

# **Code of Ethics and Professional Conduct**

**University of Veterinary Medicine, Budapest (UVMB)**



**Budapest**

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# 1. Statement of Purpose and Scope

## 1.§

(1) The Code of Ethics and Professional Conduct (hereinafter the Code) of the University of Veterinary Medicine, Budapest (hereinafter UVMB) is a compilation of both personal and professional behavioral standards, a self-imposed system of values of UVMB.

(2) The Code is applicable to employees of UVMB governed by service regulations and registered students of UVMB (hereinafter Employees and Students, respectively).

(3) As laid down in the Code, a form of behavior, an instance of expressing one's views or a form of attitude is considered ethical if it serves to

- increase confidence of partners and clients in UVMB
- promote the reputation of UVMB
- aid in ensuring transparency of academic and research activities

(4) Laying down ethical norms governing behavior both within the walls of and when acting as representative outside UVMB serves to ensure confidence of parties in each other, reliability, credibility, integrity, objectivity and impartiality; to preserve existing organizational values and work culture at UVMB; to promote uniform conduct of Employees and Students; and to strengthen the existing positive image, unity, mutual responsibility and a sense of security. Ethical norms shall cover

- lawful behavior;
- commitment to contractual obligations;
- respecting one's dignity and right to protection of personality, prohibition of discrimination and harassment, insisting on impartiality;
- warranting the right to represent interests and have freedom of expression;
- ensuring a high level of expertise and professional reliability;
- accountability and equity;
- transparent, fair and professional administrative procedures, precise record keeping;
- protection of classified and confidential information;
- pertinent and honest communication;
- and abiding by rules on conflicts of interest.

(5) Apart from self-imposed obligations, the Code also gives certain rights to the Employees and Students of UVMB. It permits Employees and Students to carry out their activities in a way so that they can be held accountable morally as well, to refuse to complete unethical tasks or requirements without adverse consequences, to take action against them and to seek the opinion of the Ethics Committee in ethical conflicts.

(6) In cases of harassment and bullying guidelines proposed in Annex 1 of the Code are to be followed.

(7) Employees and Students of UVMB must become familiar with, accept and act according to the norms and requirements set out in this Code.

(8) Requirements laid down in the Code serve as guidelines for Employees and Students of UVMB in situations where the behavior to be followed when performing an activity or making a decision is not clear because there is uncertainty or a lack of clarity regarding either the course of action to take or the scope of certain regulations.

(9) The behavior of Employees and Students of UVMB is considered ethical if it agrees with the requirements laid down in the Code.

(10) Employees and Students of UVMB are deemed to breach moral principles if they do not comply with the Code by infringing its requirements either intentionally or through negligence.

(11) The management of UVMB is to set up and operate Ethics Committees to provide a forum for discussing and resolving disputes concerning ethical behavior.

## **2. General Ethics Policy**

### **2.§**

(1) All Employees and Students of UVMB have the right to expect UVMB and other Employees and Students to respect their dignity and right to protection of personality and at the same time have a duty to observe the same principles when interacting with others.

(2) The Code lays down ethical norms based on social values generally accepted by Employees and Students which are pivotal in order to fulfill the objectives set out in UVMB's Mission Statement.

(3) In accordance with the Mission Statement of UVMB, the everyday activities of Employees and Students should be aided by establishing ethical norms that also endeavor to ameliorate society.

## **3. Basic Standards of Behavior for Students and Academic and Research Staff**

### **3.§**

(1) Employees and Students have a moral obligation to comply with laws and the requirements set out in the Internal Regulations of UVMB.

With their conduct, Employees and Students of UVMB aid in fulfilling the objectives and commitments of UVMB and they strive to comply with the ethical norms laid down in the Code when making a decision or carrying out an activity.

(2) Employees and Students are obliged to preserve the assets of UVMB and to use them in accordance with their intended purpose, and to use public funds or budget coming under their responsibility solely for legitimate university purposes in a lawful, expedient and efficient manner.

