

Action plan against offensive behaviour at the Department of Biology

1. Purpose

Offensive behaviour, including bullying and sexual harassment, is not acceptable at the Department of Biology. The purpose of this action plan is to prevent offensive behaviour. Should offensive behaviour nevertheless take place, the action plan describes who to report to and what will happen next. The Action Plan is designed to be consistent with the UCPH staff policy [guidelines for the prevention and dealing with allegations of offensive behaviour, including bullying and sexual harassment](#)

2. Leadership responsibilities and tasks

The leadership (i.e., BIO-leadership and Section Heads) commits itself - in collaboration with staff and students - to promoting a culture that not only encourages an open and critical academic discussion, but also build on inclusion and respect. At Section Head meetings, meetings in the Cooperation Committee (LSU) and the Occupational Health Committee (OHC), and at meetings in the sections, the leadership must ensure a discussion on how best to prevent and deal with offensive behaviour.

The leadership takes all inquiries seriously and deals with them as quickly as possible. The leadership has a duty to intervene if it becomes aware of offensive behaviour.

The leadership expects all employees to familiarize themselves with the action plan and actively contribute to it being observed.

The leadership, in cooperation with Union and Occupational Health representatives, will contribute to ensuring that the action plan is known and followed at the Department. The Collaboration and Occupational Health Committees both have tasks related to the psychological working environment and will therefore regularly, at least once a year, discuss if the action plan functions as intended.

3. Employees' responsibilities and rights

Employees who experience offensive behaviour have the right to stand up and object. Colleagues being aware of offensive behaviour are expected to respond by showing collegiate care and support to the offended party and stand up to the offender.

4. Definition of bullying and harassment

The University's personnel policy *Guidelines for the prevention and dealing with allegations of offensive behaviour such as bullying and sexual harassment* is based on the Danish Working Environment Authority which defines offensive behaviour as follows:

In connection with the performance of working tasks, it must be ensured that the work does not entail a risk of physical or mental health deterioration as a result of offensive behaviour, including bullying and sexual harassment. Offensive behaviour is when one or more persons grossly, or several times, expose other people to behaviour that is perceived as denigrating. Whether the offensive behaviour entails a risk of physical or mental health deterioration depends on the severity, duration and frequency of the behaviour.

Offensive behaviour is used as a collective term for bullying, sexual harassment and other ways in which

violations can occur.¹ Offensive behaviour such as bullying includes, for example, hurtful remarks, being yelled at or ridiculed, slander, unfair removal of responsibility for tasks or unfair denigration of students' or employees' performance or skills. It can also be sexual harassment in the form of unwanted touching, unwanted requests for sexual contact, obscene jokes and comments. Denigration on the grounds of race, skin colour, religion or faith, political views, sexual orientation, gender, age, disability or national, social or ethnic origin can also be offensive. Note that the examples do not constitute an exhaustive list².

5. To whom do you turn?

You can contact one of the following persons (in non-prioritised order):

Function	Name	Phone	E-mail
Head of Department	Niels Kroer	20 29 13 88	nk@bio.ku.dk
Head of Administration	Lone Winge	35 33 18 12	Lone.winge@bio.ku.dk
Section Head Functional Genomics	Olaf Nielsen	26 41 06 66	onigen@bio.ku.dk
Section Head Biomolecular Sciences	Rasmus Hartmann-Petersen	26 94 15 65	rhpetersen@bio.ku.dk
Section Head Computational and RNA biology	Jeppe Vinther	22 84 07 80	jvinther@bio.ku.dk
Section Head Cell Biology and Physiology	Søren Tvorup Christensen	35 33 02 55	stchristensen@bio.ku.dk
Section Head Cell and Neurobiology	Kim Rewitz	35 33 01 55	kim.rewitz@bio.ku.dk
Section Head Microbiology	Søren J. Sørensen	51 82 70 07	sis@bio.ku.dk
Section Head Terrestrial Ecology	Flemming Ekelund	22 43 63 01	fekelund@bio.ku.dk
Section Head Ecology and Evolution	David Nash	35 32 13 23	Drnash@bio.ku.dk
Section Head Freshwater Biology	Dean Jacobsen	35 33 01 32	djacobsen@bio.ku.dk
Section Head Marine Biology	Anders Lydik Garm	35 33 15 24	algarm@bio.ku.dk
Aquarium Manager Øresund Aquarium	Jens Peder Jeppesen	28 75 19 70	jpjeppesen@bio.ku.dk

