

# Inappropriate treatment and harassment

*From 1.8.2023 (Decision of the Rector 41/2023 §)*

The students of the University of Eastern Finland have the right to study in a safe and comfortable environment. All the university's units must ensure that students do not experience harassment or inappropriate treatment when they participate in education or receive guidance.

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university, individual teachers and the administrative staff regarding their studies. In turn, the staff must comply with the regulations and instructions of the university and their unit. The relationship between a teacher and a student includes, for example, the exercise of power in terms of guidance, counselling and teaching. However, any abuse of power is prohibited.

Members of the community must demonstrate through their attitudes and actions that inappropriate treatment of any kind is not tolerated in the community. Everyone bears responsibility for the community's operating culture.



Inappropriate treatment is unacceptable. Inappropriate treatment is repetitive behavior, such as bullying, harassment, nullification or another form of negative behavior. Inappropriate treatment can take place between colleagues, an immediate superior and an employee, a teacher and a student, or between fellow students.

The right to a safe work environment free of harassment, discrimination and bullying is based on the Employment Contracts Act, the Occupational Safety and Health Act, the Non-Discrimination Act and the Act on Equality between Women and Men.

Students' right to a safe study environment free of

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Bullying manifests itself, for example, in humiliating, insulting, spreading false information, tarnishing and isolating a person, and ridiculing one's reputation. Bullying can also manifest itself in situations where a person is not assigned work duties. Bullying is often repeated, systematic and habitual.

**Harassment** is a conduct that intentionally or actually violates the dignity of a person where the abusive behavior is related to age, language, beliefs, religion, state of health or other personal characteristics, and creates an atmosphere that demeans or humiliates the person or threatens them by creating a hostile or offensive atmosphere. Harassment is often systematic, repetitive

and oppressive. Racist jokes or name-calling of a colleague or a fellow student who belongs to a sexual minority are examples of harassment.

**Gender-based harassment** refers to unwanted conduct related to gender, gender identity or gender expression that intentionally or actually violates a person's psychological or physical integrity and creates an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive atmosphere. Gender-based harassment is not necessarily sexual in nature.

**Sexual harassment** refers to unwanted verbal, non-verbal, or physical behavior of a sexual nature. The

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benefits, opinion, political activity, trade union activity, family relationships, state of health, disability, sexual orientation or other personal characteristics without a valid reason. Indirect discrimination occurs when an apparently neutral course of actions puts certain individuals at a disadvantage compared to others.

**Gender-based discrimination** refers to placing persons in different positions based on gender, and discrimination based on gender identity or gender expression.

An individual's threatening behavior along with persecution is always inappropriate. Inappropriate treatment can also be **racism**. Racism can take the form of

discrimination, belittling or disrespectful speech or wording or hateful acts.

**Targeted harassment (doxing)** is a phenomenon in which one or more actors incite a large group to attack a person in various ways by sending hate messages via email or social media, for instance. Targeted harassment can manifest itself as direct or indirect threats, or in the form of digging up and misrepresenting information about a person's private life.

Inappropriate behavior can occur in human interaction. Such situations include teaching on campus or off-campus, distance learning, as well as various formal and

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violates private life, defamation and stalking, for instance. In such cases, you should turn to the police.

Occasional disagreements do not constitute harassment or inappropriate treatment. NB! This is not bullying:

- strong difference of opinion on an academic subject and academic debate
- when conflicts arise over decisions or interpretations related to work or studies
- when the employer makes objective and justifiable use of their right to manage work

- when dealing with problems related to a task or work division between staff members
- when the immediate superior directs the employee to an assessment of work ability
- when work tasks are changed and changes have been discussed with the employee
- when a study attainment is evaluated, and appropriate but corrective feedback is given
- when the university objectively and justifiably instructs the student on appropriate behavior or exercises its disciplinary authority over the student

‘Student’ refers to all students present who have the right to study leading to an undergraduate or postgraduate

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researcher is considered as an employee if the researcher is in an employment relationship with the university and acts in an employee role in a situation related to inappropriate treatment. The staff includes persons who have a valid employment contract with the university.

## Inappropriate treatment between a student and an employee

## Introduction

Incidents involving inappropriate behavior differ from each other, which is why the university's operating model is flexible, and the situation at hand is taken into consideration. The position of the individual must be taken into account in each process, as well as the equal treatment of all parties involved. Both the person subjected to inappropriate treatment and the person suspected of the activity have the right to use a support person of their choice. For students, the university's or student union's anti-harassment contact person is the right actor at all stages of the process, whereas employees can contact an anti-harassment contact person at

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them.