(3) Employees and Students have a moral duty to respect the dignity and rights of others and, in turn, have the right to expect others to respect their own dignity and rights. The conduct of Employees and Students should be governed by the supposition that others act according to ethical norms as well and Employees and Students should refrain from violating other people's rights while exercising their own rights.

(4) Employees and Students shall not be involved in business activities, take on positions or hold financial, commercial or any other kinds of interest which prove to be incompatible with

their activities, position or duties at UVMB. Employees and Students shall not take advantage of their university status and position, public funds, budget or services coming under their responsibility, or information acquired in the course of their work, and they shall not use these to further their own or other people's interests even if their university status has ended.

(5) Should there be any putative conflict of interest between one's duties and private interests, or should one be put in a position where there is a conflict of interest with one's university status, Employees and Students have an obligation to report it to UVMB and to comply with measures taken in order to end this situation.

(6) Employees and Students are expected to perform their duties in a professional manner and in accordance with the law and the principles of their profession. To this end, they shall endeavor to constantly develop their professional skills and competence needed to fulfill their duties.

(7) Employees and Students of UVMB shall not intentionally mislead or deceive other Employees or Students, partners and clients of UVMB or the public. They shall not make public any kind of confidential information they acquired through carrying out their duties at or outside of UVMB without being authorized to do so. Employees and Students shall not seek opportunities that might defeat or influence the policy, the decisions or the activities of UVMB by revealing confidential information they acquired while performing their duties without authorization, in an inappropriate manner or earlier than intended.

(8) Employees and Students of UVMB shall

- a) perform the duties entrusted to them to the best of their abilities and as thoroughly and conscientiously as circumstances allow;
- b) fulfill their (ad hoc or permanent) duties entrusted to them by the management or other bodies of UVMB to the best of their abilities, they are not to abandon these duties unless justified by an overriding reason, and can expect to receive remuneration, allowance or moral reward proportionate to the amount of extra work in return;
- c) strive for objectivity in their decisions, refrain from bias, be it positive or negative, and discrimination of any kind, such as sex, ethnic origin, religious or political beliefs;
- d) oppose and seek to combat all forms of violence and offence;
- e) establish a good, facilitating relationship with other Employees and Students based on mutual respect and trust; support and help each other in performing their tasks at UVMB taking into account each other's rights and interests and the interests of UVMB;
- f) not offer, demand, accept or extort remuneration or other forms of allowance or service for the purpose of obtaining benefits of any kind;
- g) voice their opinions with respect towards others and accept other people's opinions regarding their activities with openness, and shall strive for tolerant, open and honest cooperation in both internal and external fora;
- h) seek to combat and take action against any instance of wrongdoing at UVMB in their area of responsibility, even if they become involved in a personal conflict as a result;
- i) in cases of moral conflict strive to resolve the issue through patient conversation with the other party involved, or, if it is not possible, they shall seek out the opinion of the Ethics Committee, or, as a last resort, of the public of UVMB with personality rights in mind;

