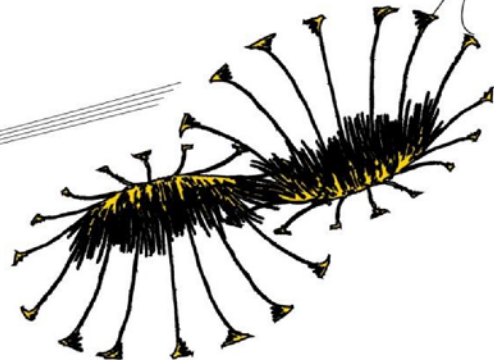




University of Twente Reporting Code for Domestic Violence and Child Abuse


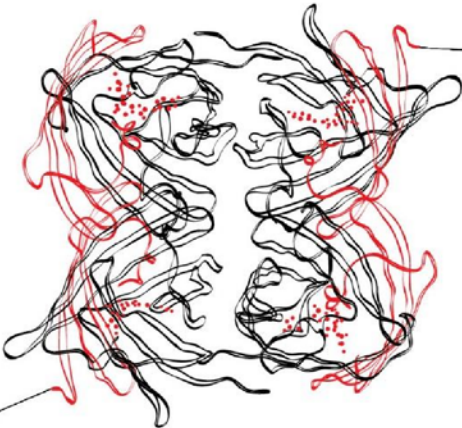
September 2019



ADOPTED

Date of decision Executive Board:
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Author and service department:
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Centre for Educational Support (CES) –
Student Affairs, Coaching & Counselling (SACC)



Reporting Code for Domestic Violence and Child Abuse

Introduction

In accordance with Article 1.21 of the Higher Education and Research Act, institutes of higher education are required to establish a reporting code for domestic violence, which is to be used for systematically stating how to address indications of domestic violence or child abuse. In addition, institutes are required to promote the knowledge and use of the reporting code. The institutes are requested to have this code in place by July 1, 2018. As of January 1, 2019, the reporting code must be supplemented with an assessment framework.

Applicability

This reporting code is applicable to violence or child abuse committed against a student in a domestic environment. Professionals are expected to be alert to signals of such situations and to react to them by following the action protocol. Every other staff member or student should report signals to a professional. Support and aftercare are available for the parties involved. Further information is available at:

<https://www.utwente.nl/en/organization/about/integrity/support-aftercare/>.

The reporting code is not applicable to:

- Violence committed by a staff member/professional against a student. Signals concerning possible violence committed by a staff member/professional with regard to a student should be reported in accordance with the internal guidelines of the University of Twente.
- Possible violence committed between students. Such signals should be reported in accordance with the guidelines of the University of Twente. An exception applies to situations in which the violence occurs between two affective partners, both of whom are students of the university.

In the aforementioned situations to which this reporting code is not applicable, refer to sources including the following codes of conduct: '[Code of conduct for acceptable and unacceptable behaviour](#)' and '[Code of conduct for Personal Relationships in the Workplace](#)', which are available on the following web page; <https://www.utwente.nl/en/organization/about/integrity/>.

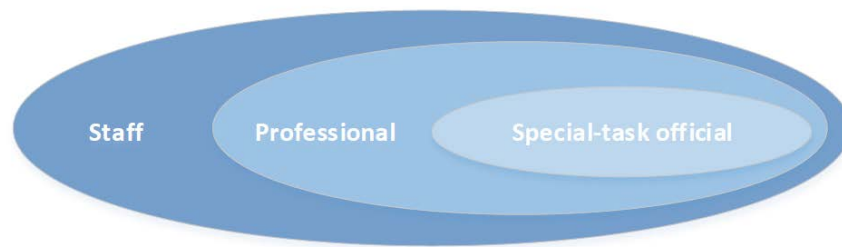
Definitions

In this reporting code, the following terms are to be understood as follows:

- **Domestic violence:** Violence (or the threat of violence) at any location by someone in a domestic sphere. Violence is to be understood as the physical, sexual or psychological violation of the victim's personal integrity. The term also refers to elder abuse, forced marriage and honour-based violence. The victim's domestic environment includes (former) partners, family members, relatives, house mates and informal caregivers.
- **Child abuse:** Any form of threatening or violent interaction of a physical, psychological or sexual nature actively or passively forced upon a minor victim by the parents or anyone else with whom the minor victim is involved in a relationship of dependence or constrained liberty, thereby causing or threatening to cause serious damage to the minor in the form of physical or psychological injury. Such interactions should be understood to include honour-related violence, forced marriage, genital mutilation and witnessing domestic violence between parents and/or other housemates by a minor.
- **Student:** Any person participating in any form of education or extra-curricular activities within the University of Twente and to whom the professional provides professional services.

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- **Staff member:** A person in employed by the University of Twente based on an employment contract, as well as anyone active within the University of Twente by means of a temporary agency, internship or secondment contract or a volunteer agreement.
- **Professional:** A staff member working at the University of Twente and, in that capacity, providing education, guidance or other form of support to the organization's students.
- **Special-task official:** A professional who has been appointed by the Executive Board to support other professionals and who makes reports to *Veilig Thuis* [Safe at Home] if needed. Student counsellors, who are confidential advisers for students, shall act as special-task officials.



Decision

In compliance with Articles 1.20 and 1.21 of the Dutch Higher Education and Research Act, the guidelines of the University of Twente concerning the General Data Protection Regulation and the codes of the University of Twente with regard to acceptable and unacceptable behaviour, the Executive Board has decided to establish the Reporting Code for Domestic Violence and Child Abuse, taking into consideration that:

- the Executive Board is responsible for the proper quality of supervision for its students and that this responsibility is definitely called for in case of providing guidance to students who are (suspected of being) involved in domestic violence or child abuse;
- the Executive Board aims to establish a reporting code specifying the appropriate manner of action and responsibilities of staff members in case of (suspected) signals of domestic violence or child abuse involving students;
- in any case, the professionals—based on this responsibility—are expected to be alert to signals in all of their contacts with students that could point to domestic violence or child abuse, and that they are to react to these signals effectively;
- the Executive Board appoints two student counsellors from amongst the professionals employed by the University of Twente as special-task officials;
- the special-task officials shall be offered the necessary training and other forms of professional development;
- the Executive Board guarantees the involvement of the HR department, such that an appeal can be made to the HR department by the special-task official in the course of supervising a staff member if deemed appropriate or necessary by the special-task official;
- in this code, the Executive Board establishes the manner in which it will support staff members in these steps (preconditions).

Preconditions for a safe environment for working and reporting

To make it possible for staff members to adhere to the reporting code within a safe working climate, the Executive Board ensures that, in addition to establishing the reporting code in compliance with the law, the following preconditions shall be met:

- The Executive Board conveys both within and outside the organisation that the actions specified in this reporting code are part of the university's policy and that staff members are expected to act in compliance with the reporting code.
- The existence, objectives and content of the reporting code are communicated within the institute, within the sphere of staff members and within the sphere of students.
- The application of the action protocol within the University of Twente is to be implemented by the Student Counsellors, in cooperation with the HR department.
- Student counsellors are appointed as special-task officials. The special-task officials should possess sufficient expertise to assess signals of domestic violence or child abuse on their merits, in order to support the professionals in the steps to be taken. The special-task officials have been provided with the necessary training and other forms of professional development.
- A range of professional development opportunities are provided on a regular basis, thereby enabling professionals to develop and maintain a proper level of knowledge and skills with regard to identifying domestic violence and child abuse, in addition to being able to follow the reporting code.
- Personal support services or aftercare are provided if desired by witnesses or staff members confronted with such violence or abuse.

- The reporting code shall be evaluated regularly and tested in practice, after which action shall be taken as needed to optimise the reporting code.
- If a staff member is confronted about the staff member's actions according to this code by a student or other party, whether in or outside of court, the Executive Board ensures that the staff member receives adequate support from the University of Twente and, if needed, sufficient (external) legal support.

The University of Twente Executive Board

Appendices:

1. Action protocol
2. Assessment framework