

Ethical Guidelines for Students at UiS

These guidelines were adopted by the Learning Environment Committee on May 22, 2018, revised October 9. 2024.

Both students and staff at UiS are required to adhere to the laws and regulations that affect the learning and working environment. Additionally, there are ethical expectations that impact everyday life at UiS.

Requirements for staff are governed by the ["Ethical Guidelines for the Civil Service"](#) and the Ethical Guidelines for Supervisors/Staff at UiS.

Within the guidelines for students, moral and ethical demands are outlined that are expected of you as a student at UiS. These guidelines aim to illuminate the university's fundamental values, indicating the standard the university upholds and actions that are not accepted.

1. Attendance

As a student, you are expected to arrive on time for teaching, supervision, practical training, and similar activities. You must allow time for attendance registration, finding available seating, and so on. You must not attend any part of your studies under the influence of intoxicating substances.

"Study situations" include teaching/lectures, group work, practical training, supervision, and examinations. Intoxication includes alcohol, narcotics, and medications that may cause intoxication.

A student who attends practical training or teaching while under the influence may be immediately dismissed, pursuant to Chapter 12 of the Universities and University Colleges Act. You are expected to come prepared when this is required. Academic progress depends on your participation.

Do not interrupt or disturb teaching, practical training, or other academic activities unnecessarily. The use of mobile phones, tablets, and similar devices must not disrupt the learning environment.

2. Respect

It is expected that you, as a student, show respect to staff and other students and refrain from statements/actions that may be perceived as condescending or offensive. You are expected to contribute to an open and inclusive study environment.

During any verbal participation, address both staff and other students with polite language. Mutual respect, openness, impartiality, and relevance are expected.

3. Confidentiality

The university handles various types of personal information, as well as information regarding technical systems, procedures, operational, and business secrets. If you come across this type of information during your studies at UiS, you must not use, disclose, or make it accessible to internal or external unauthorized individuals. Furthermore, you must not use the information for purposes other than those tasks assigned to you by UiS.

According to Section 12-7 of the University and College Act:

"A student who, in the context of studies, becomes aware of someone's personal affairs, is bound by confidentiality rules applicable to professionals in the relevant field. The institution shall prepare confidentiality agreements to be signed by students to whom this applies."

Breaking confidentiality is punishable, and confidentiality obligations also apply after you have completed your studies or practicum placement.

Even if there is no legally or contractually mandated confidentiality agreement as a student, it is important to be aware that sharing personal information can be a significant burden for those affected by the information.

4. Bullying and Harassment

UiS has a zero-tolerance policy for bullying, harassment, and discrimination based on nationality, religion, ethnicity, age, gender, gender identity, sexuality, language, or disability. Such discrimination or harassment based on the aforementioned criteria, as well as sexual harassment, is prohibited under the Equality and Anti-Discrimination Act.

The Equality and Anti-Discrimination Act defines harassment and sexual harassment:

"«Harassment» means acts, omissions or statements that have the purpose or effect of being offensive, frightening, hostile, degrading or humiliating."

«Sexual harassment» means any form of unwanted sexual attention that has the purpose or effect of being offensive, frightening, hostile, degrading, humiliating or troublesome."

It's important to note that something intended as a joke may instead be perceived as harassment.

5. Netiquette

As a student, you can not use UiS IT services to make defamatory or discriminatory statements, illegally download music/films/pornography, disclose confidential information, violate privacy, or incite or assist in illegal or rule-breaking actions.

You can read more about UiS's IT regulations.

6. Speak Up

Both you as a student and the staff have a responsibility to ensure that the relationship/collaboration between you works well. Both parties are also responsible for finding solutions if challenges arise.

If you find a mentor or lecturer relationship very difficult, a third party can be involved in clarifying what to do next. You can report via the Speak Up system or contact StOr or the Student Ombuds Person.

7. Suitability

In several fields of study, specific professional and personal requirements are imposed on those who are to practice the profession – for example, in teacher education and health and social science education. If you are unsure if a student is suitable for their profession, you are encouraged to speak up. No one benefits from unqualified students graduating. You can read more about suitability assessment and find contact persons on the student websites for suitability assessments.

8. Cheating

You are responsible for using an approved referencing method and, if necessary, obtaining permission to use others' materials. Prop. 158 L (preparatory works for the Research Ethics Act) notes that:

"The most common definition of plagiarism is to present others' work as one's own, thus misleading the reader about who has performed the work, for example, written the text. Different sciences and fields of study have different publishing traditions, but common to all is the need to credit others' and one's own previous work when building new knowledge and new reasoning on this."

Plagiarism and other forms of cheating such as bringing unauthorized aids to exams, can lead to annulment of the exam and exclusion from the country's universities and colleges.

Feel free to use the "Speak Up" system or contact the designated contact persons in such cases if you become aware of this happening.

Dual relationships

Student life can be influenced by relationships between staff/mentors and you as a student, such as familial or social relationships. In cases where this is challenging, it is recommended to seek advice as early as possible to evaluate other solutions.

Romantic relationships between a staff member/mentor and a student can also occur. The general rule in such a situation is that the mentoring relationship is terminated. If for various reasons it is impossible to terminate the mentoring relationship, the parties must try to find other suitable solutions. The parties must be aware that the general rule is being broken and thus exercise great caution in further collaboration.

Following dual relationships, there may be concerns about impartiality in the assessment of a student's work. It is not only the student's integrity that must be protected. There should be no doubt about the boundaries between the private and professional spheres, nor about the mentor's integrity and impartiality. Dual relationships are not illegal, but they can pose challenges in a study environment. Feel free to contact StOr or the Student Ombuds person if you want to consult with someone about further course completion.

10. Gifts

UiS encourages students to be cautious about accepting gifts from staff or giving gifts to staff.

11. Breach of Guidelines

The consequences of breaches of ethical guidelines will depend on what has occurred. If students' behavior is repeatedly perceived as disruptive or offensive, this will be addressed with the student.

The University and University College Act chapter 12 allows UiS's board or the Tribunal for Student Affairs to expel and exclude students who, for example:

- repeatedly disturb fellow students' work or the institutions work
- through dishonest conduct, have gained access to exams/tests/courses, or cheated during exams.
- have grossly reprehensibly endangered users' (children, patients, or others) lives or health
- have grossly breached Confidentiality Agreements
- have acted grossly inappropriately towards users.