- j) ensure conditions necessary for professional and personal development, and take action against behavior or phenomena that disturb the teaching and learning environment;
- k) credibly represent UVMB and its departments in their public utterances both within and outside of UVMB, and take action against utterances that portray a negative image of UVMB without due grounds for it;
- l) strive to uphold UVMB's good reputation and prestige, refrain from all forms of behavior that might jeopardize the interests of UVMB, and represent UVMB's legitimate interests at other universities as well;
- m) voice their opinions in cases concerning UVMB solely within their respective fields of competence, they shall do it responsibly, objectively, and taking into account the interests of UVMB;
- n) give information in a press release about UVMB only when authorized to do so;
- o) demonstrate loyalty and solidarity with other Employees, Students, and the different bodies and organizations of UVMB in order to promote a (morally desirable) sense of community;
- p) strive for a most extensive internal publicity and desire to be informed about issues and decisions relevant to them;
- q) handle data about UVMB and its Employees and Students in compliance with the law and the Internal Regulations of UVMB, protect records and databases, observe professional secrecy with regard to non-public information, and comply with intellectual property law;
- r) observe rules regarding personal or official data handling, and shall not acquire or pass on confidential data;
- s) not deliberately communicate misstatements about UVMB, its departments, Employees or Students in public;
- t) not use their official e-mail addresses on private social networking sites unless intended for marketing purposes authorized by their department heads;
- u) have the right to offer objective criticism about (collective or individual) actions or practices of the management and different bodies of UVMB, and whoever adopts retaliatory measures or makes threats for exercising their right to do so is deemed to breach moral principles;
- v) besides preserving their own culture, adopt to generally accepted behavioral norms to the extent that they become integral parts of the university community and endeavor to familiarize themselves with our customs and traditions;
- w) not engage in party political activities and agitation within the walls of UVMB, shall not spread political propaganda in any form, and, during lessons, shall refrain from comments on party politics not related to the course material;
- x) when engaging in politics, ensure
  - to separate their political activity both in time and space from their activities as tutors, researchers or students,
  - not to imply that UVMB is committed to any political party or political tendency,
  - not to get involved with groups, tendencies or movements whose goals and activities are contrary to UVMB's Mission Statement, goals or interests,

- not to use their university status and title when expressing their political views,
  - not to use their official e-mail address when corresponding on political matters, the website of their department for spreading their political views or university infrastructure for any kind of political purpose;
- y) be neutral and tolerant when dealing with matters concerning religion or beliefs in the course of their activities related to their university status;

(9) Employees and Students are expected to present a neat and clean appearance at work. Their clothes should be appropriate for the kind of work they are engaged in, and in some cases the clothes they must wear are specified by labor safety regulations. Employees and Students of both genders shall refrain from wearing clothes that are inappropriate for their working environment and might transgress other people's morals.

## **4. UVMB's Managerial Staff**

### **4.§**

(1) Employees and Students can be expected to observe moral principles only if management of UVMB and its departments, members of its elected bodies, and employees representing UVMB endeavor to create and safeguard conditions fostering ethical behavior and they themselves demonstrate ethical behavior.

(2) Employees and/or Students in managerial positions

- a) shall supervise the institution, organization, body, department, committee or students they are responsible for with dedication to UVMB and with professional, legal, commercial and moral responsibility, they shall observe moral principles and legal obligations related to them, and set exemplary behavioral standards to their colleagues;
- b) shall strive to make informed decisions and to allow of a cordial and constructive atmosphere in the community they supervise;
- c) when possible, request the opinion and advice of their colleagues in questions relevant to the community under their supervision, listen to their ideas, and encourage them to take part in the decision-making process;
- d) shall listen to their colleagues' or fellow students' professional and personal problems related to their university status, and welcome their comments relevant to their duties with openness and patience;
- e) shall assign tasks to their colleagues or fellow students they are reasonably expected to be able to perform given their knowledge, skills, position and current duties;
- f) shall inform their colleagues or fellow students of tasks to be fulfilled in due course, and shall make sure they get all the information they need in order to perform their tasks and shall ensure conditions necessary for their work;
- g) shall notify their colleagues or fellow students of the date, time and expected duration of meetings and sessions, expect their co-workers or fellow students to be punctual and they themselves shall endeavor to keep to dates and times;
- h) shall evaluate the performance of those they supervise objectively and on a regular basis, acknowledge good work, and should they be dissatisfied with their colleagues' or fellow students' work, they shall offer criticism based on facts;

