

# **University of Veterinary Medicine Budapest**

## **Code of Ethics**



**Budapest**

**September 25<sup>th</sup> , 2024.**

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# 1. Purpose and scope of the Code of Ethics

## Section 1

(1) The Code of Ethics (hereinafter: the Code) of the University of Veterinary Medicine Budapest (hereinafter: the University) is a set of values and norms that regulate personal and professional conduct at the University.

(2) The Code applies to all persons with an employee, contractor and/or student status at the University (hereinafter: University citizens).

(3) Under this Code, ethical conduct is defined as behaviour, expression of opinion, attitude that

- increases partners' and clients' trust in the University;
- boosts the University's good reputation;
- contributes to a fair and transparent higher education and research activity.

(4) The purpose of the ethical norms is to create a trustful, reliable, credible, honest, fair and unbiased environment with partners inside and outside the University, to preserve the organizational values and work culture that has been developed by the University, to support University citizens in their universal behaviour, to enhance the existing positive image, togetherness, mutual responsibility and security. The ethical norms shall apply to

- law-abiding conduct;
- fulfilling contractual obligations;
- respecting human dignity and personal rights, forbidding discrimination and harassment, requiring impartiality;
- guaranteeing the freedom of expression and representation;
- ensuring high professional quality and dependability;
- accountability and fairness;
- transparent, correct and professional administrative procedures, accurate records;
- protecting classified and confidential information, professional secrecy;
- reasonable and honest communication;
- compliance with the regulations on conflicts of interest.

(5) Beside the responsibilities assumed voluntarily, University citizens also enjoy rights under the Code. The Code enables University citizens to conduct their activities in a morally accountable manner, to reject morally derogatory tasks and requirements without negative consequences, to stand up against such tasks as well as to request the University's Ethics Committee to issue a position in case of a moral conflict.

(6) In terms of bullying, abuse and harassment, the principles laid out in Annex 1 of this Code are recommended to be applied.

(7) University citizens must understand and accept the norms and expectations defined in the Code and apply them in terms of their conduct.

(8) The Code's requirements provide a guideline for University citizens in cases where the appropriate conduct during an activity or decision-making process is not clearly defined due to the uncertainty or lack of customs, routines, rules and procedures or the unclear scope of legal regulations and policies.

(9) The University citizen's conduct shall be considered ethical if it complies with the expectations laid out in the Code.

(10) Ethical misconduct is committed when the University citizen wilfully or negligently fails to comply with the expectations laid out in the Code.

(11) In order to provide a forum to discuss, arbitrate and settle issues with ethical significance or disputes related to ethical conduct, the University's leadership creates and operates an Ethics Committee.

## **2. General principles**

### **Section 2**

(1) All University citizens can expect the institution and other University citizens to respect their human dignity and personal rights; they are also required to exercise such conduct towards others.

(2) Based on the social values generally accepted by University citizens, the Code lays out the ethical rules and behavioural norms that must be respected to ensure that the University could achieve the objectives defined in its Mission Statement.

(3) In compliance with the objectives laid out in the Mission Statement of the University of Veterinary Medicine Budapest, the daily activities of University citizens must be supported by the adoption of such ethical norms which, if applied, can contribute to the betterment of our society.

## **3. General rules of conduct for University citizens**

### **Section 3**

(1) Compliance with the legal regulations and the provisions of the University's internal codes is a moral as well as a legal obligation for University citizens.

By demonstrating the appropriate conduct in their activities and complying with the Code's ethical guidelines in their decisions and behaviour, University citizens help the University in accomplishing its goals and completing its assumed tasks.

(2) University citizens are responsible for the standard use and preservation of the University's assets as well as the lawful, purposeful and efficient utilization of the public funds and assets under their scope of responsibility, for the sole purpose of accomplishing the University's objectives.