## If you are treated inappropriately

If you are treated inappropriately, notify the bully or harasser immediately that you do not approve of their actions and ask them to stop. If you do not dare to tell the bully/harasser about the matter, you can contact the head of the unit or the immediate superior of the person you consider to be the bully.

It is recommended that the time and place of the incident be recorded. Similarly, it is recommended to keep emails, social media posts and other materials in written or image

form. The bully or harasser cannot be held accountable unless the incidents can be verified.

If you are a student and if the inappropriate behavior continues, contact the university's or student union's anti-harassment contact person, or the university's contact person for gender equality and equal opportunities. You can also contact the head of the unit. Contact can be done by calling, on-site visit or sending an email. The report can be free-form or you can file it using the notification to the employer regarding a matter involving harassment or inappropriate behavior.

If you are an employee and if the inappropriate behavior

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In the notification, identify the events and present any related documentation. Once you have reported your experience of inappropriate treatment, your participation in the case is usually necessary. If you do not participate in the proceedings, the case will lapse.

The head of the unit whose employee or student has been reported is responsible for handling the reports on inappropriate behavior, harassment and discrimination. The head of the unit shall find out what has happened, what the parties' perception of the incident is and ensure that the views expressed are recorded.

If necessary, the incident can be investigated together with the unit's key actors and in cooperation with the FSHS, occupational health care and study psychologists, for instance.

After clarifying the situation and examining the sequence of events, an attempt will be made to mediate. The head of the unit is responsible for determining whether it is possible to arrange a discussion between the parties. The meeting will be arranged in the manner deemed appropriate by the head of the unit. Before the joint discussion, it may be necessary for the head of the unit to discuss with the parties separately. If necessary, the parties' support persons and representatives of student

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If the matter is about a student's inappropriate behavior towards a teacher or a staff member during teaching, the teacher has the duty to ensure peace at work. The teacher may order the student to leave the facility, and the student's right to study may be revoked for up to three days. In addition, the student may be subject to disciplinary action: a written warning and temporary dismissal.

The head of the unit must take a neutral approach to any person who feel they have been treated inappropriately.



## Duties of the head of unit in harassment cases

The head of the unit whose employee or student (including degree, doctoral and exchange students) has been reported is responsible for handling the reports on inappropriate treatment, harassment and discrimination. The head of the unit shall ensure that all necessary information is recorded: what has happened, the parties' perception of the events, and the views expressed. In addition, your task is to draw conclusions and decisions about the necessary measures and monitor their implementation. The head of the unit also makes sure that the actions are record-ed.

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events (what happened, the time and place of the incident) and provide any documentation that may be involved. Advise the whistle-blower to keep emails, social media posts and other material in written or image form. The bully/harasser cannot be held accountable unless the events can be verified.

Inform the whistleblower that they must participate in the processing of the matter. Without the participation of the whistleblower, it is difficult to proceed with the case. If the whistleblower does not participate in the proceedings, the case will lapse.

Incidents involving inappropriate treatment can be very different from each other. In the event of serious harassment, and especially if the situation involves criminal dimensions, the head of the unit should seek support in investigating the matter from human resources services and/or legal services as early as possible.

If necessary, the situation can be investigated together with the unit's key actors (e.g. head of unit, deputy head responsible for education) and with cooperative actors, such as the FSHS, occupational health care and study psychologists.

The parties always have the right to use support person(s).

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BE INFORMED IN ADVANCE.

After clarifying the situation and examining the sequence of events, an attempt will be made to mediate. The head of the unit is responsible for determining whether it is possible to arrange a discussion between the parties. The meeting will be arranged in the manner deemed appropriate by the head of the unit. Before a joint discussion, it may be necessary for the head of the unit to discuss with the parties separately. If necessary, the parties' support persons and a representative of student health care, for instance, can participate in the joint discussion. It will be agreed during the discussion on how

to proceed in the future. The meeting is subject to a memorandum and the possible follow-up – when and how – is recorded.

The parties do not always wish to participate in a joint discussion aimed at mediating the matter. Even then, the head of the unit must agree between the parties on how the parties will act in the future and how the situation will be monitored. This shall be recorded and communicated to the parties involved.

As the head of the unit, you have the right to prohibit any inappropriate behavior. Clearly state that such behavior is unacceptable. If inappropriate treatment is related to a

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IS RECOMMENDED TO TALK TO THE LEGAL SERVICES FIRST.

You will receive support and advice from the faculty's executive head of administration, the occupational health and safety manager (when the suspect of harassment is an employee), the head of student services in the faculty (when the suspect of harassment is a student), and the university's legal services.

