

How to proceed in the event of inappropriate behaviour

for administrative, technical and scientific employees and professors of ETH Zurich

Information sheet, November 2020

Principles

Collaboration at ETH Zurich should be respectful and dealings with one another appropriate at all times. Members of ETH Zurich and their guests must observe and respect the personal rights of all persons without limit. ETH Zurich does not tolerate bullying, harassment, discrimination, threatening behaviour or violence in any form whatsoever. This sort of conduct may have consequences under employment law for both staff and professors.

The regulation governing notification by members of ETH Zurich of inappropriate behaviour defines the responsibilities and principles and the procedure to be followed in the event of reports of inappropriate behaviour ([legal collection | website](#)). It defines which behaviour is inappropriate, how to respond to it and the rights and duties of the persons involved. The regulation also defines the internal contact and advice services at ETH Zurich that are available for assistance, advice, arbitration and joint solutions. The procedure relating to inappropriate behaviour comprises an informal and a formal phase. Both the person affected and the alleged perpetrator should actively and openly participate in the process to find a solution.

Threats and violence

The Safety, Security, Health and Environment (SSHE) department is responsible for all forms of threats or violence. It ensures that immediate action is taken and the inappropriate conduct is halted. For urgent situations, please contact the SSHE alarm organisation (24 hours a day, internal: 888, external: 044 342 11 88, [website](#)).

Bullying, harassment and discrimination

Potential procedure in the event of inappropriate behaviour:

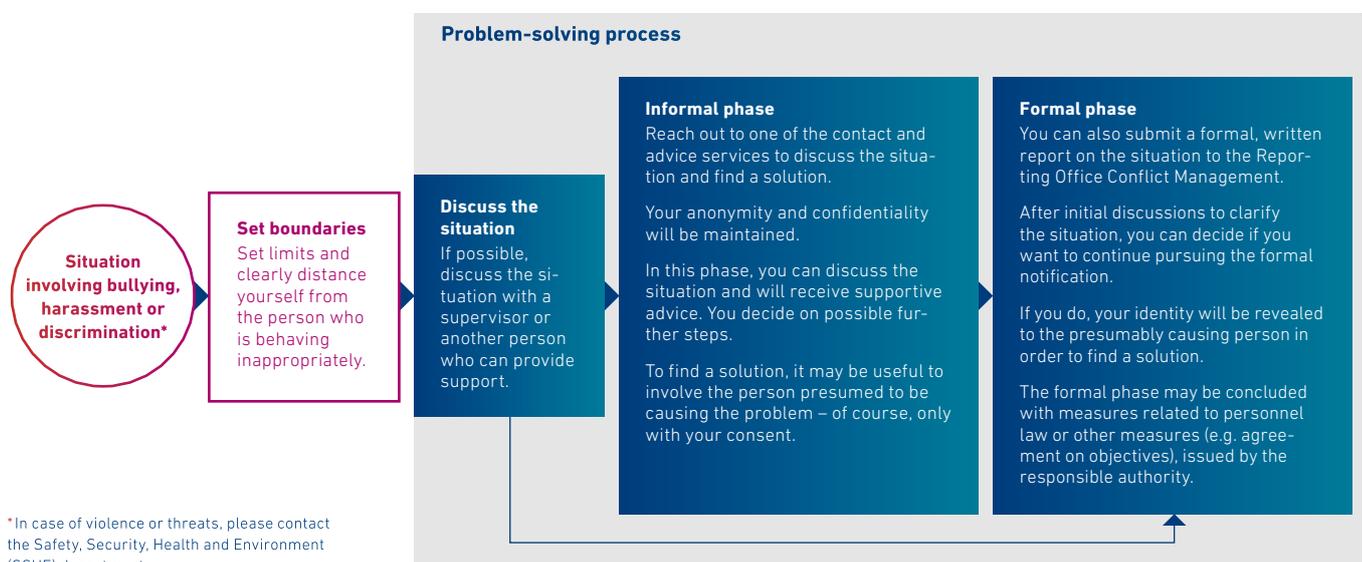


Figure 1: Procedure relating to inappropriate behaviour

1 Set boundaries

Act independently! Whenever possible, discuss the situation directly with the person who you believe is acting inappropriately. When speaking to the person, make it clear that you do not accept this behaviour. It is advisable to discuss the situation as soon as possible with your supervisor or someone you trust, and take notes of the conversation.