(3) University citizens are morally obliged to respect other people's human dignity and rights and are entitled to the same respect for their own human dignity and rights. University citizens shall form their conduct on the assumption that other citizens' behaviour is guided by the same ethical responsibility and shall exercise their human rights without infringing on other people's rights.

(4) University citizens shall not conduct such business activities, undertake such positions or functions and have such financial, commercial or other interests that would be in conflict with their activities, position and tasks at the University. They shall not abuse their legal status, position, the public funds, assets and services under their jurisdiction, the information they access during their work, and they shall not use the above to promote the interests of their own or others even after their legal relations with the University are terminated.

(5) University citizens shall immediately notify the University if they presume a conflict of interest between their task and their private interest and, should they experience such a conflict

of interest at any point during their legal relations with the University, they shall take immediate measures to eliminate it.

(6) University citizens shall perform their tasks professionally, in compliance with the law and the rules of the profession. In order to do so, they shall constantly improve their skills and preparedness that are necessary for performing their tasks.

(7) University citizens shall not mislead and/or wilfully deceive the University's other citizens, partners, clients, or the general public. Without prior authorization, they shall not disclose any information they obtained confidentially from the University's or other sources. They shall not seek any opportunity to reveal, in an unauthorized, inappropriate or untimely manner, information they obtained through their work, as it could undermine or influence the University's policies, decisions or activities.

(8) University citizens shall:

- a) perform the tasks assigned to them to the best of their abilities, with the utmost care and honest work that is possible under the circumstances;
- b) fulfil their teaching, scientific and professional tasks to the best of their knowledge, they shall not reject such tasks without a substantial and justified reason, while they are entitled to a proportionate bonus, remuneration and/or moral recognition for their extra performance demonstrated during the completion of such tasks;
- c) do their best to remain impartial in their decisions, avoid preferential or discriminatory treatment as well as any discrimination based on gender, ethnicity, religion and political views;
- d) reject any forms of violent or offensive behaviour and stand up against them;
- e) develop helpful, good, mutually respectful and trustful relations with other University citizens, support and help each other in performing their tasks at the University, with due consideration for each other's human rights, each other's and the University's interests;
- f) not offer, require, accept or coerce any financial or other remuneration or service to gain any type of advantage;
- g) express their opinions with due respect to others, receive feedback on their own activity with openness, strive to maintain a tolerant, open and honest cooperation in external and internal forums as well;
- h) step up against any discrepancies occurring at the University, take the measures under their jurisdiction to eliminate them even if it means that they need to take on a personal conflict;
- i) strive for a patient dialogue to resolve any potential ethical conflicts amongst the University citizens, if that is impossible, turn to the Ethics Committee and, ultimately, to the University's public, with proper regard for personal rights;
- j) provide the necessary learning conditions for the professional and personal development of students, step up against any behaviour or phenomena that disturb the teaching-learning environment;
- k) authentically represent the University and its organizational units in their public statements made inside or outside the University, step up against any behaviour that could undeservedly present the University in a negative light;