The head of the unit must take a neutral approach to any person who feel they have been treated inappropriately.

# Inappropriate treatment between students

## Introduction

Incidents involving inappropriate behavior differ from each other, which is why the university's operating model is flexible and the situation at hand is taken into consideration. In the event of serious harassment, and especially if the situation involves criminal dimensions, the head of the unit should seek support in investigating the matter from human resources services and/or legal services as early as possible.

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well as activities related to study or work environments. Inappropriate behavior can also be related to situations that are not directly related to teaching, however, such incidents may have an impact on teaching. Such incidents may be related to social media or student interaction at student events. In such cases, the university does not have the authority to take disciplinary action, and the university cannot oblige the student to participate in proceedings. However, to ensure a peaceful study environment, it may be appropriate to bring up a student's problematic behavior by the staff.

## If you are treated inappropriately

If you are treated inappropriately, notify the bully or harasser immediately that you do not approve of their actions and ask them to stop. If you do not dare to tell the bully/harasser about the matter, you can contact the head of the unit or the immediate superior of the person you consider to be the bully.

It is recommended that the time and place of the incident be recorded. Similarly, it is recommended to keep emails, social media posts and other materials in written or image form. The bully or harasser cannot be held accountable unless the incidents can be verified.

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in the notification, identify the events and present any related documentation. Once you have reported your experience of inappropriate treatment, your participation in the case is usually necessary. If you do not participate in the proceedings, the case will lapse.

The head of the unit whose student has been reported is responsible for handling the reports on inappropriate behavior, harassment and discrimination. The head of the unit shall find out what has happened, what the parties' perception of the incident is and ensure that the views expressed are recorded.

If necessary, the situation can be investigated together with the unit's key actors and in cooperation with the FSHS and study psychologists, for instance.

After clarifying the situation and examining the sequence of events, an attempt will be made to mediate. The head of the unit is responsible for determining whether it is possible to arrange a discussion between the parties. The meeting will be arranged in the manner deemed appropriate by the head of the unit. Before a joint discussion, it may be necessary for the head of the unit to discuss with the parties separately. If necessary, the parties' support persons and a representative of student health care can participate in the joint discussion. It will be

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If the inappropriate activity is serious or continues after the discussion, disciplinary measures will be taken in accordance with the Universities Act (written warning and temporary dismissal). If the situation requires contacting the police, it is recommended to talk to the legal services first.

The head of the unit must take a neutral approach to any person who feel they have been treated inappropriately. Support and advice may be obtained from the student union's anti-harassment contact person and/or the university's contact person for gender equality and equal opportunities during the process.

## Duties of the head of unit in harassment cases

The head of the unit whose employee or student (including degree, doctoral and exchange students) has been reported is responsible for handling these reports on inappropriate treatment, harassment and discrimination. The head of the unit shall ensure that all necessary information is recorded: what has happened, the parties' perception of the events, and the views expressed. In addition, your task is to draw conclusions and decisions about the necessary measures and monitor their implementation. The head of the unit also makes sure that the actions are recorded.

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events (what happened, the time and place of the incident) and provide any documentation that may be involved.

Advise the whistleblower to keep emails, social media posts and other material in written or image form. The bully/harasser cannot be held accountable unless the events can be verified.

Inform the whistleblower that they must participate in the processing of the matter. Without the participation of the whistleblower, it is difficult to proceed with the case. If the whistleblower does not participate in the proceedings, the case will usually lapse.

Incidents including inappropriate treatment vary a lot. In the event of serious harassment, and especially if the situation involves criminal dimensions, the head of the unit should seek support in investigating the matter from human resources services and/or legal services as early as possible.

The case can be investigated together with the unit's key actors in cooperation with the FSHS and study psychologists, if necessary.

The parties always have the right to use a support person. These support persons for students include the university's anti-harassment contact person, contact

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appropriate by the head of the unit. Before a joint discussion, it may be necessary for the head of the unit to discuss with the parties separately. If necessary, the parties' support persons and a representative of student health care can participate in the joint discussion. It will be agreed during the discussion on how to proceed in the future. The meeting is subject to a memorandum and the possible follow-up – when and how – is recorded.

The parties do not always wish to participate in a joint discussion aimed at mediating the matter. Even then, the head of the unit must agree between the parties on how



the parties will act in the future and how the situation will be monitored. This shall be recorded and communicated to the parties.

If inappropriate behavior has taken place, you as the head of the unit have the right to prohibit such behavior. Clearly state that such behavior is unacceptable. If necessary, you can transfer the case to the faculty for disciplinary action.