- i) shall strive to create (working) conditions necessary for promoting their colleagues' professional career and development, to provide adequate human resources and new recruits necessary for work, and equal opportunities and publicity for their colleagues or fellow students;
- j) shall make sure that colleagues or fellow students to be appointed as representatives in decision-making bodies have the necessary professional skills and qualifications to properly represent the interests of the delegating community besides performing their duties at work;
- k) shall endeavor to resolve internal conflicts arising within their departments;
- l) shall not use their managerial positions for gaining unlawful benefits, for political manipulation, or for taking advantage of the hierarchical working relationship in situations outside work;
- m) have an obligation to ensure when providing information of any kind that all the data given are true, and are obliged to make sure that written works and all kinds of intellectual property created in their departments bear the names of only those individuals as authors who took part in the creation process;
- n) shall not engage in any activities that pose a conflict of interest with their managerial position, shall not jeopardize the interests of UVMB while holding a position in organizations outside UVMB, and shall not influence assessment of Employees or Students they supervise using their professional status or title;
- o) shall not use their position to gain undue privileges in the course of their studies.

## **5. Members of the Decision-making Bodies and Committees of UVMB and Its Departments**

### **5.§**

(1) When accepting their duties, members of the decision-making bodies and committees of UVMB and its departments shall commit themselves to representing matters, individuals, organizations or communities entrusted to them acting solely in the best interest of UVMB.

(2) Members of different bodies and committees of UVMB shall

- a) go to meetings prepared and take part in them actively; and if they are unable to do so for either objective or subjective reasons, they shall return their mandate or resign;
- b) represent the views and interests of the community entrusted to them at meetings and vote objectively considering the facts while bearing in mind the interests of UVMB as well;
- c) not pass on information gained during in camera sessions or the content of committee files and meeting minutes containing confidential data to any unauthorized person;
- d) not violate ballot secrecy.



## **6. Employees and Students Representing UVMB and Its Departments**

### **6.§**

(1) In the course of their activity and performing their duties, Employees and Students come into contact with other Employees and Students or external partners who are not employed by UVMB through providing service, or carrying out administrative or other types of tasks. Employees and Students should keep in mind that they represent UVMB and its departments in such cases. They should be aware of the fact that everything they do and how they do it, including their decisions, the service provided, information given, or patient care, defines UVMB and its departments.

(2) Employees representing UVMB and its departments shall

- a) be sincere, honest, and fair, and free from bias and prejudice;
- b) be held responsible for the consequences of their decisions and actions when dealing with partners;
- c) be impartial and shall not discriminate against either certain individuals or a particular group;
- d) not request or accept- either directly or indirectly- presents, allowances or any other forms of gain which could have an influence on their judgement, their decisions or how they carry out the tasks assigned to them;
- e) carry out the tasks assigned to them complying with the laws and the decisions of managing bodies in a professional manner, without bias, with equity and justice, and in accordance with the rules of proper administration;
- f) respect the time and work of Employees and Students or other partners they deal with when delivering patient care or carrying out any other kinds of activity;
- g) assist Employees, Students or clients seeking their help through efficient and prompt patient care or office work during consultation or business hours;
- h) refer their partners or clients to the competent person or organization if they cannot help them solve the problems encountered.

## **7. Ethical Norms, Rights and Obligations Applicable to Students**

### **7.§**

(1) Students of UVMB are entitled to

- a) expect others to respect their dignity and right to protection of personality and at the same time have a duty to observe the same principles when interacting with others;
- b) a fair and honest learning environment and professional activity ensured by UVMB and Employees and fellow Students;
- c) seek the support of UVMB in ethical conflicts if their behavior is consistent with the principles set out in the Code;
- d) seek the opinion of the Ethics Committee in ethical conflicts.

(2) Students shall use solely authorized means and methods in the course of their activity and refrain from using unauthorized means and methods in order to seek or gain unfair advantage over their fellow Students.