- l) strive to safeguard the University's good reputation and authority, refrain from any behaviour that could undermine the University's interests, represent the University's justified interests in their interactions with other higher education institutions;
- m) in relation with specific issues affecting the University, express and represent their opinions only within their own jurisdiction, in a responsible, factual manner, with proper regard for the University's interests;
- n) not make a statement or give information to the media without an authorization to such effect;
- o) demonstrate their loyalty and solidarity for the University's other citizens, bodies and organizations in order to strengthen an institutional identity that is morally appropriate as well;
- p) strive to have the widest possible internal publicity and require to be properly informed about issues and decisions that affect them;
- q) manage data pertaining to the University and University citizens in line with the legal regulation and internal policies, with special regard to protecting the personal data of University citizens and respecting their private lives and privacy in general;
- r) safeguard notes and databases, manage confidential or non-public data as classified information, comply with the regulations pertaining to the protection of intellectual property;
- s) refrain from committing ethical misconduct by violating the rules pertaining to the protection of personal data and classified information, or by obtaining and forwarding protected data;
- t) refrain from committing ethical misconduct by wilfully making false public statements and allegations about the University, its operation, organizational units and/or citizens;
- u) not use their university e-mail address in personal online social media outlets, unless they do so for the University's marketing purposes, in a manner approved by the leaders of their organizational unit;
- v) have the right to express impartial criticism regarding the University's leaders, institutions, collective or individual measures and practices; any retribution or intimidation against them for exercising this right constitutes an ethical misconduct;
- w) while preserving their own culture, adapt to the University's generally accepted behavioural norms and strive to learn about our customs and traditions, to the extent required for integration into the University's community;
- x) refrain from conducting party political activities or promoting party political agendas, conducting political propaganda, disseminating propaganda materials, making party political statements unrelated to the course materials during classes;
- y) if they assume a political role, do their best to
  - clearly separate their political activity in time and space from their teaching, research and/or student activities,
  - refrain from creating any misconception that the University is dedicated to a political party or line;
  - not join any group or movement, the goals and activities of which are contrary to the University's Mission Statement, objectives and interests,
  - not use their University position or title when conducting political activities,

- not use their University e-mail address for political correspondence, their organizational unit's webpages to disseminate their views, or the University's infrastructure for any political purpose;
  - z) demonstrate a neutral and tolerant behaviour in religious or ideological affairs during their activities connected to their relations with the University;
- (9) University citizens are expected to show up well-groomed and dressed appropriately for the performance of the tasks assigned to them. During certain work activities, University citizens are obliged to wear protective clothing in compliance with the requirements laid out in the labour safety regulations relevant to the particular activity. The representatives of both genders are also expected to refrain from wearing attires that are unfit for a higher education and research environment, flagrant or potentially gravely offensive for others.

#### **4. University citizens in executive positions**

##### **Section 4**

(1) University citizens and communities cannot be expected to demonstrate ethical conduct unless the leaders of the University and its organizational units, the members of elected bodies, the institution's representatives strive to create and maintain the conditions that support ethical behaviour, and they also demonstrate such behaviour themselves.

(2) University citizens in executive positions shall

- a) lead the institution, organization, organizational unit, body, committee, student group or staff belonging under their management with professional, legal, financial and moral responsibility as well as dedication to the University; comply with the pertinent ethical norms and legal regulations, exhibiting a conduct that is exemplary for their staff;
- b) strive to make informed, well-prepared decisions and create a supporting, constructive environment in the community under their leadership;
- c) as much as possible, elicit the opinions and proposals of their colleagues before making important decisions affecting the community under their leadership, listen to their colleagues' ideas and encourage them to participate in the decision-making process;
- d) empathize with their colleagues' or fellow students' professional or personal problems that are in connection with their status at the University, be patient and open to listening to their input in relation with their tasks;
- e) assign such tasks to their associates, fellow students that they can be expected to fulfil based on their preparedness, position and current tasks;
- f) inform their associates or fellow students about their tasks in due time, make sure that they get the information they need for their activities and ensure that they have the conditions to fulfil their tasks;
- g) inform their associates or fellow students about the starting time and duration of meetings and discussions, and hold their associates as well as themselves accountable for work attendance;
- h) regularly and impartially evaluate the performance of their associates, recognize jobs well done, if they are dissatisfied with their associates' performance, support the evaluation with well-established facts;
- i) strive to create the conditions and work environment that help their associates in their professional progress and development, provide the personal conditions and professional human resources needed for the work, ensure that their associates have equal opportunities and publicity;

- j) when recommending or nominating their associates or fellow students to the University's decision-making bodies, make sure that the candidate has the necessary expertise and qualification to represent the interests of the delegating community beside performing their existing tasks;
- k) strive to internally settle disputes arising within their organizational units;
- l) not use their decision-making position to gain an unlawful advantage or to exert political or ideological influence, or take advantage of their hierarchical position in situations that are not directly related to their work;
- m) be responsible for the validity of the information reported to the authorities or other organizations, make sure that the papers and intellectual property created in their organizational unit only list authors who were actually involved in the creative process;
- n) not conduct any activity that is in conflict of interest with their executive position, not infringe on the University's interests through their assignments given by other, non-University organizations, not influence the evaluation of their associates;
- o) if they are students, not use their position to gain unjustified academic advantages.

