

Code of Conduct

# Protection of Personal Integrity

Information,  
counselling  
and support in  
conflicts

The ZHAW creates an inspiring, trusting and appreciative learning and working atmosphere. As part of the whole, all members of the university contribute to a good working and learning environment. It is important to respect boundaries, to take notice of violations and to help others.

The ZHAW protects the personality, dignity and integrity of its university members. There is zero tolerance for any behaviour that violates the personal integrity of others. This is regulated in the ZHAW's Regulations on the Protection of Personal Integrity. Anyone who violates these regulations must expect consequences under employment law or disciplinary measures.

However, differing interests and opinions are part of everyday working life. Whenever possible, these should be addressed and solutions found. Nevertheless, if stressful misunderstandings or conflicts arise, it is worth seeking advice or mediation at an early stage.

In order to counteract undesirable behaviour, set boundaries at an early stage and provide assistance in cases of conflict, the ZHAW offers a wide range of counselling and support services.

Take advantage of the advisory services  
and get in touch early →

# Counselling and support services

The following counselling centres can assist you in conflict situations or if you are confronted with undesirable behaviour – whether you are the person affected, an observer or a line manager who has been informed of the situation (also see [Arbeitsanleitung zum RPI](#)).

The counselling centres will help you to analyse the situation and provide information about further steps and possible courses of action.

## Confidential counselling centres

Internal confidential advisory Service:

The Diversity Unit runs the ZHAW's internal confidential office. It provides confidential advice and support to all members of the university on issues relating to the protection of personal integrity, conflicts in the work or study environment, and all topics relating to diversity, equity and inclusion. It can be called upon to mediate conversations within the ZHAW or, at the request of those seeking advice, take intervening action.

→ [beratung@zhaw.ch](mailto:beratung@zhaw.ch)

External independent advisory service:

ZHAW employees can alternatively contact the independent advisory service (external counselling centre). The centre provides confidential advice and focuses on conflict resolution and mediation in the workplace.

→ [konfliktloesung@zhaw.ch](mailto:konfliktloesung@zhaw.ch)

Psychological counselling service:

The psychological counselling service offers staff and students alternative and/or supplementary support and counselling if the conflict or breach of integrity causes psychological distress or to help them cope with the situation personally.

→ [psychologischeberatung@zhaw.ch](mailto:psychologischeberatung@zhaw.ch),  
+41 58 934 83 30

## Other contact persons and services

These contact persons and services provide advice and support and draw attention to possible courses of action.

They are obliged to act within the scope of their duty of care and are not bound by confidentiality.

- Managers or course directors and heads of continuing education programmes
- HR Consulting in personnel matters, HR processes and interventions:  
[consulting.hr@zhaw.ch](mailto:consulting.hr@zhaw.ch)
- ZHAW security in threatening and violent situations:  
[info-sicherheit@zhaw.ch](mailto:info-sicherheit@zhaw.ch),  
+41 58 934 65 50,  
ZHAW 24-hour emergency telephone number:  
+41 58 934 70 70

## Scientific integrity

If scientific misconduct is suspected at the ZHAW:

→ [ZHAW Intranet](#)

# What is inappropriate conduct?



## Discrimination

Discrimination refers to the demeaning or disadvantaging of a person or a group of persons on the basis of protected characteristics such as origin, skin colour, gender, gender identity or gender expression, sexual orientation, age, language, social status, lifestyle, religious or ideological belief or due to a physical, intellectual or psychological disability. Forms of discrimination are diverse and may include, among other things, statements, depictions, hostile behaviours, omissions or refusals.



## Bullying

Bullying is systematic, hostile behaviour sustained over an extended period, aimed at isolating or excluding a person at their workplace or place of study or even removing them from their workplace or place of study. Bullying may be expressed through various actions, for example as attacks on a person's ability to communicate, social relationships in their study or work environment, social reputation, the nature of a person's professional or personal situation, or (mental) health.



## Sexual and sexist harassment

Sexual or sexist harassment is deemed to be unwelcome behaviour involving a sexual reference or of a sexist nature. Sexual harassment may be expressed through various forms of behaviour, such as physical contact, sexual advances, salacious remarks or jokes, and offensive or discriminatory comments or actions based on gender.



## Threats and violence

A threat is deemed to occur when a person intentionally creates fear through verbal, written or non-verbal expressions or credibly indicates that they will behave violently towards themselves or others. This includes, for example, threats of physical violence, the destruction of property, reputational damage or existential intimidation. Violence includes any form of physical or psychological impact capable of causing harm to a person or impairing their physical or psychological integrity. This includes physical assaults as well as forms of psychological violence (e.g. coercion, extortion, humiliation, systematic intimidation, stalking).

# ZHAW's duty of care

Senior management and line managers ensure a workplace environment that is free of discrimination and harassment within their area of competence. They exemplify such behaviour and intervene to correct conduct that crosses boundaries. Management figures have a duty of care towards their staff and must take action. They must take relevant indications and reports seriously. Where necessary, they implement appropriate (immediate) measures to protect an affected person and inform them of the contact points or the possibility of a formal investigation procedure.

Teaching staff ensure a respectful and discrimination-free learning environment as well as an inclusive learning culture. They have protective responsibilities towards students and continuing education participants and are thus obliged to prevent behaviour that breaches these Regulations and take appropriate measures.



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