does not match the recommendation regarding the choice of secondary school**

The school boards have an agreement that secondary schools will only consider students with a multiple recommendation admissible if they offer the lowest education level of the multiple recommendation at their school. In Onderwijs Transparant, it is not possible for the teacher to register a student at a school where the student is not considered admissible according to the administrative agreements in Utrecht and Stichtse Vecht. If a parent still wants to register with such a school, they will have to contact the POVO (primary and secondary education) regional coordinator.

The regional coordinator can possibly take care of the registration in Onderwijs Transparant. The email address of the regional coordinator is [povo@bakhuysconsultancy.nl](mailto:povo@bakhuysconsultancy.nl).

### **2.3 The educational report**

By law, the primary school is obliged to draw up an educational report for every student who transfers to secondary education and to properly inform parents about its contents. Parents receive a copy of the educational report. They do not have to approve or sign the educational report. If parents do not agree with the information the school has included in the educational report, they have the right to add their views to the report. Onderwijs Transparant offers an option for this.

### **2.4 Students who need more support**

Some students need more support, for instance, in terms of learning or behaviour. Support for these students is offered at primary school or secondary education. This can be done in the form of basic support or with an arrangement offered by the partnership. Schools have a duty of care for students with additional support needs. If a student needs more support than the regular secondary school can provide on the basis of the school support profile, the school where the student has registered will look for suitable alternatives together with the student, the primary school, parents and involved partnerships. This may, for instance, involve additional support at the school for secondary education or (temporary) education in another setting, such as the OPDC Utrecht (intermediate facility) or a school for secondary special education.

This route starts at the end of year 7/start of year 8 and also applies to students who make the transition from special (primary) education to the OPDC or secondary (special) education.

### **2.5 Students who live in the Netherlands for a short period**

For students who have lived in the Netherlands for less than four years, the primary school's recommendation regarding the choice of secondary school is based on the information collected during the period that the student is at school. These students can also take advantage of the opportunity for additional examination in January of the exit year. The results of these examinations are included in the educational report and are supportive in determining the final recommendation regarding the choice of secondary school.

### **2.6 Consultation between primary and secondary education**

In order to issue a well-founded recommendation, the schools share their knowledge and experience. For instance, by having consultation early in the school year about the most appropriate level of education and the most appropriate support. These meetings are organised at the initiative of the schools or school boards. Schools can also contact each other themselves. The students remain anonymous in these consultations.

### **2.7 Consultative transfer**

Primary schools usually also have information about students that secondary schools don't need to place a student, but which can be valuable in monitoring and guiding the student. Secondary schools



also sometimes need further explanation regarding the educational report. This information can be shared between the primary school and the secondary school during the 'consultative transfer'. These meetings take place at the end of each school year and are organised centrally. During the registration process, both the primary school and the secondary school can indicate whether they want to transfer a student on the basis of a consultative transfer. During the preparation, the schools involved will provide additional questions and information. The primary school may only share information with permission from the parents.

### 03 What does secondary education do?

### 3.1 Registration and placement

The registration period is determined nationally and takes place from the moment the final recommendation has been determined until 31 March. Secondary schools then have approximately three weeks to process the registration (see annual calendar). The school of first preference will process the application. It assesses the registration for admissibility (see 3.1.1) and for placeability (see 3.1.2).

#### 3.1.1 The school rejects the student if the student is not admissible

If the student is not admissible, the student will be rejected.

There are three grounds on which a school can reject a student:

1. The single recommendation issued by the primary school or the lowest level of the multiple recommendation issued by the primary school does not correspond to the level of education offered by the secondary school.
2. The student does not meet the additional admission criteria, as determined in advance and announced by this school<sup>8</sup>.

If a student is not admissible on one of the aforementioned grounds and is therefore rejected, the secondary school will reject the student in Onderwijs Transparant and will also make the grounds for rejection known. The secondary school will announce this to parents and the primary school. Every year, it is agreed before which date this rejection must be registered in Onderwijs Transparant (see [annual calendar](#)). If the student is not admissible and has therefore been rejected, the student is automatically registered with the next-preferred school on the preference list. This registration will then be treated in the same way as all other registrations.