If the matter is about a student's inappropriate behavior towards a teacher or a staff member during teaching, the teacher has the duty to ensure peace at work. The teacher may order the student to leave the facility, and the student's right to study may be revoked for up to three

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The head of the unit must take a neutral approach to any person who feel they have been treated inappropriately.

## **Inappropriate treatment between staff members**

The personnel's right to a safe work environment free from harassment, discrimination and bullying is based on the Employment Contracts Act, the Non-discrimination Act and the Equality Act. In addition, the Occupational Safety and Health Act obliges the university as an employer to

ensure safety and health at work, and superiors to intervene promptly in cases of inappropriate treatment at the workplace.

[Instructions for the situations in inappropriate treatment between staff members including handling and supporting persons \(in Intranet, opens in a new tab, login required\).](#)

## **If you are accused of inappropriate treatment**

Even if you don't think you've been guilty of bullying or

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investigated. This is done by reviewing the relevant documentation and discussing with the parties.

Incidents involving inappropriate treatment are typically resolved in discussions between the parties and the head of the unit. Before a joint discussion, it may be necessary for the head of the unit to discuss the matter separately with you. You can also indicate that you want to discuss the matter one-on-one with the head of the unit before the joint discussion.

You always have the right to use a support person of your choice at different stages of the process. As an employee, you can receive support from the university's anti-

harassment contact person (cases between an employee and a student), an occupational health and safety delegate, a contact person for gender equality and equal opportunities or an employee's representative. As a student, you can receive support and advice from the university's anti-harassment contact person and/or the student union as well as from the contact person for gender equality and equal opportunities

## Reporting

Faculties hold the responsibility to report harassment

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discussed in the University's Equal Opportunities Committee, where joint discussions are held and the necessary development proposals are made annually in May-June.

## Who handles and provides support in harassment cases

# 1. Actors and roles in different cases

## Cases between staff and students (when the notification is directed at an employee)

- IN CHARGE OF THE INVESTIGATION: Head of Unit
- PRACTICALITIES (including memos): Executive Head of Administration in the Faculty
- SUPPORT TO THE PARTIES INVOLVED: Anti-Harassment Contact Persons at UEF and
- Student Union, Occupational Health and Safety Delegates, Employees' Representatives, Contact Persons for Gender Equality and Equal Opportunities
- SUPPORT TO THE INVESTIGATORS: Occupational

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Employees' Representatives, Contact Persons for Gender Equality and Equal Opportunities

- SUPPORT TO THE INVESTIGATORS: Student and Learning Services, General Administration and Legal Affairs, Legal Specialist

## Cases between students

- IN CHARGE OF THE INVESTIGATION: Head of Unit or a person appointed by her/him
- PRACTICALITIES (including memos): Head of Student Affairs in the Faculty
- SUPPORT TO THE PARTIES INVOLVED: Anti-Harassment Contact Persons at the Student Union, Study Psychologists

- SUPPORT TO THE INVESTIGATORS: Student and Learning Services, General Administration and Legal Affairs, Legal Specialist

[Cases between staff members: Instructions in Intranet \(opens in a new tab, login required\)](#)

## 2. Actors and their roles in detail

### Head of Unit, Immediate Superior

- Primary responsibility for intervention in harassment cases involving staff members of one's unit/team -> active responsibility to act.
- Primary responsibility for intervention in cases where the notification is directed at a student majoring in

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workplace, they have the right to prohibit such behavior. It is the manager's/superior's task to clearly state what kind of behavior is unacceptable at work.

- If inappropriate treatment is related to a student, the head of the unit is responsible for investigating the case and possibly transferring the case to the faculty for disciplinary action.

Receives support for the investigation from the executive head of administration or the head of student services in the faculty, occupational health and safety manager, anti-harassment contact persons, general administration and legal affairs.

## Executive Head of Administration

- Takes care of several practicalities (convenes meetings, records memos, etc.) in cases where the person behaving inappropriately is a staff member, e.g. a teacher.
- Ensures proper completion of the process.
- Reports the cases anonymously for statistical purposes to the Student Well-Being and Study Ability Team and the Occupational Health and Safety Commission (cases between staff and students: the number of cases, the nature of cases, between whom, gender distribution) as well as to the Occupational Health and Safety Commission (cases between staff).

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cases between students to the Student Well-Being and Study Ability Team (the number of cases, the nature of cases, between whom, gender distribution).

- cases between staff and students to the Student Well-Being and Study Ability Team as well as to the Occupational Health and Safety Commission (the number of cases, the nature of cases, between whom, gender distribution).
- Involved in investigating the need for disciplinary action against a student.