(3) Students violate ethical norms if they

- a) illegitimately obtain confidential exam questions or materials or make an attempt to do so;
- b) use or attempt to use devices not authorized by the instructor when participating in a (written) test or quiz, a practical or oral exam, or while completing home assignments;
- c) ask for or accept help from another person when participating in a (written) test or quiz, a practical or oral exam;
- d) ask another person to take a (written) test, a practical or oral exam or to complete an assignment in place of themselves, or attempt to take a (written) test, a practical or oral exam or to complete an assignment in place of someone else;
- e) illegitimately claim the authorship of materials, research papers, any other kinds of written work or their summaries which are not their own, or fail to credit properly ideas taken from another;
- f) present work carried out jointly as their own, or falsely claim they have taken part in the working process to a certain extent;
- g) submit the summary of a research project or part of it simultaneously or any time in the future to another instructor without being authorized to do so by the instructor who originally set the task to them in order to further their own academic advancement;
- h) falsify the documents on students' academic progress in any way;
- i) use the results of other people's work without taking part in producing those results;
- j) falsify the results of their own or somebody else's work;

(4) Students are deemed to breach moral principles if they act in bad faith when using knowledge and skills acquired at UVMB.

(5) Students shall publish results as their own solely when obtained from research conducted by them, give credit to authors they borrow ideas from and identify and reference external sources complying with copyright rules. Students shall fully identify the work from which they have borrowed if and when they

- a) quote from a paper or speech other than their own or paraphrase any part of it;
- b) use the ideas, opinions, theories or models of others;
- c) use facts established by others or data and illustrations other than their own in their work.

If Students fail to do so, they commit plagiarism and violate the principles of honest and fair professional activity.

(6) If Students become aware that somebody has committed plagiarism, they shall initiate disciplinary action.

(7) Students violate the principles of honest and fair professional activity if

- a) they modify, destroy or withhold other students' work necessary for academic or professional advancement;
- b) they prevent or make it difficult or impossible for other students to access information necessary for their academic or professional advancement, or mislead their fellow students regarding academic or professional matters;

- c) they damage, destroy or prevent access to materials or equipment assisting in learning, or modify or destroy data stored on computers;
  - d) they impede the academic or professional development of their fellow students.
- (8) Students shall assist other students with their academic or professional work and advancement in a transparent manner.
- (9) Students shall provide factually accurate data relating to them.
- (10) Students shall voice their opinions of other Employees and Students of UVMB in an honest, thoughtful and unbiased manner.

## **8. Ethical Norms, Rights and Obligations Applicable to Academic and Research Staff**

### **8.§**

- (1) Members of academic and research staff at UVMB have the right to expect
- a) others to trust them in their effort to demonstrate ethical behavior and at the same time have a duty to observe the same principles when interacting with others;
  - b) the support of UVMB in ethical conflicts if their behavior is consistent with the principles set out in the Code;
  - c) UVMB to ensure conditions necessary for engaging in honest and fair professional activity;
  - d) UVMB to provide them with the possibility of continuous professional development.
- (2) Members of academic and research staff at UVMB shall
- a) refrain from being offensive or humiliating when evaluating Students' work or academic achievement;
  - b) be open to Students' questions of professional or any other nature, and shall inform Students of the dates and times of consultations;
  - c) give instructions to Students related exclusively to their academic work;
  - d) refrain from evaluating the performance of Students with whom they have a family, friendly or hostile relationship in an exam setting, unless the exam is conducted before a board of examiners;
  - e) not offer private lessons for fee or any other benefits to Students enrolled in subjects of their own departments;
  - f) not make defamatory remarks about UVMB, its departments, its Employees or Students in public, and shall refrain from doing so especially in the presence of Students;
  - g) take on duties that do not jeopardize UVMB's interests and shall avoid situations where there would be a conflict of interest with their university status;
  - h) inform their immediate superiors of duties they take on outside of UVMB if they might affect the interests of UVMB;
  - i) be an advocate of scientific truths while showing the highest degree of professional integrity and adhere to data and facts obtained through scientific methods, and shall refrain from falsifying the results of their own or other people's work;
  - j) bring phenomena they deem dangerous or harmful as experts of their own field to the attention of the public or authorities;
  - k) assist their co-workers with their professional development;

- l) provide their colleagues with feedback on their work, and shall be open to the opinions and legitimate criticism of others regarding their own work;
- m) not accept unethical assistance in order to further their own professional advancement;
- n) comply with the publication practices and standards of their own disciplines when disseminating research findings, shall clearly state how much of the work was done by them and other researchers, and shall preserve the partial results of their research in order to be able to prove the genuineness of their own results;
- o) give credit to those who assisted them in their publications.