3. The support offered as determined in the School Support Profile of the secondary school for which the student has registered is not sufficient for the additional support required by the student.

If the secondary school believes it cannot provide the student with the additional support required, the secondary school has a statutory obligation to work with the student, parents and primary school to look for suitable alternatives for this student ([duty of care](#)). The partnerships can provide support in this regard. The school can reject the student only once a new school has been found that is willing to admit the student. Because this may take a longer period of time, the school may inform parents that they need more time to reach a placement decision. The statutory period of six weeks can be extended by an additional four weeks. If the secondary school assesses that a vso setting is the most suitable setting, the secondary school must request a statement of needs from the partnership. Only when this has been issued and a school for secondary special education is willing to admit the student, can the school reject the student. If the secondary school assesses that another regular school is a better match, this school must also be prepared to admit the student before the secondary school can reject. In all cases, professional consultation must take place between the primary school and secondary school; the parents are involved in this process. Students for whom a postponed placement decision applies will be excluded from the draw in the case of over-registration at the educational level in question.

If the student has to be placed in regular education after the extended period, the student will be able to take advantage of a direct placement at the school of first preference.

#### 3.1.2 Direct placement

There are four situations in which a direct placement may be appropriate. In the case of a direct placement, the student will be excluded from a possible draw.

*In exceptional cases, a direct placement for specific support needs*

In exceptional cases, a secondary school may decide to place a student with specific support needs before registration. For such a direct placement, it must be demonstrated that the secondary school in question is the only school in Utrecht that can offer this student this appropriate education. Please note that every secondary school has an obligation to provide appropriate education. Learning disabilities are therefore no reason to decide on a direct placement. A direct placement of a student

with specific support needs can occur, for instance, when there are serious limitations in coming to school and the student with the specific support needs is dependent on the school in question given the residential location.

If parents believe there is an exceptional situation and their child qualifies for a direct placement, they must submit a request to the principal or governor of the relevant secondary school. The procedure is as follows:

- The relevant secondary school must have received the direct placement request (including the required documents) no later than 31 January 2024. The request must be submitted by email or post.
- The request must include reasons why the secondary school in question is the only school that can offer their child appropriate education.
- The request must be accompanied by evidence demonstrating the special support need. This may be medical data, test results or statements from primary school. The residential location can also play an important role.
- The primary school supports the request and substantiates this in a written statement.
- If necessary, the principal or governor of the secondary school will discuss the request (anonymously) with one or more of the following people:
  - core partners (school doctor, neighbourhood team, school attendance officer, partnership);
  - the care coordinator;
  - the transition class department manager;
- The secondary school decides on the direct placement.
- The secondary school will inform the parents in writing of the decision no later than 8 March 2024 and make this known in Onderwijs Transparant.

#### *Sibling arrangement at St Bonifatius College and the Christelijk Gymnasium Utrecht*

St Bonifatius College and the Christelijk Gymnasium Utrecht have a sibling arrangement in place. This means brothers or sisters can be placed immediately. These arrangements will be phased out. See the schools' websites for detailed information.

#### *Students for whom a deferred placement decision applies*

For some students, the secondary school needs a longer period to determine whether the school can meet the student's support needs. In that case, schools can extend the registration period from 6 weeks to 10 weeks. They will inform parents of this by letter. In collaboration with the primary school, parents and any external partners, the secondary school will look for the most suitable place for the student. If after the extension, it turns out the student can be placed at the school, this student can be placed directly at the school of first preference.

#### *Exception rule for participation procedure 'Joining secondary education' 10-14 education*

Students who start in the primary education (PO) department of Academie Tien do not participate in the 'Joining secondary education' procedure and have direct access to the secondary education (VO) part of the same concept. A 10-14 concept exists if:

- students aged 10 to 14 who follow a course of study with a continuous teaching guideline from primary school to secondary school;
- a primary school and a secondary school work together for the course of study (students are registered on the same so-called BRIN number<sup>k</sup> PO and subsequently on the same BRIN number VO);
- Primary and (first-stage) secondary education students follow education at the same location.

