

## VUB Code of Conduct

*The VUB embraces diversity and rejects inequality. The VUB strives towards equality for every student and every member of staff; an equality which the university defines as equity without erasing difference. The VUB campuses are welcoming places where discrimination, disadvantage and transgressive behaviours are not tolerated. The VUB strives to be an agent of change, offering opportunities, correcting inequalities and in doing so, steering new generations towards increased equality and appreciation of diversity.*

- ✓ Diversity is a fact of life at our university. The VUB campuses, just like the city of Brussels which surrounds us, is home to an extremely diverse population which gives the university its rich character.
- ✓ Staff and students at the VUB treat each other with respect. We reject speech and actions which violate, or are deemed harmful, to anyone's dignity.
- ✓ Staff and students address people with the pronouns they prefer (he/she/they).
- ✓ No form of transgressive behaviour - bullying, verbal or physical violence and sexually unacceptable behaviour - and discrimination or disadvantage based on socio-economic circumstances, class, philosophy, religion, nationality, skin colour, ethnicity and migration background or in terms of age, sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, physical and mental abilities and disabilities will be tolerated. This applies to both direct communication through speech as well as images, actions, conduct and online communication.
- ✓ Students, professors and members of staff who witness discrimination, unfair treatment or transgressive behaviour are obliged to defend the victim. If they are unable to stop undesirable behaviour, they will take responsibility for reporting it, if necessary, anonymously.
- ✓ Managers, senior staff and professors are aware that their words and actions set an example. They take reports and incidents seriously and act on them appropriately. This may include opening up for discussion any transgressive behaviour as a collective teaching/learning opportunity.

### **Our commitment:**

- ✓ The VUB implements a policy of diversity and equality which covers not only students and staff, but also the management, culture and practice of the institution.
- ✓ Every report of discrimination, unfairness, or transgressive behaviour will be treated seriously and looked into with care and in confidence, always safeguarding the privacy of those involved.
- ✓ Where possible, incidents may be regarded as teaching and learning opportunities to find solutions together.
- ✓ If any communications contain words, texts or images which incite segregation, hatred, discrimination or violence, the VUB will be liable to criminal proceedings. Further action will be taken against those found responsible.

### **Contact:**

- **Helpline for transgressive behaviour: meldpunt@vub.be**
- Confidential counselors for staff: intranet - heading 'welfare at work'
- Confidential counselors for students: <https://student.vub.be/en/confidential-counsellor-and-disciplinary-procedures>
- External prevention advisor for psychosocial aspects
- Employee representatives from the 'Committee for Prevention and Protection at Work' (CPPW): christel.van.den.bossche@vub.ac.be (secretary CPPW)
- For advice on issues concerning inclusion, diversity and equality: mail to equality@vub.be