## **5. Members of decision-making bodies and committees at the University and its organizational units**

### **Section 5**

- (1) The members of the decision-making bodies and committees at the University and its organizational units, when they are nominated to such bodies and accept the assignment, shall be guided by the interests of the persons, organizations and communities the representation of which is assigned to them.
- (2) The members of the bodies, committees shall
- a) actively participate in and be duly prepared for meetings;
  - b) not withdraw or resign from their position unless the conditions to perform their tasks are not given due to objective or subjective reasons;
  - c) voice the opinions and interests of their represented community in the meetings, and cast their vote after a careful and objective consideration of the facts and the University's interests;
  - d) not disclose the content of the closed meetings or the confidential materials prepared for the body/committee to any unauthorized party;
  - e) not violate the secrecy of the vote.

## **6. University citizens representing the University and its organizational units**

### **Section 6**

- (1) While conducting their activities and performing their tasks, University citizens may get into contact with other University citizens or third parties for the purposes of case management or administration. In such cases, University citizens must constantly be aware that they represent the University and/or its relevant organizational unit. Their performance, opinion, decisions, the services they provide, the information they give, the manner, orderliness and



professionalism with which they manage affairs, are all reflections on the University and/or the relevant organizational unit.

(2) Associates representing the University and its organizational units, and managing affairs on behalf of the University, shall

- a) demonstrate a sincere, fair and honest conduct, remain unbiased and impartial in their actions;
- b) be accountable for their decisions and the consequences of their actions;
- c) not exhibit prejudice or discrimination against any individuals or groups;
- d) not ask for or accept, either indirectly or directly, gifts, remuneration or other advantage that could influence their judgement, the honest performance of their tasks or their decisions;
- e) perform their tasks professionally, impartially, fairly, in line with the norms of civilized management of affairs and in accordance with the relevant legal regulations and the decisions of the steering bodies;
- f) respect the time and efforts of the University citizens and other clients who are affected by their performance;
- g) be available for University citizens and clients at the pre-determined office and business hours, and provide rapid and effective assistance and care for them;
- h) if they are unable to help in solving the arising problems, inform the parties as to which organization or person could give them a reliable and professional response and/or which organizational unit is in charge of the particular affairs.

## **7. Ethical norms, rights and responsibilities pertaining to students**

### **Section 7**

(1) University students are entitled to

- a) be respected in their human dignity and rights, and are obliged to exercise the same in terms of others;
- b) expect the University and/or the University citizens to provide and maintain, respectively, a fair and honest learning environment;
- c) request the University's support in ethical conflicts, if their conduct is in accordance with the principles and ethical norms of this Code of Ethics;
- d) seek the Ethics Committee's opinion in case of a moral injury.

(2) Students shall not use unauthorized, forbidden or unlawful means, tools or procedures to gain unfair advantage over their fellow students.

(3) It is considered as a violation of ethical norms if students

- a) gain unauthorized access to non-public test/exam questions or exercises, or attempts to do so;
- b) use or attempt to use tools that are not authorized by their instructors for written and oral exams or papers/projects to be submitted;
- c) use any kind of input from another person for written and oral exams;

- d) commission another person to take written or oral exams or fulfil tasks instead of them, or attempt to fulfil other people's tasks;
- e) submit materials, research, work, summary, ideas or texts collected, devised, created, performed or authored by other people as if they were their own, misuse or wilfully misrepresent sources by omitting or inaccurately referencing them;
- f) present the result of joint efforts as if it were solely their own or misrepresent the extent of their own contribution to the work;
- g) submit a written summary of data collection or research, or a part thereof, contemporaneously or at different times, to other instructors than the one who originally assigned the task to them, without the permission of the original instructor, in order to gain an academic advantage;
- h) falsify the evaluation of a test/exam in any way;
- i) generate results from other people's work without personally participating in the achievement of such results;
- j) falsify the results of their own or other people's work.

