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# Dignity at Work and Study Policy for the Royal Danish Academy – Architecture, Design, Conservation

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**Compiled and issued by:** Executive Management and Liaison Committee

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Det  
Kongelige  
Akademi

Arkitektur  
Design  
Konservering

## 1. Background and purpose

The Royal Danish Academy wishes to foster a creative and positive environment characterised by respectful conduct, professionalism and shared values, as well as insight into and awareness of contemporary society and its cultural trends. Fulfilment of our purpose as an academic and educational institution in which we continuously cultivate knowledge and skills, requires that the dignity of students and staff is safeguarded in an environment free from harassment, including sexual harassment, bullying and intimidation, which are referred to in the following as 'offensive behaviour'. Equally imperative is receptiveness to diverging opinions and approaches, including mutually courteous conduct and interaction among students and staff.

Staff in senior roles ('management') have a general responsibility for safeguarding the study and work environment. Management, staff and students are jointly responsible for supporting and promoting a culture in which offensive behaviour is not tolerated. Everyone is expected to assume personal responsibility for taking action if they become aware of any such misconduct. Staff, students and managers have the right at any time to object to conduct or statements they perceive as unacceptable, as described in the foregoing, without consequences for their studies or professional life.

Any cases of offensive behaviour must be dealt with as soon as possible, and both students and staff are to have easy access on the website and intranet to information on guidelines and procedure for dealing with misconduct reports and complaints. Anyone who becomes aware of unacceptable behaviour should bear in mind that several parties may be implicated, each of whom has the right to be treated fairly and respectfully.

Regarding offensive behaviour involving staff or students, the Royal Danish Academy has adopted the Danish Working Environment Authority's definition, as summarised in English here: <https://at.dk/en/topics-tools/offensive-behaviour-must-stop-let-us-help/>

*Offensive behaviour is described as follows:*

Offensive behaviour is a collective term for bullying, harassment, including sexual harassment, and other forms of unacceptable behaviour in the workplace or place of study. It may include both deliberate actions and failure to take action. It should be noted that exercising customary managerial responsibilities, professional peer feedback and the like do not constitute offensive behaviour. As such, any critique in the context of academic assessment does not constitute offensive behaviour.

*Offensive behaviour in a work or study setting includes:*

- Withholding necessary information
- Hurtful remarks
- Improperly being demoted or relieved of responsibilities or duties
- Spreading malicious rumours or excluding individuals from social or academic groups
- Abusive remarks or criticism regarding an individual's private life
- Verbal abuse or ridicule
- Actual or threatened physical assault
- Hostility or refusal to communicate verbally or electronically ('silent treatment')
- Disrespect for an employee's job, work performance or competence
- Offensive or intimidating phone calls, letters, email messages, text messages, photos and videos, including on social media
- Disrespect regarding age, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, ethnicity, political or religious beliefs

*Offensive behaviour may also take the form of sexual harassment, which includes:*

- Unwelcome touching and sexual advances
- Unwelcome requests for sexual favours
- Sexual innuendo, 'jokes' and comments
- Unwelcome requests of a sexual nature
- Displaying or showing pornographic material

Please note that these lists are not exhaustive.

Equally, the Royal Danish Academy protects the freedom of expression of staff and students, as defined in Section 77 of the Danish Constitutional Act <https://www.ft.dk/da/dokumenter/bestil-publikationer/publikationer/mingrundlov/min-grundlov/kapitel-8/paragraf-77>

This establishes the right of all individuals to freedom of expression in writing and in speech, subject to their responsibility under law, and with due respect for diverging opinions and approaches.

## 2. Responsibility for dealing with offensive behaviour

### 1.2 Management responsibilities

Management has a responsibility for establishing a structure that is predicated on the fair and respectful treatment of all parties, and safeguards dignity at work and study. Management must also prevent offensive behaviour by fostering a culture of openness about the differing attitudes, perceptions and expectations staff or students may have regarding one another, and about what is perceived as offensive behaviour. A manager who becomes aware of misconduct involving offensive behaviour must intervene immediately and initiate clarification of the problem. Heads of department have a special responsibility for respecting the Royal Danish Academy's status as both a study and work environment.

In the event of alleged misconduct, the immediate superior or supervisor must initiate an investigation into the matter. This must be done in consultation with the implicated parties and, respectively, Study Administration and the HR & Legal Department for staff. Management is responsible for compliance with approved policy and procedures and for ensuring that implicated parties are treated with discretion. Management has a duty of confidentiality but in some cases also has a duty to take action, such as in the event of a criminal offence.

### 2.2 Staff responsibilities

Staff are expected to show mutual respect, to safeguard the study and work environment, and to actively prevent offensive behaviour. It is the responsibility of each individual to act with due care in sensitive situations. A member of staff who believes they have been subjected to offensive behaviour, or who discovers that a colleague or student has been subjected to offensive behaviour, is expected to have familiarised themselves with the present Policy and official procedures. Staff have a special responsibility for actively preventing offensive behaviour in the teaching environment and for being alert to any such misconduct during social events hosted by the Royal Danish Academy. The present Policy also applies to events held outside normal work hours or study attendance time.

## 3. Student responsibilities

Students are expected to show respect for fellow students and staff, to safeguard the psychosocial study and teaching environment, and to actively counteract offensive behaviour in the study and teaching environment. Offensive behaviour includes interactions between staff and students and between students. Any student who believes they have been subjected to offensive behaviour, or who discovers that a fellow student has been subjected to offensive behaviour, should react. Students can seek advice from the student counsellors. Student counsellors have a duty to treat all such notices of concern in the strictest confidence.

Students can also contact the student counselling service, which offers counselling to students exposed to offensive behaviour, <https://srg.dk/english/book/safe-talk/>. Anonymity is not an option for students who lodge a formal complaint.

#### 4. External parties

External parties such as external examiners or other authorised partners with access to Royal Danish Academy premises are subject to the present Dignity at Work and Study Policy established to prevent offensive behaviour. Staff have a responsibility for ensuring that any external parties they interact with have been made aware of the present Policy. External examiners will be informed of the Policy by the Study Administration. Management may opt to contact an authorised partner to inform them of the Dignity at Work and Study Policy and intervene to put a stop to offensive behaviour by any external party.

#### 5. Consequences

If management agrees that offensive behaviour has occurred, and if the perpetrator is a member of Royal Danish Academy staff, management will determine how such misconduct is to be dealt with. In some cases, a mediated interview will be warranted. In other cases, disciplinary action may be taken in the form of a written warning, reassignment, termination, dismissal or other sanctions; cf. the customary procedure under employment law. Correspondingly, disciplinary action may also be taken against students.

It should be noted that cases concerning offensive behaviour may take several months to process, as the implicated parties must be interviewed, and allegations thoroughly investigated.

#### 6. Follow-up on the Dignity at Work and Study Policy

This Policy is compiled and issued by the Liaison Committee and is revised annually to coincide with the statutory workplace assessment and educational environment assessment, regardless of whether any cases of offensive behaviour have occurred. In addition, the Student Union will be involved, which, as the co-signatory, informs the students of the Policy. The present Policy is accompanied by a flowchart illustrating the official channels for submitting complaints, and a description of Royal Danish Academy procedure in cases of offensive behaviour; see the [link](#).

