

## CODE OF CONDUCT ON INAPPROPRIATE BEHAVIOUR

(approved by the Executive Board on 28 September 2018)

At Ghent University a code of conduct applies which contains principles that outline a framework for the diversity of interactions. This code, that applies to students, employees and anyone who comes into contact in any way with (a student or personnel member of) the university, lays down guidelines that Ghent University considers important in the broad context of interpersonal behaviour.

### PRINCIPLES

1. At Ghent University we expect that everyone interacts with one another in a caring and respectful manner. The best way to 'set limits' on inappropriate behaviour is to prevent it by creating a culture in which positive and respectful interaction with one another is stimulated so that students and employees form part of a friendly university.
2. Everyone has individual personal limits and respect for these forms the basis for all interpersonal interaction. Remember that your limits are not necessarily the same as those of another person, and vice versa.
3. Inappropriate behaviour and perception are inextricably linked: no one specific behaviour in itself is necessarily inappropriate because it fulfils certain conditions; often it is the perception of this behaviour by the other person that determines whether the behaviour is experienced as inappropriate.
4. The daily interaction with one another at the university is based on the same norms and values as in society. We expect from you that you do not exceed any limits in terms of (cyber)bullying, stalking, intimidation, aggression, discrimination, exploitation, inappropriate sexual behaviour, etc. Persons who exhibit this kind of behaviour in society are exceeding a limit; this is no different at the university.
5. Inappropriate behaviour occurs in a variety of forms and is not linked to certain forms of interpersonal interactions, students and personnel categories or gender. No form of inappropriate behaviour is tolerated at Ghent University. We expect that in setting and

judging behaviour everyone pays attention to the various forms of inappropriate (sexual) behaviour: learn to recognise, avoid, prevent and control them, based on respect for one another's limits at all times (principle 2) and the value of the perception (principle 3).

6. Time is also not a determining factor: non-inappropriate behaviour may become inappropriate behaviour over time. This kind of inappropriate behaviour is then also unacceptable.
7. An imbalance of power may also form the basis of inappropriate behaviour. We expect that everyone, and certainly those persons in a position of power, is aware of this and never abuses it. In addition, we expect from them that they apply the rule of equal opportunities; this means that if the personal interaction with one person brings with it certain advantages, these same advantages may not be denied another person in the same professional situation.
8. Ghent University wishes to create a culture in which everyone can and dares to openly discuss the limits of behaviour, can be respectful to one another and dares to challenge inappropriate behaviour, actually stands up for others and regards the passive bystander role as undesirable, dares to report inappropriate behaviour confidentially and safely and dares to report inappropriate behaviour even if you are not the person involved in it yourself. These reports will be dealt with in total discretion and reporters are protected (whistleblower status).
9. A constructive restorative vision is central to Ghent University's policy on inappropriate behaviour; this vision is both proactive and reactive. In concrete terms this means that all reports of inappropriate (sexual) behaviour are taken seriously and dealt with in a professional manner. Ghent University also takes prevention measures and aims to make everyone (more) resilient to make limits clear in interactions with others, and also to take measures if limits are exceeded.
10. If a report is made, this will always be investigated further. If interventions are considered necessary, in the first instance these will be aimed at stopping the undesirable behaviour and repairing the work relationship. If this is not successful, other interventions will be considered, but sanctions will follow if they are deemed necessary. These sanctions will be proportional to the inappropriate behaviour identified and will be applied uniformly and in a balanced manner

## AREA OF APPLICATION

This code applies to activities performed within the framework of Ghent University (where Ghent University is represented or if the activities come under the Ghent University flag):

- By personnel employed by Ghent University or who for disciplinary matters come under Ghent University regulations (e.g. Research Foundation Flanders personnel),
- By employees of contractors commissioned by Ghent University,

- By all Ghent University students (both enrolled and registered, including doctoral students),
- By voluntary and/or unpaid Ghent University employees,
- By visitors to Ghent University campus or to activities carried out off campus in the name of Ghent University,
- Non-limitative but more general: by other third parties who are visiting or under the auspices of Ghent University have contact with Ghent University or members of the Ghent University community.