

Recommendations for teaching staff **on how to deal with incidents of discrimination, sexual harassment, or bullying**

Why is this topic important for all teaching staff?

Incidents of discrimination, sexual harassment, and bullying are a reality. This is because pronounced hierarchies, relationships of dependency, and the associated power imbalances can encourage inappropriate behavior, especially at universities.

Teachers are often among the first points of contact and confidantes for students. This guide is intended to provide a framework for conducting conversations, offers further information on dealing with discrimination, bullying, and sexual harassment, and lists the contact details for the counseling services offered by the University of Salzburg.

What should I do if I become aware of such incidents?

If victims of discrimination, sexual harassment, or bullying come to you, the situation can be challenging for both you and the person affected.

The approach always depends on the needs of the person affected, your relationship with them, your role at the university, and your personal options for action.

However, there are recommendations that can help you. It is also important to be aware of and avoid certain pitfalls for contact persons.

Recommendations for conversations with affected individuals

- + Treat the conversation as confidential.
- + Take your time. Listen without judging.
- + Remain calm and collected.
- + Do not question the affected individual's account.
- + Accept if the individual does not want to talk about certain things. Do not pressure them.
- + Reassure the person that they are not to blame for the incident(s).
- + Provide information on available internal and external support services.
- + Accept the person's individual way of dealing with the incident(s).
- + Do not make any promises that you cannot or do not want to keep.
- + Be aware of your limits and responsibilities.
- + The expertise for counseling and support lies with the designated contact points.

After the conversation

- + Write a memory log.
- + Keep any documents you receive in a safe place (data protection).
- + Be aware of your own needs.
- + If necessary, discuss the situation with support services without revealing the person(s) affected.

What you should avoid

- + Do not deny or downplay the problem.
- + Do not impose your feelings on the person affected.
- + Do not rush to refer those affected to (other) support services.
- + Do not say how you would act in their place.
- + Do not see yourself as the only person responsible for resolving the situation.

Basend on: Erste Hilfe für Lehrende im Umgang mit Vorfällen sexueller Belästigung der Universität Innsbruck
www.uibk.ac.at/de/gleichbehandlung/belaestigung/erste-hilfe-fuer-lehrende/