

Policy regarding the Code of Conduct of Study Association for Media and Culture AKT

The establishment of this document is intended as a form of (preventive) policy regarding misconduct within Study Association AKT. This translates into:

- Making the code of conduct known within the association;
- Sufficient supervision of compliance with the code of conduct;
- Providing adequate knowledge of the policies and risks of misconduct within the association.

The document is intended to be an addition to the HR (House Rules) of Study Association AKT and consists of three sections:

1. Glossary
2. Code of Conduct Student Association AKT
3. Protocol Violation of Code of Conduct Study Association AKT

Glossary

Board - The sitting board of the Association for Media and Culture AKT. The board is involved in the procedure, unless a board member themselves is involved as reporter or the reported.

Dissolution - Dissolution of membership following violation of the Code of Conduct.

Advisory Board - Advisory board of the sitting board of the Association for Media and Culture AKT, consisting of former board members. The Advisory Board is involved in the procedure in the case of involvement of a board member or in the case of objection by a member.

Suspension - If a member is suspended, it means that they can no longer participate in AKTivities, activities of SVO in which AKT is co-organizer and can no longer visit the AKT living room.

Confidential Contact Person - The two confidential contact persons of the Association for Media and Culture AKT. The confidential contact persons are the first point of contact for making a report.

Blacklist - A list to track underpayments. If a member is on this list, that member will be denied access to any AKTivity. This list is maintained by the treasurer of the AKT board of Association for Media and Culture.

Code of Conduct Study Association AKT

The following code of conduct is designed to contribute to a safe environment within Study Association AKT (hereafter AKT) and includes established guidelines on the desired behavior and the corresponding protocol in case of undesirable behavior. We strive to make every member feel comfortable within the study association and to create a safe atmosphere, so that AKTivities can be organized and take place with enjoyment. To ensure everyone can enjoy their time at AKT, this code of conduct contains rules that we, as an association, want to follow and promote. The code of conduct applies to everyone involved in the association and applies to all forms of interaction during AKTivities or interaction in the living room. When there is evidence of behavior that violates this code of conduct, we encourage members to make an (anonymous) report to one of the confidential contact persons, or to do so to the board. The board can then refer the member to one of the confidential contact persons. Confidential contact persons cannot be part of the Board or the Advisory Board. This document is not only intended for members, but also for the board and external attendants during AKTivities. There is an option at any time to go to University of Utrecht and its confidential contact persons (vertrouwenspersonen-ongewenstgedrag@uu.nl) and/or student advisors (studieadviesMCW.gw@uu.nl or 030-253 6680) as any concerned party.

Here is what AKT understands by the code of conduct:

1. Everyone is always responsible for their actions;
2. We treat each other and each other's property with respect;
3. We respect each other's boundaries;
4. Sexually offensive behavior and language will not be tolerated. This includes unwelcome sexual comments;
5. Physical and mental violence will not be tolerated. The use of violence is seen as making the atmosphere within AKT unsafe. This includes (cyber) bullying and other forms of harassment;
6. Discrimination will not be tolerated. Everyone should be able to feel safe, regardless of their origin, religion, sexual identity or orientation, gender, or any other characteristics on which someone may feel discriminated against;
7. All members of AKT are accountable for misconduct and have the right to call someone to account for misconduct;
8. We encourage each other to abide by the code of conduct.

Protocol violation Code of Conduct Study Association AKT

This document is intended to provide some clarity to members of Student Association AKT involved in a report of misconduct. The procedure outlined herein provides a general overview of what the Board, the Advisory Board and the person(s) involved are expected to do when dealing with a case.

Structure of the protocol:

- I. Definitions
- II. How and where to report (suspected) misconduct
- III. Exceptions
- IV. The procedure
- V. Dealing with a report
- VI. Making an objection

I. Definitions

In this protocol, behavior is defined as the totality of all conscious and unconscious acts, actions and reactions of members in relation to the social environment.

1. Safety
By safety, AKT understands the absence of unsafe situations and/or danger, the central issue being that members are protected from harm to their physical and mental integrity.
2. Misconduct
Behavior that contradicts the defined guidelines of AKT's Code of Conduct.
3. Sexually transgressive behavior
Crossing another person's boundaries while sexually approaching someone, such as in the form of unwanted touching, unwelcome comments, messages of a sexual nature or sexual abuse.
4. Physical violence
Assault on personal integrity in the form of physical contact, with the intent to physically injure and/or frighten.
5. Mental violence
Violation of personal integrity in the form of mental contact, with the intent to emotionally injure and/or cause fear.
6. (Cyber)bullying
Behavior involving repeatedly targeting in malicious ways, both digital and non-digital.
7. Exclusion
Deliberately rejecting, excluding or ignoring someone in such a way that the person experiences it as unpleasant.

