UNIVERSITEIT VAN AMSTERDAM

Code of conduct of the University of Amsterdam

Approved by the Executive Board on 27 August 2020

INTRODUCTION

The Code of Conduct is the framework outlining appropriate behaviour for all staff and students of the University of Amsterdam. This code is informed by our core values, as incorporated into our Strategic Plan. The Code of Conduct helps staff and students act in a responsible manner, in accordance with the values espoused by the University, and also allows them to hold each other accountable in the event that the code is breached. The code concerns any and all conduct a member of staff or student engages in as part of their work or studies, irrespective of whether said conduct takes place on the University's premises, in an academic setting elsewhere (e.g. at a conference) or online (e.g. an online lecture, social media).

Specific rules of conduct have been derived from this code and laid down in separate rules and regulations. Where relevant, these rules and regulations allow us to challenge unacceptable behaviour and to lodge complaints. More information on these regulations and complaints procedures can be found here.

HOW TO INTERACT WITH EACH OTHER

UvA: a foundation of appreciation and trust

The UvA seeks to offer a positive and safe working and studying environment, in which staff and students interact with each other in a respectful manner. We highly value mutual appreciation and trust. We expect UvA staff and students to show appreciation for each other's achievements, acknowledge each other's identities and assume that others are acting in good faith, even when the pressure is on. The UvA is committed to clear communication. Staff and students are willing to help each other, make an effort to establish a positive team spirit and take care not to abuse power imbalances. Staff and students are considerate of each other, listen to each other, seek to create an inclusive environment and respect interpersonal differences, for instance with regard to cultural and/or socioeconomic background, personal beliefs, political preferences, age, gender, sexual orientation, functional impairment or chronic disease.

Unacceptable behaviour: harmful to people and to our organisation

In order to establish a safe and proper working and studying environment, employees and students must refrain from any kind of unacceptable behaviour. Unacceptable behaviour is harmful and therefore not acceptable. Unacceptable behaviour comprises any behaviour on the part of a staff member or student that is stressful to the person on the receiving end, because it either jeopardises or injures the other person's bodily or mental integrity. This may include, but is not limited to,

physical or verbal aggression, harassment or sexual harassment, discrimination and exclusionary behaviour, bullying and academic sabotage.

Unacceptable behaviour refers to any situation where at least one person involved may reasonably feel that the behaviour is unacceptable. Staff and students must challenge unacceptable behaviour, even when they are witnesses rather than persons involved (see below).

ROLES

Staff

Basic principle: all members of staff have a professional attitude

A professional attitude is informed by integrity, diligence and expertise, regardless of what capacity a member of staff is acting in, both in collaborating with their colleagues and in their interactions with their students. We expect everyone who performs any activities at the UvA, regardless of whether they are employed by the UvA, to have such an attitude. Members of staff are aware of the UvA's role in society.

Members of staff take great care not to misuse the University's resources, such as equipment, the computer network, the library, lecture rooms and other shared facilities. In so doing, they comply with applicable regulations.

In certain situations, members of staff may be bystanders, i.e. people who have witnessed unacceptable behaviour. Bystanders play a crucial role in reducing unacceptable behaviour, either by talking directly to the person responsible for the unacceptable behaviour or by seeking help from a third party (click here for an overview of whom to contact if you have something you wish to report: Staff, Students). The UvA encourages bystanders to report misconduct and follows up on all reports it receives, without exception.

In performing their academic duties, our staff ensure that they conduct their research in a careful manner. Academics are familiar with the Netherlands Code of Conduct for Research Integrity (2018) and act in accordance with said Code of Conduct.

Expected behaviour of lecturers, supervisors and PhD supervisors

All members of staff who are engaged in teaching (ranging from student assistants to full professors) treat students with respect. They are aware of the dependence and the power imbalance inherent in their relationships with their students and do not use these to their own advantage; they do not violate their students' privacy. Mutual respect is paramount. Lecturers ensure social safety during their lectures and seminars, both when teaching in a classroom and when teaching online. Lecturers remember that they are role models and adhere to the values and manners laid down in this Code of Conduct, both in their speech and in their behaviour, which also means that they are proactive in identifying unacceptable behaviour and take action to put a stop to inappropriate or unacceptable behaviour.