## Director of Human Resources and Staff Well-Being

- Involved in the investigation of harassment cases when staff members are involved, in particular where inappropriate treatment is repeated and there is a need for disciplinary action.
- Acts as a competent employer representative.

### **General Administration and Legal Affairs**

- Provide legal support upon request and ensure the legal protection of the parties involved.

### **Teacher in charge**

- Teacher in charge is involved in investigating cases related to teaching.

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can help you if you experience harassment.

- Knows the process and is able to disclose how the case proceeds and what kind of actions are required from a person who has experienced inappropriate treatment.
- Can participate in the investigation of the harassment case by providing support and advice.
- Can give advice if you cannot find suitable help whom to turn to or on the right kind of help.

You can also contact the anti-harassment contact person if you have seen incidents including harassment or you would like to discuss possible ways to address them.

- Is in contact with the contact person for gender equality and equal opportunities as needed.

### **Contact Person for Gender Equality and Equal Opportunities**

- Provides guidance and advice on issues related to the Equality Act or on discrimination based on gender, gender identity and gender expression, as well as on the promotion of gender equality.
- Acts as the first step and, where necessary, as a link to the other actors providing help, with whom the aim is to find solutions to the issues raised.
- Is in contact with the anti-harassment contact person where necessary. In cases between staff members,

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at any stage of the process.

- Low-threshold discussion support and counselling for students.
- Provides advice and support to students who have experienced harassment or other form of inappropriate treatment to take the case forward in accordance with the university's protocols .
- Can also participate as a support person in meetings with the university staff.
- Does not hold official authority in cases of inappropriate treatment, but offers support and advice in taking a harassment case forward.

### **Occupational Health and Safety Manager**



- Supports the employer representatives and assists in the implementation of the investigation by guiding and advising and, where necessary, leads the process if the investigation concerns the staff of several units.
- Assesses the effects and solutions in terms of the Occupational Safety and Health Act.
- Investigates cases between staff together with the immediate superior(s) and occupational health and safety delegate.
- Obtains, where necessary, an external investigator or mediator in cases between staff members.
- Receives the official notifications to the employer regarding a matter involving harassment or inappropriate behavior and initiates investigations in

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required from a person who has experienced inappropriate treatment.

- Can act as a support person by providing advice and workplace mediation.
- Gives advice on the right kind of help, also in situations where an employee has witnessed such behavior or the employee wants to discuss possible ways to address inappropriate treatment at the workplace.
- Is in contact with the contact person for gender equality and equal opportunities if necessary.
- [Contact information \(in Intranet, opens in a new tab, login requires\)](#)

## **Employees' Representative**

- Employee can contact the representative at different stages of the process if they so wish.

## **Student Well-Being and Study Ability Team (Hyry)**

- Compiles and processes harassment reports from faculties annually in March-April (cases in which a student is involved) and conducts discussions about the process as well as forwards the cases to the Gender Equality and Equal Opportunities Committee.
- Reports prepared by the Chair of the Student Well-Being and Study Ability Team.
- [Contact information](#)

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## **Campus Pastors**

Provide support in the form of:

- Discussions, and support to all members of the university community on how to take matters forward.
- Individual support for follow-up where necessary.
- Consultative support for challenging interaction situations.
- [Campus pastors](#)

## **Study Psychologists**

Provide support in the form of:

- Discussions, and support to all members of the university community on how to take matters forward.
- Individual support for follow-up where necessary.
- Consultative support for challenging interaction situations.
- [Study psychologists](#)

## **Gender Equality and Equal Opportunities Committee**

- Discusses annually in May-June the reports from the Student Well-Being and Study Ability Team and the Occupational Health and Safety Commission and promotes the issues and discussions at the university level.

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## **The Student Union of the University of Eastern Finland's Anti-Harassment Contact Persons**

- [Contact information \(opens in a new tab\)](#)

Please see above, when necessary "Who handles and provides support in harassment cases".

[The Decision of the Rector: Operating Model to Prevent Inappropriate Treatment and Harassment at UEF \(pdf\)](#),  
41/2023 § / dnro 1939/00.00.02/2023, 7.6.2023.

## Instructions

- [Approach to Operating Models to Prevent Inappropriate Treatment and Harassment at UEF in Intranet \(new Intranet from autumn 2024, opens in a new tab, login requires\)](#)
- [Prevention of and intervention in sexual harassments at schools and educational institutions](#) (Finnish National Agency for Education, Guides and handbooks 20018:4c, opens in a new tab)

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