2 Informal phase

During this phase, both those affected and those who have witnessed inappropriate behaviour, such as bullying, harassment or discrimination, can go to a contact or advice service and seek advice. The alleged perpetrator against whom an accusation has been levelled can also contact these centres.

2.1 Procedure during the informal phase

As a first step, it is recommended that persons affected contact their supervisor and then the office responsible for the department and/or the competent HR personnel consultant. In addition, the ombudspersons, contacts for university groups (KdL, AVETH and PeKo) and HR's internal and external "Respect" advice and arbitration bodies are also available.

The relevant office will discuss and clarify the situation with the parties involved. They will review the courses of action available jointly with the person affected. The person affected must give their consent to the next steps, while also acting independently at all times. The goal is to find a joint and mutually agreeable solution. In general, the advice is provided confidentially and anonymously in relation to the alleged perpetrator. It is usually advisable to involve the alleged perpetrator in the process in order to find a quick solution. In such cases, the identity of the person affected will be revealed to the alleged perpetrator only with their consent.

2.2 Overview of the contact and advice services

As the person seeking advice, you choose who you would like to contact. If the service you contact is not responsible for the situation, you will be forwarded to the appropriate service with your consent. Depending on your position, the following contact and advice services are available:

Administrative and technical employees	Scientific employees	Professors
Ombudspersons		
Advice and conciliation services respect		
Personnel Consulting		
Staff commission	AVETH	Lecturers' Conference (KdL)

Figure 2: Contact and advice services (informal phase)

2.3 Deadlines

Notify your supervisor, your HR personnel consultant or a contact or advice service within three months of the event whenever possible. The earlier you make them aware of a conflict situation, the more likely it is that a solution will be found for all involved parties.

2.4 Conclusion of the informal phase/transition to the formal phase

If a mutual solution cannot be found during the informal phase with the help of a contact or advice service, the person affected may submit written notification to the [Reporting Office Conflict Management](#). It is possible to report directly to the Reporting Office Conflict Management without making use of the informal phase, but this should only be done as an exception (see point 3 below).

In the case of conflicts and differences of opinion in connection with the supervision of doctoral candidates, the persons affected are referred to the competent offices for the formal phase or for the mediation and arbitration procedure pursuant to the [Ordinance on Doctoral Studies](#).

In the event of suspected violations by students pursuant to Art. 3 ETH Zurich Disciplinary Code, the next step taken is in line with the [ETH Zurich Disciplinary Code](#) (see separate information sheet for students).

3 Formal phase

A report in the formal phase must be submitted in writing by the person concerned. This notification requires that the alleged perpetrator has an employment relationship with ETH Zurich. In general, it makes sense to submit a formal notification only after the attempt to find a solution during the informal phase has failed.

3.1 Conclusion of the formal phase

The person affected may submit written notification of inappropriate behaviour, such as bullying, harassment or discrimination, to the [Reporting Office Conflict Management](#) in the Office of the Vice President for Personnel Development and Leadership (further information about submitting a notification). Anonymous or verbal notifications are not accepted.

In order to clarify the situation, the Reporting Office Conflict Management will hold initial discussions with the person affected. If they wish to pursue a formal notification, the person's identity will be revealed to the alleged perpetrator in order to find an effective solution. Confidentiality will be maintained vis-a-vis third parties not involved.

The Reporting Office Conflict Management verifies the competent office, ensures compliance with deadlines and completeness of the notification, and reviews which parties are involved. In addition to the person affected, this office also listens to the alleged perpetrator. The conflict manager works with the person affected and the alleged perpetrator to find a joint solution with the aim of reaching a mutually agreeable conclusion or an amicable resolution. Mutually respectful behaviour and fair play in communication are also required until conclusion of the formal phase.

If, in cases of discrimination, an amicable resolution cannot be reached, the person affected may, if they and the alleged perpetrator are both employees of ETH Zurich, contact the [Conciliation Commission of the ETH Board](#).

The formal phase may be concluded with measures under employment law or other measures (e.g. an agreement on objectives) issued by the competent office.

If you experience inappropriate behaviour at any time, please report it. ETH Zurich is there for you and will support you.

Further information can be found in the regulations on the reporting by ETH Zurich members of inappropriate behaviour and at www.ethz.ch/respect.

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