The relationship between PhD candidates and their supervisors is similarly fraught with dependence and power imbalance. Supervisors are always mindful of this fact and do not use it

to their own advantage. The collaboration between PhD candidates and their supervisors is characterised by mutual respect and a professional attitude in their interactions.

Role of supervisors
The person supervising a department, team or unit serves as a role model in terms of their conduct. Supervisors are mindful of the dependence and the power imbalance inherent in their relationships with their team members and never use these to their own advantage, particularly in situations in which their assessment is critical to an employee's next career move. Supervisors ensure that they do not mix personal and professional relationships and that there are no conflicts of interest. They play a key role in ensuring and promoting a positive working environment. They regularly enquire about the atmosphere on the work floor and call to task any members of staff who are guilty of unacceptable or inappropriate behaviour. This means that supervisors are open and approachable, request feedback, able to recognise and discuss unacceptable behaviour and able to intervene in such a way as to stop unacceptable or inappropriate behaviour and improve the working environment in the long term.

Supervisors who receive a report on unacceptable behaviour always take such reports seriously; supervisors assume responsibility, treat both the person filing the complaint and the person whom the complaint concerns respectfully and implement appropriate measures, while always giving the person who filed the complaint the appropriate level of protection.

Relationships with colleagues
Members of staff who, in addition to having a professional relationship with a colleague, are in a romantic or family relationship with them always act professionally and objectively and are aware of the risks such private relationships pose to their integrity. They must report to their supervisor any situations in which they are working in a hierarchical or other relationship with their partner or relative, as well as any other private relationships that might jeopardise their ability to act professionally and objectively. Their supervisor may then make the appropriate arrangements, in consultation with the other person's supervisor where necessary. Members of staff who are in a romantic or family relationship with a colleague are not allowed to assess or monitor each other's work, perform certification for each other or authorise each other to do anything requiring authorisation. The same applies to members of staff who are in a position where one person is financially dependent on another person. Lecturers and supervisors ensure that they do not mix personal and professional relationships with their students and PhD students.

Proper conduct with regard to ancillary activities
Any member of staff who performs ancillary activities on top of their work at the University must provide transparency on these ancillary activities and must refrain from any activities that might damage the interests or reputation of the University or parts thereof. Staff must act in accordance with the Regulations Governing Ancillary Activities.

Students

Acting professionally with regard to others
Students treat their fellow students, lecturers and other members of staff with respect. Among other things, they are respectful in their forms of address and manner of communication, both in written communication and when meeting in person, during both classroom activities and social gatherings, both on campus and elsewhere.

Students behave with integrity and refrain from any type of conduct that may negatively affect their fellow students, lecturers and other members of staff or the quality of education in general. Students do not misuse the University's resources, such as equipment, the computer network, the library, lecture rooms and other shared facilities.

Acting professionally with regard to one's studies
Students who are attending the University of Amsterdam seek to make the most of their potential. They familiarise themselves with the requirements of their degree programme and commit to the learning objectives to be attained. With a view to their training as academics, they learn to work independently, communicate properly, collaborate with others effectively, take great care when collecting information, and solve problems. Students call each other out on ineffective behaviour such as breaking promises, quitting and profiting from other people's work, as well as on unacceptable behaviour (even if they are a bystander, rather than the victim of any such behaviour). Bystanders play a crucial role in reducing unacceptable behaviour, either by talking directly to the person responsible for the unacceptable behaviour or by seeking help from a third party (click here for an overview of where to report misconduct). The UvA encourages bystanders to report misconduct and follows up on all reports it receives, without exception.

Other rules, regulations and procedures
The University of Amsterdam has laid down certain specific codes of conduct in separate rules and regulations, including several complaints regulations. For more information.

Regardless of whether you are a member of staff or a student, if you witness any behaviour that violates this code, check the Social Safety Support Guide for information on where to report this: for Staff, for Students.

In addition, members of staff are always free to consult their supervisor, and students can consult their lecturer or programme director.