

We do not accept bullying in our workplace!

Guide to Handling Bullying at TEKNAT and SUND

What is bullying?

It is considered bullying when one or more persons, regularly and over time, - or repeatedly in an abusive manner - expose one or more other persons to infringing acts that are perceived by the exposed person(s) as hurtful or degrading.

The infringing acts become bullying when the targeted persons are unable to defend themselves effectively against them.

Bullying can include gossip, abusive teasing, withholding of information, ridicule.

Some concrete examples are:

- that someone does not get the information needed in order to carry out tasks

- that someone always ends up with the unpopular tasks
- that a colleague or manager shouts at someone
- that a colleague or manager ignores someone

Prevention

A good psychological work environment is the best basis for ensuring that bullying does not occur. You can thus help make a difference by working towards creating a positive and healthy work environment for everyone.

Here at our workplace, we have a special challenge because scientific debate is typically characterized by critical thinking, which can spill over into dealings with colleagues. You should be particularly careful not to use the academic critical format in working with your

The policy can be found in the AAU Manual www.aauhaandbog.aau.dk under Conflict Management (unfortunately in Danish only).

colleagues.

Bullying can occur in conflicts. Conflicts are often due to the fact that people do not perceive the world the same way. Professional disagreements are part of university life, but disagreement should not evolve into conflict. Conflicts are most easily avoided by talking about the disagreement in an open, objective and constructive manner.

Should conflicts arise, there is help available in the main consultation committee's policy for handling conflicts. This also contains guidelines for managing the type of conflicts that can lead to bullying, harassment, discrimination, threats and psychological and physical violence.

This little folder can provide inspiration for how you should handle an encounter with bullying, and how we can help each other prevent bullying.



Preparedness

What should you do as a colleague, manager, victim of bullying, bully?

As a colleague

- You have a duty not to stand idly by if bullying occurs. Bullying destroys our work environment, and therefore it is not just for the sake of the colleague who is being bullied that you should intervene, but also for yourself and your other colleagues.
- You can help the person being bullied, for example, by telling them what you have observed. It can lead to a conversation about how your colleague perceives the situation and what the options are for reacting.

- You can go to your manager, your work environment representative or your union representative and ask for help.

As a manager

- You have a duty to ensure a good tone in the workplace.
- You should always take it seriously if an employee contacts you about bullying.
- You should make sure you are prepared to handle conflicts and difficult conversations as part of handling a possible bullying situation.
- You should make sure that there is a procedure for how to handle bullying if it occurs, or if information

about bullying appears in anonymous surveys such as the APV survey (work environment survey).

As a victim of bullying

- You must take your experience of being bullied seriously. Talk with your union representative or work environment representative, your manager or a colleague you trust.
- Don't let yourself get down. Do things that make you happy. Take care of yourself!
- Try to build new relationships with colleagues who do not participate in bullying, even though it may seem difficult. It can make the relationship to the person bullying you have less importance.

- You can contact the university's mental health hotline, the firm Arbejdspyskolog.

The contact person is Milo Leig Andersen, and he can be reached at tel.: 5054 1440 or email: milo@arbejdspyskolog.dk

As a bully

- If you are thinking about whether your colleagues perceive you as a bully, you have taken the first step towards the necessary behavioral change.
- If you think or if it has been indicated that you are bullying a colleague, you should take the initiative to meet with him/her, and your manager and union or work environment representative should also take part. The purpose of this meeting is to stop the bullying, which can be done by discussing how you can change your behavior so your colleague can come to feel comfortable at work.

How is a case of bullying resolved?

The sooner you deal with a case of bullying, the easier it is to solve the problem. It is easiest if it can be resolved informally and locally by dialogue between the parties involved.

If you are unsure how to take action on a local level, you can contact the HR department that has a set procedure for how these types of cases are handled. The procedure can be found in the AAU Handbook: www.aauhaandbog.aau.dk under "Conflicts that lead to bullying, harassment, discrimination, threats and psychological and physical violence; guidelines." (Unfortunately in Danish only). The victim of bullying is always entitled to ask for help where they see fit.

As a part of handling a case, an investigation is made into whether we are actually dealing with bullying. The purpose of this investigation is to prevent accusations of bullying without basis, since it can be a great mental strain to have an indictment hanging over one's head.

If the problem is not resolved, continued bullying behavior can have consequences for employment.

Help options

- AAU's mental health hotline, the firm Arbejdspyskolog. The contact person is Milo Leig Andersen; he can be reached at tel.: 5054 1440 or email: milo@arbejdspyskolog.dk
- The Working Environment Authority has a hotline for workplace bullying that you can contact anonymously by telephone (in both Danish and English):

See more on the website: www.arbejdstilsynet.dk

Further information

You can find further information on various websites, such as:

- www.arbejdsmiljoviden.dk (DK only)
- www.stopmobning.dk (DK only)
- www.arbejdsmiljoweb.dk (DK only)
- www.arbejdsmiljoforskning.dk