8. Harassment

Behavior that involves deterring, restraining or overwhelming someone by threatening them, whether physically or verbally.

9. Discrimination

Putting someone at a disadvantage or treating them unequally based on a variety of characteristics such as ancestry, gender, sexual identity or orientation, religion or other traits on which a person bases their own identity.

II. How and where to report (suspected) misconduct

The first person to contact for reporting an incident is one of the confidential contact persons. The member may also choose to make a written report directly to the board without consulting the confidential contact person if that person chooses the formal process (what this formal process entails is explained later in this document). The board then refers the member to one of the confidential contact persons. The confidential contact person guides the reporter during the process of making a report, both in a practical and emotional sense. The confidential contact person refers the member, if necessary in agreement with the member's own judgment, to relevant authorities that can provide support and/or assistance to the reporter. Members may also use the board as a first point of contact, but ultimately they should also use the confidential contact person to serve as a point of contact for the reporter on any issue.

The rest of the procedure is followed as described under Section IV "The Procedure". The board can always go to the Advisory Board for advice on a report and the procedure, but is not required to do so.

III. Exceptions

When one of the confidential contact persons is involved in a report as reporter or the reported, the other confidential contact person will automatically be involved in handling the report and the possible continuation of the procedure. When the reporter or the reported is someone from the board, this board member and the rest of the board should withdraw from the procedure. When this is someone from the Advisory Board, this person and the entire Advisory Board should also withdraw from the proceedings. However, both board members and Advisory Board members may continue to perform their regular duties that are part of their positions until the proceedings are completed and a verdict is issued.

When a board member is involved as a reporter or as the reported, the Advisory Board takes over the duties of the board within the procedure. This is the only situation in which this is the case. When the Advisory Board eventually makes the decision to suspend a board member, it must go past the General Assembly.

IV. The procedure

There are two procedures that can go down: formal and informal handling. Also, below is a description of what happens when someone makes a report but is not involved in the incident themselves.

a. Informal handling of a report

In consultation with the reporter, the confidential contact person can choose to handle a report informally. This will involve one or more discussions between the parties involved, with the confidential contact person as mediator. When the reporter is not satisfied with the outcome of the informal handling, they can choose to follow the protocol of the formal handling or to start the informal handling of the report again with the other confidential contact person.

If there is any misconduct occurring on the spot at an AKTivity, the board may choose to remove the offender from this AKTivity at any time. If another member does not find this to be sufficient, a report to the confidential contact person may still be chosen. The confidential contact person stores reports, including the outcome of the handling (consequences), for three years in an overview on the drive of the confidential contact persons. After three years, the data of a report will be deleted.

b. Formal handling of a report

1. A member chooses to make a written report of misconduct to the board, possibly in consultation with one of the confidential contact persons. The member may also choose to do so without consulting the confidential contact person, by making a written report directly to the board. The primary goal is for the reporter to be comfortable with making the report. The written report should include:

- a. A description of the situation in which the misconduct occurred (a description of the situation) to what extent the reporter is comfortable with it, who the person(s) involved are, and where and when the misconduct occurred.
- b. Possibly: what the desired outcomes are from the reporter's point of view.

2. The written report shall be provided to the board. This can be done physically (mailing address: Muntstraat 2a - 3512 EV - Utrecht) or by mail, bestuur@akt-online.nl.

3. The board will provide a response within five working days, indicating confirmation of receipt and preliminary follow-up steps from the board.

c. A (board) member reports a violation of the code of conduct but is not personally involved in the incident

There may also be a (board) member reporting misconduct. When a (board) member is not personally involved in the incident, the following procedure will be followed:

1. The (board) member makes a written report. This will require the same requirements as a written report by a member of AKT. Further details may be added, but are not required.
2. The board discusses the incident and, with the consent of the (board) member involved, notifies one of the confidential contact persons of the incident.
3. Afterwards, the (board) member concerned will be contacted by the chairman of the board and invited for an interview with the chairman and one of the confidential contact persons. During the conversation, the (board) member is informed about the report, which includes the content of the report.

4. After this conversation, the procedure proceeds as the formal procedure with a reporter (see point IV.b.).
5. If the (board) member objects to the decision taken by the board and/or the Advisory Board, the procedure is the same as the formal procedure where a board member is not the reporter. This procedure is described in point VI.

V. Dealing with a report

On condition that the reporter of the misconduct has given permission, the confidential contact person will prepare a short report of the conversation they had with the reporter. The board then discusses the report or the written report to the board in the board meeting. The board then organizes talks with the parties involved together with the confidential contact person previously involved. Here the chair of the board and the confidential contact person will be present. When the chair of the board cannot be present, the vice chair will assume this role. When the vice chair cannot be present, the vice vice chair will be present, etc. When the confidential contact person cannot attend, the other confidential contact person will attend. If one of the parties (the reporter or the member who has engaged in misconduct) does not wish to have the conversation with each other, the conversations will take place separately. The conversations held will be reported, in an anonymous and confidential manner. The board member present will compile this with the confidential contact person, in order to get an as legitimate picture of the conversations as possible. These may not be shared other than in the case of an objection, when the Advisory Board must be involved. Based on the report, the board will choose what the consequences for the misconduct will be. In doing so, the board may take into account the offender's past record within AKT, e.g. receipt of previous warnings and the advice of the confidential contact person.