(3) Members of academic and research staff at UVMB have the right and obligation

- a) to help their Students develop both their personalities and morals, to set an example for them, and, if the need be, to help them with their personal problems or their studies;
- b) to keep up-to-date with the development of their own disciplines, and with the latest trends and methods in the field of learning and teaching;
- c) to accept positions or undertake duties that they are competent to (ful)fill and have the necessary time available to them to prepare for;
- d) to perform their (professional) duties with a high degree of precision following careful planning, and, to this end, to be informed of the tasks to fulfill in time;
- e) to be informed of the dates, times and expected duration of committee sittings and other formal meetings in due course so that they can prepare for them;
- f) to seek the opinion of the Ethics Committee in ethical conflicts;
- g) to carry out their educational tasks to the best of their knowledge and to strive to pass on the most up-to-date knowledge related to their field to Students.

(4) Members of the academic staff of UVMB shall

- a) deliver lectures and instruct practicals personally, unless justified by an overriding reason, be well-prepared, punctual and shall inform Students of any change in due course and through appropriate channels;
- b) deliver lectures or instruct practicals incorporating the latest advancements in their fields in a suitable way, and shall provide Students with a written summary of the material to be learned;
- c) inform Students of their expectations, the requirements of progress checks and exams, and shall make all reasonable efforts necessary to prepare Students for progress checks and exams;
- d) set tasks for Students to complete in the course of progress checks or exams that can be fulfilled after successfully completing the course;
- e) refrain from one-to-one exam situations and ensure that Students complying with the rules and regulations of exams or tests do not suffer any disadvantage should any of their peers be caught cheating;
- f) endeavor to eliminate circumstances that would allow for cheating in exam or test situations;
- g) inform Students in advance of the fact that, should any of them be caught cheating, they shall be suspended;
- h) be impartial when evaluating Students' work and shall base their system of evaluation on disclosed and unified criteria;
- i) provide Students with exam or test dates that are evenly distributed over a period of time, and ensure the same level of difficulty of exam or test questions;

- j) justify their reasons for giving a Student a certain grade and inform the Student of the correct answers if requested by the Student;
- k) refrain from informing a Student of their grades in public without the consent of the Student;
- l) endeavor to prevent disclosure of confidential exam or test questions and materials before the time of the exam or test.

## **9. The Ethics Committee**

### **9.§**

(1) By agreeing to comply with the Code of Ethics and Professional Conduct the University of Veterinary Medicine, Budapest sets forth the furtherance of maintaining the professional and institutional integrity of UVMB through implementation of its ethical norms. In controversial situations UVMB wishes to achieve this goal by way of the Ethics Committee.

(2) Following adoption of the Code, in controversial situations where ethics are concerned the senior manager having competent authority regarding the issue at hand shall convene the Ethics Committee, which shall strive to resolve the conflict by adopting an opinion either on their own initiative or upon request.

(3) The main priority of the Ethics Committee shall be to harmonize the guidelines laid down in the Code with the everyday practices of university life by using the means at its disposal.

(4) To this end, everybody to whom the Code applies is obliged to cooperate fully with the Ethics Committee.

(5) The Ethics Committee shall operate and conduct disciplinary proceedings as laid down in the rules of procedure of the Ethics Committee.

## **10. Final Provisions**

### **10.§**

(1) The Code of Ethics and Professional Conduct was negotiated with and approved by the Senate of UVMB on \_\_\_\_\_, 2017 under No. \_\_\_\_\_.