(4) It is considered as an ethical misconduct if students use the things they learned at the University malevolently for purposes that are not appropriate, or scientifically, socially or professionally accepted.

(5) Students shall only submit their own research findings as the result of their work, they shall indicate external sources in the expected form and according to the relevant rules and cite references and sources accurately. Students shall reference as sources consulted if they used any other person's

- a) written or oral communication or parts thereof, quoted verbatim or in summarized form;
- b) concepts, opinions, hypotheses or model;
- c) established facts, data or illustration for their work.

Failure to provide proper references constitutes plagiarism, which is a violation of the norms related to honest and fair professional activities.

(6) Students who are aware of plagiarism shall file for ethical proceedings.

(7) It is considered as a violation of the norm related to honest professional activity if students

- a) change, destroy or withhold other students' work that would help their academic and professional advancement;
- b) block, hinder or prevent other students from obtaining information for their academic advancement, or provide their fellow students with misleading information in academic or professional affairs;
- c) damage, destroy or render inaccessible any learning aids or materials, or change or erase data that are stored in computers;
- d) hinder their fellow students in their scientific/professional progress.

(8) Students shall help the work and professional advancement of their fellow students by honest means.

(9) Students shall ensure the validity of their personal data submitted for administration purposes.

(10) When offering their opinion on other University citizens, students shall provide honest, carefully considered and impartial responses.

## **8. Ethical norms, rights and responsibilities pertaining to teaching and research staff**

### **Section 8**

- (1) The University's instructors and researchers can expect
  - a) to be trusted in terms of their integrity and disposition to demonstrate ethical conduct, and shall exercise the same in terms of others;
  - b) to be supported by the University in case of ethical conflicts as long as their conduct is in line with the provisions of the University's Code of Ethics;
  - c) to be provided with the conditions for fair and honest professional activity;
  - d) to be enabled by their employer to conduct regular self-tuition and further education.
- (2) University citizens with instructor or researcher status shall
  - a) refrain from judging other students' activities and results in an offensive or humiliating manner;
  - b) be open to receive professional or other questions from students, inform such students as to when they can receive them and as to when they have the allocated office hours for students;
  - c) only give instructions to students in relation with academic or the related University affairs;
  - d) not conduct the exams of students who are related to them or are in friendly or hostile relations with them, or otherwise request to conduct the exam in front of a committee;
  - e) provide tuition for the students of their own organizational unit, for extra money or other remuneration;
  - f) not make public derogatory remarks on the University, its organizational units, the University citizens, and especially refrain from doing so in front of a student audience;
  - g) not infringe on the University's interests through their assignments and jobs taken, avoid situations resulting a conflict of interest;
  - h) inform their direct superior about any external assignments that affect the University's interests;
  - i) represent scientific truth with professional integrity and insist on data and facts attained through scientific methods and the conclusions drawn thereof, refrain from falsifying the results of other people's or their own work;
  - j) call the attention of the competent University citizens to phenomena they, as an expert of their own field, consider harmful or dangerous;
  - k) help the professional progress of their colleagues;
  - l) Discuss their comments on their colleagues' work directly with the affected colleagues, listen to the feedback on their own activity and accept justified criticism;
  - m) not accept unethical help for their professional advancement;
  - n) When presenting their results to the public, act in accordance with the approved publication habits and rules of the discipline, clearly communicating the extent of the contributions provided by other researchers and themselves, properly retain the milestone results of their research in order to validate the originality of their own results;
  - o) acknowledge the work of the associates who contributed to the publication.
- (3) Rights and responsibilities of the University's instructors, researchers
  - a) provide moral and humane guidance for the students entrusted in their care, provide personal and pedagogical assistance if necessary;

