

Introduction

The Code of Conduct of the student union at South-Eastern Finland University of Applied Sciences is a guideline aimed at ensuring a welcoming and safe environment for everyone. It provides information on how to act if one encounters an uncomfortable or disruptive situation.

The Code of Conduct applies during classes, at events organized by the student union, and during their official after-parties.

In this document, we address equality, harassment, and bullying situations, as well as how to respond to them. Everyone is responsible for their own behavior and how they treat others. A good community spirit is a collective responsibility, and everyone must respect the right of fellow students to enjoy a safe and pleasant studying and event experience. Together, we create an environment where all participants can feel equal and welcome in all the mentioned occasions.

Harassment, discrimination, and inappropriate behavior.

Harassment is behavior that intentionally or effectively violates a person's dignity, creating a degrading, humiliating, threatening, hostile, or aggressive atmosphere.

Sexual harassment refers to verbal, non-verbal, or physical behavior of a sexual nature that is unwelcome and intentionally or effectively violates a person's mental or physical integrity, particularly by creating a threatening, hostile, degrading, humiliating, or intimidating atmosphere.

Gender-based harassment refers to unwelcome behavior related to a person's gender, gender identity, or gender expression that is not sexual in nature, which intentionally or effectively violates that person's mental or physical integrity and creates a threatening, hostile, degrading, humiliating, or intimidating atmosphere.

Discrimination refers to the unequal treatment of individuals or placing them in different positions without acceptable justification. Discrimination also includes creating a threatening, hostile, degrading, or humiliating atmosphere, as well as issuing commands or instructions to discriminate.

Inappropriate treatment refers to behavior that goes against common decency towards others. Acceptable behavior does not include shouting, raging, or discussing personal characteristics in an inappropriate manner.

Participants in events organized by the student union are a diverse group of individuals, representing various opinions, identities, and value systems. In such a setting, harassment and discrimination can occur, often unnoticed. Respecting everyone's freedom of expression and opinion is the first step towards ensuring an event that is free from discrimination and harassment.

Finnish alcohol culture can sometimes be pressure-filled, especially for those who do not consume alcohol. The choice to use or abstain from alcohol is a personal one, and no one's choice should be questioned or judged. Often, excesses and embarrassing situations occur under the influence of alcohol; however,

everyone is responsible for their own behavior, and being under the influence does not remove one of that responsibility.

Social media is an essential part of students' and the student union's daily life. Instant messaging applications can lower the threshold for discrimination, such as excluding someone from a group chat. In such situations, it is equally important to contact a harassment contact person.

Written and visual communication on the internet can sometimes be easily misunderstood. To avoid misinterpretations, remember to uphold good etiquette when using social media.

Harassment contact person services.

At student union Kaakko, we aim to address and prevent harassment occurring in higher education. At XAMK, we follow a joint equality and diversity plan for students and staff.

The student union has harassment contact persons at each campus, who are either elected representatives or staff members, representing various genders. The role of the harassment contact person is to listen without judgment and to address reported harassment situations upon request. Harassment contact persons are bound by confidentiality and will not take action without the consent of the person who has experienced the harassment. This confidential relationship encourages individuals to discuss sensitive issues. If desired, the person who has experienced harassment can choose not to request any actions and can seek supportive conversation from the harassment contact person.

Harassment contact persons are available at all student union events and can always be reached via email. A person who has experienced harassment can also contact a harassment contact person later if they were unable to speak about it at the time of the incident.

Procedures

If you experience harassment, discrimination, or inappropriate behavior:

Contact a harassment contact person.

- Share what you have experienced or what happened.
- Discuss with the harassment contact person how to resolve the situation.

If you witness someone else being harassed or discriminated against and want to report it:

Contact a harassment contact person.

- Share what you have seen or what happened.
- The harassment contact person will, at your request, reach out to the parties involved in the situation you experienced.

Actions of the harassment contact person:

Upon receiving information about a harassment situation, the harassment contact person acts with confidentiality and based on the consent of the affected individual.

The harassment contact person can:

- Contact the parties involved in the harassment situation and discuss what happened.
- Arrange an opportunity for both parties to talk about the incident.
- Advise the parties involved to reach out to various support services, such as helplines.
- Assemble a decision-making group regarding the necessary actions.

If the harassment situation is particularly blatant and offensive, the harassment contact person will assemble a decision-making group.

The decision-making group can:

- Contact the student coordinator or supervisor of the person accused of harassment.
- Decide on potential disciplinary actions, such as removal from a program segment or event, or banning the individual from student union events.