(2) Following the decision of the Senate of UVMB this Policy entered into force on July 2, 2016, and its amendment on September 21, 2016.

### **On behalf of the Senate of UVMB**

Dr. Márton Battay  
Secretary of the Senate

Dr. Péter Sótonyi  
President of the Senate

**I agree**

\_\_\_\_\_, 201... Budapest

Dr. Gergely Bohátka  
Chancellor

## **Annex 1: Harassment and Bullying Policy**

The following policy annexed to the Code of Ethics and Professional Conduct set forth by the University of Veterinary Medicine, Budapest (UVMB) is designed to provide guidelines and raise awareness for students and staff to identify inappropriate conduct and behaviors that are inconsistent with the values of UVMB.

Our Institution strongly believes that harassment and bullying pollutes the working and learning environment and has a detrimental effect upon the wellbeing, health, confidence, morale and performance of those directly affected by such behavior or who are witness to it.

UVMB is committed to creating a working and learning environment free from harassment and discrimination in which all staff, students and visitors to UVMB are treated with dignity and respect.

This Policy applies to all registered students of UVMB, students on a leave of absence, visiting students of other institutions and students of international academic exchange programs, diploma awaited students (all referred to in this Policy as ‘students’), all members of staff and all visitors to UVMB.

UVMB strongly encourages any staff, student or visitor who considers they are suffering harassment to take action using the procedures set out in this policy. UVMB in turn commits to taking seriously and thoroughly investigating any allegations of harassment that are formally brought to its attention. No person will be treated less favorably for making an allegation in good faith. Where such an allegation is found to be true, action will be taken against the perpetrators, up to and including dismissal of staff or expulsion of students. Individuals who engage in unlawful harassment may also be held personally liable for their actions and subject to prosecution under criminal law.

### **The definition of harassment**

Harassment is any behavior that is unwelcome and affects the dignity of those subjected to it. For the purposes of this policy, UVMB will use and apply the following definition of harassment as being: ‘Unwanted conduct related to a protected characteristic which has the purpose or effect of: violating a person’s dignity; or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for them.’

Any behavior that is unwanted and could reasonably be considered to violate a person’s dignity or to create an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for them is potentially harassment. Typically, for behavior to be considered harassment, it must be persistent and continue or develop over a period of time. However, a one-off incident that is particularly serious can in itself constitute harassment.

Harassment can be communicated verbally, be physical in nature, or be expressed through other means of communication, such as letters, emails, text messages and graffiti. It may be expressed directly to the Complainant, occur in their presence or be communicated about them to a third

party. Often harassment is targeted at a particular individual. However, a prevailing workplace or learning culture, where, for example, the telling of racist jokes or homophobic comments is tolerated, can also constitute harassment.

Behaviors amounting to harassment may include

- insults, name-calling and offensive language and gestures;
- inappropriate jokes;
- ridiculing and undermining behavior;
- inappropriate or unnecessary physical contact;
- physical assault or threats of physical assault;
- intimidating, coercive or threatening actions and behavior;
- unwelcome sexual advances;
- isolation, non-cooperation or deliberate exclusion;
- inappropriate comments about a person's appearance, intrusive questions or comments about a person's private life and malicious gossip;
- offensive images and literature;
- pestering, spying or stalking;
- offensive conducts related to a person's age, race, gender, ethnic or national origins, nationality or religious beliefs.

These examples are not intended to be exhaustive. They are, however, indicative of behavior that would be considered unacceptable conduct by UVMB. On occasion, individual perceptions of behavior may differ - perhaps due to differences in attitude, experience or culture - and what one person would consider acceptable behavior may be unacceptable to another. The defining factor in determining if behavior amounts to harassment is that the behavior is unacceptable to the recipient and could 'reasonably be considered' to amount to harassment. The intention of the person engaging in the behavior - whether or not they meant to harass - is not a primary factor in determining if harassment has taken place.