- b) Follow the progress of their discipline and acquire the teaching and learning methodologies related thereto;
  - c) undertake the tasks and activities they are professionally prepared for and/or have the expertise, adequate experience and available time to perform and/or solve;
  - d) perform their professional activities in a well-planned manner; be informed of the professional and community-related tasks in due time required for feasibility;
  - e) be informed in advance of the time and duration of committee meetings and discussions with sufficient time for preparation;
  - f) turn to the Ethics Committee for an opinion in case of a moral injury.
  - g) perform their teaching tasks to the best of their abilities and do their best to ensure that their students can efficiently acquire the up-to-date knowledge related to the particular subject;
- (4) Instructors shall
- a) except in duly justified cases, teach their classes personally, well-prepared, at the pre-determined time and place, without delay, and inform their students properly and in due time;
  - b) Present knowledge to their students in a form that they can process, integrate the modern elements of their discipline into their lectures, provide written materials that summarize the information;
  - c) clearly inform their students of their professional and academic expectations and the exam requirements, and do their best to prepare students for the examinations;
  - d) when it comes to examinations, determine the exam questions for students in such a manner that students can answer them if they successfully completed the course;
  - e) avoid examinations with no other person present, take special care to prevent honest students from being disadvantaged if a fellow student commits a fraud;
  - f) strive to eliminate any conditions that could enable students to commit fraud during the preparation or submission of their answers;
  - g) warn students if they detect a behaviour that is indicative of fraud, if a student is caught in the act, suspend the examination of the student;
  - h) evaluate students' performance impartially, based on a public and universal set of criteria;
  - i) distribute exam dates and times evenly, make sure that the difficulty level of the exam question sets is equal;
  - j) after the examination and on the student's request, clearly explain the evaluation to the candidate and communicate the expected answers;
  - k) not make the student's grade public without the student's consent;
  - l) do their best to prevent the affected parties from accessing the restricted test/exam questions and exercises prior to the date of the test/exam.

## **9. The Ethics Committee**

### **Section 9**

(1) By adopting the Code of Ethics, the University of Veterinary Medicine Budapest aims to maintain the University's professional and institutional integrity through enforcing the

University's ethical norms. In case of a dispute, the University exercises this effort by way of the Ethics Committee.

(2) After the adoption of the Code of Ethics, the higher executive with jurisdiction in the affair convenes a meeting of the Ethics Committee, which issues an opinion on ethically debatable issues, upon request or ex officio, thus helping the resolution of the conflicts.

(3) The primary purpose of the Ethics Committee is to harmonize the provisions of the Code of Ethics with the practice of university life.

(4) To ensure that the ethical norms laid out in the Code of Ethics are enforced in the University's life, everybody under the scope of the Code of Ethics is obliged to cooperate with the Ethics Committee.

(5) The operation of the Ethics Committee and the ethical proceedings are regulated in the by-laws of the Ethics Committee.

## 10. Closing provisions

### Section 10

(1) The Code of Ethics was discussed and adopted by the Senate's meeting under Resolution No. 9/2022/2023 SZT on October 5<sup>th</sup>, 2022.

(2) This Code shall enter into force as of July 2 of 2016, Amendment No. 1 shall enter into force as of December 12 of 2017, while Amendment No. 2 herein shall enter into force as of October 5<sup>th</sup> of 2022. This Amendment No.3. shall enter into force as of September 26<sup>th</sup>, 2024

Budapest, September 25<sup>th</sup>, 2024

### Representing the University Senate

  
Dr. Márton Battay  
Secretary of the Senate

  
Dr. Péter Sótónyi  
President of the Senate



## **Annex No.1: Guidelines related to bullying, abuse and harassment**

Annexed to the Code of Ethics released by the University of Veterinary Medicine Budapest (hereinafter: the University), this policy serves as a guideline for the University's students and staff to raise their awareness regarding the detection of behaviours that are incompatible with the University's values.