¹ [WEA guideline 4.3.1 Offensive behaviour, including bullying and sexual harassment](#), February 2019, and [Prevent violations of a sexual nature, BFA for Welfare and Public Administration](#). Both are in Danish only.

² Sexual harassment, discrimination, etc. are also regulated by Danish and international legislation, for example in [the Criminal Code](#), [the Working Environment Act](#), [the Gender Equality Act](#), [the Non-Discrimination Act](#), [the Act on Ethnic Equal Treatment](#) and [the ILO Convention no. 111 concerning discrimination in respect of employment and occupation](#).

Other			
Union representative HK technicians	Tine Simonsen	35 32 13 01	tsimonsen@bio.ku.dk
Union representative Dansk Metal	Finn Fernando Jørgensen	35 33 35 97	finn.jorgensen@bio.ku.dk
Union representative HK clerks	Helle Bek Mikaelson	35 32 23 78	hbmikaelson@bio.ku.dk
Union representative AC TAP	Nynne Meyn Christensen	35 33 02 03	nmchristensen@bio.ku.dk
Union representative VIP	James F. Winther Flemming Ekelund	35 32 15 00 51 82 70 41	jrwinther@bio.ku.dk fekelund@bio.ku.dk
Occupational Health representatives	https://kUNET.ku.dk/faculty-and-department/bio/occupational-health-and-safety-(ohs)/Pages/default.aspx		
Other resource person affiliated with the institute	Peter Ratajczak Gylling Ehlers	35 33 47 17	pete@science.ku.dk

Any contact to the leadership will be treated in confidentiality, but depending on the severity of the offence, the manager may have a duty to investigate the case. For instance, in cases of sexual harassment or breach of employment conditions the manager can be obliged to proceed with the request and, therefore, cannot guarantee anonymity in relation to the person that have been reported as offender. The manager needs to take into consideration that there are several parties, who all have the right to be treated with care and respect.

If you contact a union or occupational health representative, this will be in confidentiality and with full anonymity. You may also contact the University's [psychological counselling service](#) anonymously.

The trade unions offer advice and support to their members in cases of bullying and sexual harassment. Employees who feel subjected to bullying or other harassment may, therefore, contact their respective unions. This can be done either through the local union representative or by direct contact to the union.

6. Information and training of department staff

The action plan is available for all employees on the Departmental intranet.

At least once a year, offensive behaviour will be discussed at staff meeting/topic meetings where all employees are informed about the action plan and where everyone have the opportunity to comment and provide input. New employees are informed about the action plan by their manager as part of their introductory programme. In cooperation with the Collaboration and Occupational Health committees, it is the duty of the leadership to make sure that the named persons have proper skills to deal with reports of harassment.

7. Evaluation and revision of the action plan

The plan is evaluated at least once a year. In the evaluation, emphasis must be placed on the following issues:

- Does the plan work as intended or is there a need for adjustments?
- Do we have sufficient preventative measures?
- Have there been any organisational changes that necessitate a revision of the action plan?
- Is there a need to do more to make the plan more visible to employees?
- Are there any ideas or additional measures needed to ensure that the plan is followed?
- Is there, for example, a need for skills development of employees, managers, union and OHS representatives?

8. Commencement

The plan takes effect on March 1 2021.

Date: 16/2/2021



Niels Kroer

Chair LSU

Date:



Tine Simonsen

Deputy chair LSU

Date:



Amal Al-Chaer

Occupational Health representative