If students choose not to continue with the course after the primary education part and want to switch to another secondary school or another direction at the relevant secondary education school, they do have to follow the procedure "Joining secondary education". In that case, they will follow all applicable agreements for switching students.

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<sup>k</sup> Educational institution registration number

Primary education students in a 10-14 concept are registered in Onderwijs Transparant with the secondary education department of the same 10-14 concept before the final registration date of that year. This secondary school places these students on the basis of direct placement.

If the secondary school has sufficient places at the educational level for which students have registered, the students who have registered will be placed.

### **3.1.3 The school holds a draw in the event of over-registration**

If a school has more registrations than places at the educational level for which students have registered, not all students who have registered can be placed. A draw will be held. A draw will be held among students who have registered for the same level of education. Whether or not a draw must be held will only be clear once secondary schools have processed all first-preference applications and rejected students who are not admissible. Students with a first preference at a school with over-registrations at a certain educational level, and who are eligible for that educational level, will be included in the draw. The draw is based on the Boston mechanism.

It is first checked whether a student can be placed at his/her first-preference school. If this is not successful, the student is immediately registered with the second-preference school, and so on. The draws take place one after the other, in the presence of the civil-law notary. All students in Utrecht and the region are notified of the school they have been admitted to on the same day. It is important that sufficient preferences have been communicated, otherwise there is a possibility that a student will not be admitted to a secondary school.

## Explanation of central draw

### Registration:

- Secondary schools create transition classes and indicate for each transition class which recommendation is eligible for this and also indicate the capacity for each transition class in Onderwijs Transparant.
- The primary school can register students for the transition classes that match the recommendation issued to the student.
- The registration preferences are processed on a preference list.
- Together with the school governors, it is examined whether an upward adjustment of capacity can prevent a draw.

### Draw:

- After the registration period, the project leader will have access to all registrations for each transition class and all priority rules per registration. Initially, only preference 1, because this is determined by the first-preference school itself.
- All students who are registered for a transition class for which there is sufficient capacity for all registrations in preference 1 will be admitted.
- In the case of a transition class with insufficient capacity, the priority rules are examined first before students are admitted:
  - o First, all students who qualify for priority rule 1 will be admitted. If there is still capacity left, the next group of students who qualify for priority rule 2 will have their turn.
  - o If it turns out there is insufficient capacity for a 'group' of registrations (per priority rule), admission will not be possible. This group of students will then ultimately proceed to the draw.
  - o All students who are not eligible in advance based on priority rules and capacity will be rejected in advance.
- All registrations that require a draw (see above) will proceed to the draw and matching module. The transition classes and their (remaining) capacity per transition class will also proceed.
- A Boston draw is performed during the draw and matching module:
  - o Each student is assigned a random draw number.
  - o The student with number 1 will be matched first to his specified transition class, followed by the student with number 2, etc.
  - o If a student can ultimately not be matched because the transition class is full, that student will be eliminated.
- The results of the draw are processed in the system.
- The above steps will then be repeated for all students who are not admitted to preference 1. NB: after preference 2, priority rules no longer apply.

### Example:

School A has 100 places and 140 registrations. Of these, 80 students have priority rule 1, 45 students have priority rule 2 and no priority rule applies to the remaining 15 students.

- The 80 students are admitted because there is sufficient capacity for that group. There are 20 places left after that.
- Those 20 places are not enough for the group of 45 registrations with priority rule 2. These students will be included in the draw. A draw will then be held for 45 students who have a chance to win 20 places.
- The 15 students without a priority rule have already been rejected in advance. They will follow the steps repeated for preference 2. NB: after preference 2, priority rules no longer apply.

### Placement:

- All parents/students will be informed by email on the same day at which school the student has been selected and therefore placed. The placement constitutes admission, with the exception of schools where additional admission criteria apply: De Passie and X11. They will assess the registration after placement. Students who have not been placed can through the primary school register at a secondary school that still has room after April 25. These will process the registration in order of receipt.

### **3.1.3.1 During a draw, priority for students from Utrecht at schools in Utrecht on first preference (priority rule)**

If a draw must be held for first-preference schools due to over-registrations, students who live in the municipality of Utrecht<sup>9</sup> have priority for secondary schools in Utrecht, but only on the first preference. However, this only applies to the first preference.