Our institution firmly believes that bullying and harassment are toxic behaviours for a professional and academic environment and have a devastating effect on the personal development, health, confidence, morale and performance of whoever experiences or witnesses them.

The University is fully dedicated to creating a professional and academic environment free of bullying and discrimination, where all students, staff and visitors of the University are treated with respect and honest appreciation.

This policy applies to the University's registered students with active or inactive status, students visiting from other universities, students participating in international higher education exchange programmes, students waiting for the release of their diplomas (for the purposes of this policy, hereinafter: "students"), as well as all employees and visitors of the University.

The University encourages its employees, students and visitors to take immediate measures according to the procedure published in this Code if they feel or believe that they are victims of harassment. The University shall take all officially submitted or communicated complaints and statements related to harassment seriously and conduct a full investigation thereof. No person shall suffer any negative consequences if they file for an ethics investigation of harassment in good faith. If the accusation of harassment is verified, the perpetrator(s) will be subjected to internal proceedings which may lead to the dismissal of the staff member(s) or student(s). Persons committing acts of unlawful harassment shall be held personally accountable for their actions and may be prosecuted under the law.

### **Definition of harassment**

Harassment is defined as any unwelcome conduct that violates the victim's human dignity. For the purposes of this policy, the University defines and uses the term of harassment as follows: "Any unwelcome conduct that is related to any of the protected characteristics and the purpose or effect of which is to violate the human dignity of any person, or to create an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for any person."

Any unwelcome conduct that can be rightfully assumed to be violating the human dignity of any person or sufficient to create an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive

environment for any person shall be considered as potential harassment. For a conduct to be considered harassment in general, it needs to be repeated or persistent. Nevertheless, a one-off, outstandingly severe incident may also exhaust the term of harassment.

Harassment can be verbal or physical and it can be conducted via other communication channels such as by letter, e-mail, social media, text messages or graffiti. Harassment may be conducted directly, i.e., in the victim's presence or indirectly, i.e., communicated to a third party without the victim's presence. Harassment is usually targeted at a specific person. Nevertheless, an existing workplace or academic environment where, for example, racist jokes or homophobic remarks are tolerated, may also exhaust the term of harassment.

Forms of conduct considered as harassment include:

- insults, slurs, use of offensive language or gestures;
- inappropriate jokes,
- jeering or humiliating behaviour;
- inappropriate or unnecessary physical contact;
- physical abuse or threats to exert physical violence;
- intimidating, coercive or threatening acts or conduct;
- unwelcome sexual behaviour/advances toward another person (physical contact, provocative, suggestive behaviour);
- isolation, wilful exclusion, or denying cooperation from any person;
- inappropriate remarks on the appearance of a person, intrusive questions or remarks regarding a person's private life and/or spreading malevolent rumours;
- Use of offensive imagery or literary texts;
- teasing, prying or stalking;
- offensive behaviour in connection with a person's age, origin, racial, sexual, ethnic, national or religious background.

The listed forms of conduct are not the only examples of harassment; they serve as a guideline as to what forms of conduct are considered unacceptable by the University. On occasion, it may happen that a person judges, potentially due to differences in attitude, experience or culture, a certain behaviour differently; i.e., what appears to be acceptable behaviour for one person, may be evaluated or considered by another as unacceptable. As to what is considered harassment, a key element is that the given behaviour must be unacceptable for the affected person, and/or the behaviour in question may rightfully be assumed to be harassment. The intention of the person accused of harassment, i.e., whether they meant to harass the other person or not, is not a primary factor in determining whether the case of harassment applies.

### **Definition of bullying**

Bullying may be defined as follows: "Any offensive, intimidating, malicious or hurtful behaviour and/or mistreatment or abuse of power, which leads to the victim's wilful degradation, humiliation, defamation or offence". Bullying is typically a series of negative acts repeated within a certain period.

