

The Royal Danish Academy of Fine Arts' Harassment and Sexual Harassment Policy

Prepared by the working group for the preparation of shared guidelines on the prevention and handling of sexual harassment, bullying and other forms of offensive/harassing conduct (the harassment group), set up by the Liaison Committee (Samarbejdsudvalget) on 7 December 2017. As discussed by the Liaison Committee on 25 June 2018.

Harassment

First and foremost, all employees at the Royal Danish Academy of Fine Arts' Schools of Visual Arts must always be aware that an unequal power dynamic exists between employees and students and between management and regular staff. This power dynamic is always present even though the Academy often voices a wish for and promotes a general tone based on the idea of an entirely flat structure or hierarchy. In connection with any and all forms of harassment or offensive behaviour, the person holding the position of greater power/authority always has the ultimate responsibility. This can never be called into question.

As a result, all employees and the entire faculty must be aware that they are part of a hierarchical structure in which they have a special responsibility for the students. Hence, they must at all times remain aware of their own behaviour and manner of speech.

What is harassment?

Harassment is conduct that offends or violates a person's being and dignity.

Harassment can take many different forms and will often appear in the guise of e.g. innuendo, bullying, problematic rhetoric and miscommunication. It may also involve quite concrete physical assault, unwelcome physical contact and other conduct that violates personal boundaries.

No single, objectively defined boundary between ordinary, acceptable human interaction and harassment exists; perceptions may vary greatly from one person to the next, and for this very reason it is highly important for anyone who is the victim of harassment to have confidence in their own perception of a given situation.

Harassment may include, but is not limited to, discriminatory conduct in relation to gender, gender identity and/or gender presentation, ethnicity, religion, disability, sexual orientation and age.

The victim defines what is unwelcome, invasive or offensive.

Rules of conduct/guidelines:

Guidelines for victims of harassment

Being the subject of harassment is painful. You may feel guilty, and the idea of taking action to remedy the situation may feel overwhelming and insurmountable. It is victim of harassing conduct who defines what is unwelcome, invasive or offensive.

You should know that the overall responsibility for the working and study environment at the Schools resides with the Rector, and that the institution will not tolerate a climate of harassment. In addition to this, all staff and students have a responsibility to contribute to ensuring a good working climate that is free of bullying and harassment among students and staff alike.

If you find yourself the victim of harassment, it is important that you:

1. Trust what you feel, trust your experience. Be aware of what is happening to you – physically and mentally. You might want to write down your thoughts and feelings.
2. Speak to people you trust. You might want to involve others (friends, family, fellow students/co-workers) to help you deal with the situation.
3. Try to respond as quickly as possible when you find yourself the victim of harassment. This takes courage and strength, but do try not to wait to the point where you have sustained serious mental and/or physical injury. Having said that, you should also know that it is never too late to react.
4. Use the opportunities available for getting help:
 - seek support from friends and fellow students/co-workers.
 - seek help (external or in-house) relevant to harassment situations:

External counselling for students: The Student Counselling Service, tel.
+4570267500

Internal counselling of students: Work is currently being done to ascertain whether it would be possible to set up a central ombudsman function for Danish arts education within the field of harassment. Until this matter is resolved, The Study Administration will be able to offer you advice on the courses of action available to you.

External counselling for employees: Contact your immediate superior. He/she will refer you to our counselling scheme for members of staff.

All such conversations will be confidential and fall within the scope of the professional duty of confidentiality of those involved.

This information is also available on Info.

5. You can also use the contacts listed above if you witness someone else being the victim of harassment.
6. Pay attention to your health.

Potential symptoms after long or short-term harassment may include:

- Agitation, nervousness and restlessness. Irritable and aggressive behaviour.
- Headaches, muscle pains and stomach trouble.
- Trouble sleeping, anxiety and depression
- Difficulty concentrating and remembering things
- Withdrawal from collegiate and social communities.

If you experience any of the symptoms above, consult your doctor.

7. If the harassing conduct is of a criminal nature, it must be reported to the police. This applies to cases such as violence, rape or indecent exposure.

Guidelines for educators, management staff and the Study Administration

How should you respond?

As an employee and/or manager you have a special responsibility for ensuring that no harassment takes place at the institution. You are a role model on how to interact at the institution. You also need to be aware that you yourself may be misunderstood and perceived as a perpetrator of harassment based solely on something you said.

1. Clearly show that you do not accept harassment.

2. Be open and listen for signs of harassment. Always show sensitivity if a co-worker or student feels ill-treated and chooses to tell you – and take it seriously. A sense of safety and trust is crucial in these situations, and it should be made clear that all such conversations are entirely confidential and fall within the scope of your professional duty of confidentiality.
3. Turn passive witnesses into active ones. This means that you should actively intervene if you see signs or instances of harassment. If you simply let it happen, you become an enabler and share in the responsibility for what happens.
4. If you become aware of instances of harassment, inform Rector immediately. Rector will address the case according to the nature of the relevant incident(s).
5. Make sure that everyone knows about the offerings provided by the institution to victims of harassment, i.e. who to contact for help.
6. Take part in establishing personnel policies that prevent harassment – or follow up on such policies. Chart your mental working environment in the institution's H&S risk assessment (APV) and Study Environment Survey (Studiemiljøundersøgelsen) and make sure that any problems are followed up on.
7. Be aware that you may easily be misunderstood – it is important that the victim of harassment does not feel that you are siding with the perpetrator.

Responses

Harassment and offensive conduct at the Royal Academy of Fine Arts is taken very seriously and may have a direct impact on the perpetrator's employment or education at the institution.

Rector is responsible for following up on all incidents of harassment of which the management is made aware. Accordingly, Rector will take up the issue with any member of staff whose conduct has been perceived as offensive/harassment.

In cases that may be remedied by behavioural adjustments, Rector may issue a reprimand or official warning followed by a probationary period. In the event of serious offences and in cases where warnings are not heeded, the perpetrator of offensive/harassing behaviour may be dismissed.

Such employment-related consequences will always be carried out in compliance with general employment law and administrative principles of fairness and proportionality.

All personnel matters fall within the scope of the professional duty of confidentiality, meaning that they cannot be discussed within the institution.

If the victim wants full anonymity, there is no open case, meaning that the entire process will be handled without issuing any communication or information to internal or external parties apart from those directly involved.

Links to testimonies/cases on sexual harassment, offering examples of situations of offensive and transgressive behaviour.

<https://www.idoart.dk/blog/kunstneriskfrihed-bryd-tavsheden-ligesom-sverige>

<https://www.dr.dk/nyheder/indland/48-anonyme-vidnesbyrd-om-kraenkelser-paa-danske-universiteter-er-kun-toppen-af>

https://www.skrivunder.net/aabent_brev_til_rektorerne