Gymnasium-only schools are excluded, because they have a regional function. At these schools, a draw is held among the total number of eligible students for the relevant educational level who are not directly placed, without making a distinction between students who live in the municipality of Utrecht or in the region.

Priority rule 1: Immediate placement

Priority rule 2: Priority for Utrecht students at secondary schools in Utrecht

Priority rule 3: Students from an Al Amana primary school have priority at the Al Amana secondary school if this is their first preference. They will have direct access. This only applies if they meet the level recommendation and enter Al-Amana College as their first preference on their list. Students will be registered via Onderwijs Transparant.

### **3.1.3.2 The draw is public and takes place under notarial supervision**

The draw is organised centrally for the entire region and takes place under notarial supervision. A representation of schools, school boards and the municipality will be present at the draw. The draw is public.

## **3.2 Placement and admission**

Parents will receive an email with a placement decision via Onderwijs Transparant. This email explains the procedure for draws at secondary schools. This also contains the draw number if it has been assigned to the student. This placement decision counts as an admission/rejection at the secondary school. The secondary school digitally registers this decision, so the primary school is informed. An exception applies if a placement decision is made at a school with additional admission criteria (De Passie and X11) that is not the first preference on the preference list. In that case, the additional criteria then be tested and therefore the placement decision will not necessarily lead to admission. Parents are responsible for obtaining information about these admission criteria before applying

to these schools. If a student is admitted, the secondary school will confirm the admission in writing and ask the parents to complete and sign an enrolment form.

## **3.3 Students who are not admitted**

If a student has not yet been admitted to a secondary school after the draw, the primary school will, possibly with the support of the implementing organisation, the secondary education partnership and the school attendance officer, look for a suitable school within or outside the municipality of Utrecht that still has places available. The secondary school will process these registrations in order of receipt. There is a place for every student from Utrecht at a secondary school in Utrecht.

### **3.3.1 Waiting list**

The draw takes place in order; this means the first draw relates to the first preference of all students. For eliminated students, an attempt is made to place them at their second-preference school.

If this school too experiences over-registration, a draw will follow, after which the student will be placed at the third-preference school (if a draw has not already taken place at that school). With each draw, the process will continue until all students receive a draw number. This creates a waiting list that will be used if students decide not to take their assigned place after admission. The school will contact the student with the next number on the waiting list. This creates a waiting list that will be used if students decide not to take their assigned place after admission. The school will contact the student with the next number on the waiting list. The waiting list is valid until the last day of the academic year.

## 04 Information and communication



#### **4.1 The primary school: point of contact for parents and students**

The primary school informs and advises parents and students about the transition to secondary education and the applicable procedure. The primary school pays extra attention to important aspects of the registration procedure and the changes that have been implemented due to the Progression Act. The primary school actively informs parents about the student data that is used, to whom it is transferred, at what time and for what purpose.

#### **4.2 Open days for secondary education**

All secondary schools in Utrecht organise open days or information meetings. Students cannot yet register at a school during this period, but they can already orientate themselves. Information about open days can be found on the websites of the secondary schools. Students from year 8 can also visit an open class afternoon at a secondary school at least twice. Parents register their child for this. Information about this can also be found on the websites of the relevant schools.

#### **4.3 Website with information about the procedure**

All information about the procedure in Utrecht and important dates can be found at [www.naarhetvo.nl](http://www.naarhetvo.nl). Additional information for parents can also be found at [naarhetvo.nl/ouders](http://naarhetvo.nl/ouders). Primary schools can use the website to supplement their information to parents. This website also contains a PowerPoint presentation about the changes brought about by the new Progression Act and the letter that parents have received about this. The school can contact the implementing organisation for advice and information during the registration and placement period (February-June) via [info@naarhetvo.nl](mailto:info@naarhetvo.nl). Outside this period, they can contact a representative of their own board with questions. Information about this can be found at [naarhetvo.nl](http://naarhetvo.nl). Schools can contact the implementing organisation only via [info@naarhetvo.nl](mailto:info@naarhetvo.nl).