The consequences can take on the following forms:

a. According to the board, or the Advisory Board, there is no violation of the code of conduct. Therefore, there are no consequences.

b. According to the board, or the Advisory Board, there is a violation of the code of conduct. An official written warning will be issued.

1. A warning is valid for the duration of the membership as a member and alumnus of AKT. Thus, upon becoming an alumnus, previous warnings do not expire.

2. A warning will be issued for any violation of the Code of Conduct. The board may additionally impose additional consequences such as suspension or expulsion.

3. With a second warning, a member is automatically suspended from AKTivities. The suspension is valid for three months.

4. With a third warning, the board will start deliberating on permanent cancellation of the membership. If the decision to dissolve membership is not made, a member will be automatically suspended again for three months.

c. According to the board, or the Advisory Board, a violation of the code of conduct has occurred.

This is a violation where no report was made, but where, according to the board itself, there was a violation of the code of conduct and a warning was not listened to on the spot. This warning also counts as an official warning, since it comes from the board at an AKTivity. The board therefore consults on suspension or removal. The following applies here:

1. The member is no longer welcome at the association for three months or the membership is cancelled.
2. If a member is suspended, it means the member can no longer participate in AKTivities, activities of SVO in which AKT is co-organizer and can no longer visit the AKT living room.
3. If a member has already registered for AKTivities, any registration will be cancelled.
4. Should the suspension occur after this member has already signed up for an AKTivity taking place during the suspension period, the member is still required to fulfill any payment obligations of this AKTivity. Failure to do so will result in the member being blacklisted.

The parties involved will be informed of the decision of the board in writing. In addition, the board is responsible for enforcing the consequences taken. This may include keeping a record of warnings and ensuring that the membership is suspended or cancelled.

VI. Making an objection

If one or more of those involved do not support the decision of the board, they have fourteen days to make an objection. This should be done by informing the confidential contact person in writing, in the form of a physical letter to the confidential contact person or an e-mail to the e-mail address of the confidential contact persons. The letter should explain the part of the procedure with which the person concerned disagrees. This may be about the outcome and/or about the procedure itself. The confidential contact person will inform the board of the objection.

a. The individual is not satisfied with the outcome of the proceedings.

1. The board shall respond to the individual's objection in writing within three working days. The board does so by revisiting the report and reevaluating the consequences taken. Any consequences taken shall remain in place until the objection is resolved.
2. When there is dissatisfaction regarding suspension, the person involved may ask the board to ask the Advisory Board to re-evaluate the report. The Advisory Board may ask the person(s) involved to meet with the Advisory Board to get a better picture of the situation.
3. If the person concerned is not satisfied with the decision of the Advisory Board, no further appeal is possible.

b. A person disagrees with the process of reporting and/or handling of the procedure.

1. De betrokkene kan het bestuur verzoeken om de gesprekken opnieuw te voeren of om het rapport opnieuw in te zien. Het bestuur zal hier mee akkoord gaan en de situatie herbeoordelen. Hierna stelt het bestuur de betrokkene schriftelijk op de hoogte van het genomen besluit.
2. The individual may request that the board retake the interviews or to review the report. The board will agree and reassess the situation. Following this, the board will notify the individual in writing of the decision made.
3. The Advisory Board will take over the review of the situation from the board. The Advisory Board may choose to conduct interviews with the dissatisfied individual and others involved, as long as previous reports are also included in the evaluation. Based on the Advisory Board's evaluation, a conclusion is drawn. In addition, based on the reports and any interviews with the person(s) involved, the Advisory Board concludes whether the board acted appropriately.
4. The Advisory Board strives to make its decision within two weeks. This is done by informing the board in writing.

a. The Advisory Board judges the way in which the board has handled the procedure as adequate: the consequences chosen by the board remain valid.

b. The Advisory Board judges the manner in which the board has handled the procedure as inadequate: the consequences chosen by the board no longer apply. The Advisory Board makes another ruling, which cannot be appealed.

It should be noted that this document provides a guideline. Each situation is context-dependent, so there are cases where an exception to the protocol can be made. The moment a person feels that their report has not been taken seriously or has been handled carelessly, they can go to one of the other institutions.

This document was written by the 43rd board of Student Association for Media and Culture AKT and is also inspired by The Code of Conduct from the 40th board of Study Foundation Art and the Code of Conduct from the 13th board of U.H.S.V. Anteros.