### **The definition of bullying**

Bullying can be defined as unwanted 'offensive, intimidating, malicious or insulting behavior, an abuse or misuse of power through means intended to undermine, humiliate, denigrate or injure the recipient' intentionally. Bullying tends to be a repeated negative action over a period of time.

Typically, bullying is one person against another, or a group of people against an individual (such defined as mobbing). Bullying can also occur in less obvious scenarios and outside of traditional power relationships, e.g. a member of staff may be bullied by a student or a manager by a member of staff.

Behaviors constituting bullying may include

- ridiculing a person;
- using abusive or vulgar language, derogatory remarks, insults, or epithets;
- shouting or screaming at a person;



- use of obscene gestures, or mocking;
- behaviors that are intimidating, threatening, disruptive, humiliating, sarcastic, or vicious may also constitute hostile behavior;
- setting someone up to fail, e.g. withholding necessary information or deliberate work overload ;
- unwarranted or invalid criticism and criticism which lacks the necessary constructive support to help the recipient improve their performance;
- persistently ‘singling out’ a person without good reason or deliberately excluding, isolating or ignoring an individual;
- making threats or comments about job security or academic success or failure without foundation;
- sending hurtful or threatening e-mails or instant messages, spreading rumors or posting embarrassing photos of others;
- openly and repeatedly labeling someone with demining words (e.g.: ’troublemaker’).

The above examples are not exhaustive. They are, however, indicative of behavior that would be considered unacceptable conduct by UVMB. Be aware that bullying can take place not only physically or verbally but through the use of technologies such as the social media as well.

### **Good faith**

If, at any time, there is evidence that allegations of harassment or bullying have been made vexatiously or maliciously, that false information has been provided or that the Complainant has otherwise acted in bad faith, disciplinary action may be taken. Any investigation based upon those allegations may be terminated.

### **Procedures in the case of harassment or bullying**

UVMB encourages staff and students to take action against harassment or bullying using the guidelines set out below. No person will be treated less favorably or suffer any detriment for having raised or supported an allegation made in good faith.

If a person believes they are being subjected to harassment or bullying it is recommended that, where possible and appropriate, those involved should attempt to resolve the situation informally in the first instance. It is, however, up to the Complainant to decide how they wish to proceed.

Whichever approach is chosen, it is recommended that a written record of any incident of harassment is made as soon as possible after an incident occurs. This should be signed, dated and kept for future reference.

### **Filing an official complaint**

Official complaints must include

- Complainant’s personal details;
- details of when and where the harassment or bullying took place, including dates and times;
- details of alleged harasser or bully;

- details of the behavior;
- details of any witnesses to the behavior.  
If applicable: records of any sorts about the incidences (e.g. text messages, e-mails, screen shots, audio-video recordings, etc. could also be attached) or details of any informal attempts which have been taken to resolve the situation and its outcome.

If informal methods do not resolve the matter, or if the harassment or bullying is particularly serious, a formal complaint and allegation of harassment or bullying should be submitted in writing either in an e-mail format or via postal services, by a registered postal letter containing all the relevant details.

Confidentiality is ensured to all mentioned or directly involved in the incident.

Complaints must be filed within 60 days following the latest incident of harassment or bullying. In the case of serious and deeply traumatizing acts of harassment or bullying such time deadline will not apply.

**In all cases of harassment or bullying occurring between students and/or staff members complaint must be filed directly to the Rector of UVMB, who, depending on the nature of the incident, will decide on the investigation into the allegation and any necessary disciplinary procedure in the shortest time possible.**

#### **Accessible help services on-campus**

Independent and confidential mental health counseling is available free of charge to all involved in an alleged harassment or bullying including those who witness such incidences. Counseling services offer one-on-one sessions with a mental health counselor during campus office hours. In addition for staff members UVMB employee services, along with legal counseling and on-campus occupational medical services are also available.