## 05 What to do in the event of complaints

In the event of complaints about a primary school or a secondary school, the complaints and objections regulations of the relevant school or school board apply. This also includes, for instance, complaints about the rejection of a student or about the recommendation regarding the choice of secondary school.

Dissatisfaction with or suggestions for improvement of the 'Joining secondary education' procedure can be expressed in writing to the board of the school in question.

The board can submit this during the administrative consultation of 'Joining secondary education'.

## 06 The procedure in seven steps

1. The primary school will provide a binding recommendation regarding the choice of secondary school by 24 March 2024 at the latest.
2. The primary school digitally registers the student at the preferred secondary schools on behalf of the parents. Students with a recommendation for employment-oriented education, vmbo-bbl, vmbo-kader and vmbo-kader/vmbo-tl are advised to include two schools in Utrecht on their preference list. Students with a recommendation for vmbo-tl, havo or vwo are advised to include six schools in Utrecht on their preference list. Schools from the region may be added anywhere on the preference list.
3. The school of first preference will be the first to process the application. Via an authorisation form, parents give permission for the primary school teacher to inform the school of first preference that it is the school of first preference and to send the educational report and any other relevant documents to the school of first preference.
4. Students who live in Utrecht have priority at secondary schools in the municipality of Utrecht, but only on their first preference. This priority rule does not apply to the gymnasium-only schools in Utrecht.
5. A draw is held if there are more registrations than places at a school at an educational level. If students are eliminated, they are immediately registered in the digital system with their second-preference school. On 25 April, students are told at which school they have been placed.  
Placement also leads to admission, except at a school where additional criteria apply.
6. Between 1 February and 1 June, the implementing organisation supports the schools in the implementation of the procedure. More information about this can be found at [www.naarhetvo.nl](http://www.naarhetvo.nl).
7. Timeline of the Joining Secondary Education procedure

Discussing provisional recommendation regarding the choice of secondary school with parents	10 January to 31 January
Progression test	First two weeks of February
Result progression test	No later than 15 March
Adjustment after higher result progression test	Between 15 and 24 March
Final recommendation regarding the choice of secondary school	No later than 24 March
Registration with secondary education with preference list	From the moment the final recommendation has been determined until 31 March
Secondary school tests the admissibility of registrations	1 April to 18 April
Final rejection date secondary education	19 April
Possible draw and placement decisions	23 - 25 April

8. View the timeline of the VSO procedure [here](#).

## Notes

- 1 Available on [www.naarhetvo.nl](http://www.naarhetvo.nl).
- 2 Pursuant to the Primary Education Final Test Act, a primary school may issue a single or multiple recommendation. In the case of a single recommendation, one type of school is recommended, for instance, havo. In the case of a multiple recommendation, two adjacent types of schools are recommended.
- 3 In accordance with the law, gymnasium falls under a vwo recommendation. Registration, placement and, if necessary, drawing also take place at vwo level.
- 4 'Registration' should be interpreted as parents showing written interest in the school for their child ([letter](#) dated 20 December 2016 from the State Secretary for Education, Culture and Science).
- 5 Wherever this procedure refers to 'parents', it also refers to parent, caregiver or caregivers.
- 6 At times, a student's registration at the school of first preference is withdrawn by parents/primary school. The person requesting withdrawal of registration is responsible for ensuring the student is registered with a new preferred school in a timely manner.
- 7 If parents object to a digital registration or if a student wants to register at a school that does not use this digital registration system, the student will be registered with certified paper. The primary school can request this from the implementing organisation via [info@naarhetvo.nl](mailto:info@naarhetvo.nl).
- 8 Two schools in Utrecht have additional registration criteria: De Passie for evangelical secondary education and XII, a school for the graphic arts industry. Students must meet the additional criteria of these schools to be admitted. For more information, visit the websites of these schools.
- 9 A student may reside in multiple places. To be considered an Utrecht student, at least one address given in the educational report must be an address in the municipality of Utrecht. A student who moves to Utrecht before the start of the next academic year, but is not yet registered there during the registration period, is also regarded as a Utrecht student.