

SYL Safer Space Policy

Introduction

All SYL events fall under the Safer Space Policy, and event participants are required to commit to the Policy. In addition to events, the Safer Space Policy also applies to the official discussion groups, information channels and social media maintained by SYL.

The Policy supports participants in creating a safer space, aims to prevent unpleasant situations and describes ways of reporting any harassment situations. The Policy prevents the emergence of hierarchies and unequal situations within the student movement. It creates a sense of community and an experience of inclusion when everyone can feel welcome and contribute together to an increased sense of security.

Harassment is behaviour that violates human dignity. Harassment may include hate speech and inappropriate or discriminatory treatment. Sexual harassment is verbal, non-verbal or physical unwanted behaviour of a sexual nature that violates a person's mental or physical integrity.

A safe space is defined by the interaction between participants, and there can be no universal guidance on how to define the boundaries of an individual participant or when they are crossed. The wording of a "safer" space and not a "safe" space refers to the fact that creating a perfectly safe space is not possible, but the aim is to improve the current state.

Safer Space Policy

- In SYL events, no kind of harassment, discrimination, hate speech or other inappropriate behaviour is accepted.
- We intervene in disruptive or inappropriate behaviour and do not ignore it.
- We respect each other and value the diversity of the community and its individuals.
- We treat everyone equally regardless of their characteristics or status, such as skin colour, class, gender, sexual orientation, political orientation, language, nationality, state of health, religion, etc.
- We are mindful of the different boundaries each of us holds and respect those boundaries. Everyone has the right to define their own identity.
- We identify and acknowledge our privileges. Privilege refers to the unearned benefits of certain social groups.

- We are open and listen to others. We avoid making assumptions about other participants because we cannot decide other's experiences, thoughts, life situation or identity for them. Since we still usually make assumptions about others, we try to be aware of our biases.
- We talk respectfully to each other. We do not express inappropriate personal views of other people, whether those persons are present or not. We do not express or spread stereotypes or use offensive comparisons.
- We promote the implementation of equal treatment and encounters. We do not distort the views of others, make malicious interpretations or generalise our own experiences to others.
- We give each other space and encourage others to participate. We make sure that everyone is heard in conversations and able to engage.
- We speak so that everyone can understand: we try to use language that can be understood even by people outside our reference group. One example is explaining the meaning of abbreviations.

Harassment contact persons

Creating a safer space is the responsibility of all event participants, supported by the events' harassment contact persons.

At least two harassment contact persons of different genders are selected for SYL events to monitor the realisation of the Safer Space Policy during an event.

Participants can reach out to the harassment contact persons if they observe or experience something that violates non-discrimination, equality or safety, or suspect having observed or encountered something of the sort. Observations can be reported face-to-face, by telephone or with an anonymous online form. All reports of harassment and suspected harassment are taken seriously and, as a rule, addressed by the harassment contact persons during the event.

The harassment contact persons support the establishment of a safer space and conflict resolution. The harassment contact persons act as neutral investigators in possible harassment situations during an event and give all parties concerned the opportunity to be heard during the process. For example, impartial mediation may be offered in the processing of a notification if doing so is deemed necessary.

This guideline was approved at the meeting of the SYL Board in December 2025.