In general, bullying involves cases where a person is targeted by another person or group of people (the latter is called psycho terror or mobbing). Bullying can also be characterized by a

less obvious scenario, i.e., contrary what the hierarchical positions would suggest, a teacher may potentially be bullied by a student, or an executive by a subordinate.

Forms of conduct considered as bullying include:

- mocking of a person;
- use of offensive, rude or defamatory language and/or derogatory remarks or terms;
- shouting or yelling at a person;
- use of obscene gestures or ridiculing a person.

Forms of hostile behaviour include

- bullying, threats, humiliation, subversive behaviour, sarcasm and/or meanness;
- causing the failure of another person, for example, by withholding necessary information from them or overburdening them with tasks at their workplace;
- unfounded or inappropriate criticism or such criticism that is not meant to be constructive and to help the person to be more productive;
- “picking on” a person for no reason, or wilfully excluding, isolating or ignoring a person;
- insulting another person in terms of their job security, and/or successful or unsuccessful academic advancement without any foundation, or make remarks thereto;
- sending offensive or threatening e-mails or instant messages to any person, or post malicious allegations, rumours or embarrassing photos about any person on social media;
- openly and regularly describe any person with derogatory terms (e.g.: “troublemaker”).

The listed forms of conduct are not the only examples of bullying, but they serve as a guideline as to what forms of conduct are considered unacceptable by the University. We must bear in mind that bullying does not always take a verbal or physical form, it could also be conducted electronically via social media, for example.

### **Good faith**

If it is confirmed that the accusation of harassment or bullying was made out of spite or malevolence, or if incorrect information was reported or if the complainant acted maliciously in any other way, disciplinary proceedings may be initiated. Investigations launched based on such accusations may be terminated.

### **Procedure of investigating complaints regarding harassment or bullying**

The University encourages its employees and students to take immediate measures by following the procedure below if they are faced with harassment or bullying. No person shall suffer any negative consequences if they press charges on account of harassment or bullying in good faith, or if they support such charges.

In a perceived case of harassment or bullying, the affected parties should, if it is possible and appropriate, try to find a solution for the situation themselves as the first step. However, it is up to the complainant as to what they wish to do next.



Regardless which path is chosen by the affected party, they are recommended to record each incident in written, signed and dated documents so that the victim could reference them later.

### **How to file an official complaint**

Details of the procedure of filing official complaint is regulated by the Regulation on the Whistleblowing System.

If there is no informal solution for the situation or it is an especially severe case of harassment and/or bullying, the complaint shall be submitted officially, including all the relevant details, in writing via e-mail addressed to [complaint@univet.hu](mailto:complaint@univet.hu) to the person responsible for student rights. The information related to all persons affected by the case in any way shall be handled confidentially by the University.

The complaint must be submitted within 60 days after the latest incident of harassment or bullying. This temporal limitation does not apply to cases of harassment or bullying that caused severe or serious trauma.

**Regardless whether the affected parties are students and/or employees, the complaint shall be submitted to the Rector, who shall immediately make a decision on the investigation and conducting the procedure subject to the type of the case.**

### **Assistance and services available at the campus**

The University offers free mental hygiene consulting services, which can be used freely, independently and confidentially by any parties affected in any real or alleged case of harassment and bullying, including the potential witnesses. The service allows for individual consulting during the office hours pre-scheduled for the given semester. Mental hygiene consulting services are also available for the University's employees along with other services for employees (legal consulting and occupational medical care).

### AMENDMENT LOG

Date of release	Version No.	Written / amended by	Description of amendment
12/12/2017	V1	Dr. Márton Battay	Approved by the Senate
October 4 <sup>th</sup> , 2022	V2	Dr. László Fodor	Updated for organizational changes
September 25 <sup>th</sup> , 2024	V3	Dr. Márton Battay	Updated due to legal changes