

# **SHS Code of** **Conduct**

This code of conduct has been drawn up with inspiration from the KY Code of Conduct

## **Introduction**

The Code of Conduct sets out the foundation of the SHS principles and values, and how we are committed to providing a safe, equal and harassment-free environment for all. The Code of Conduct applies at all SHS events, in all activities and in situations where SHS members are in contact with each other or other people. Everyone is expected to respect others and their surroundings.

If you experience harassment in our community or want to talk about these topics, you can always contact the SHS Equality and Harassment ombudsmen and/or the Chair of the Board, whose contact details can be found on shs.fi under "Contact".

## **What is the SHS Code of Conduct**

A code of conduct is a document that describes things and topics that we value and that are important in our community. The purpose of the Code of Conduct is to support the maintenance of safe student union activities, prevent harassment and make it easier to act if you encounter harassment. The document also encourages SHS members to intervene when they encounter situations that may lead to harassment or make others uncomfortable.

The Code of Conduct applies to every event organized by the SHS or its subsidiary organizations, so this document applies to all events and activities of committees, clubs and commissions, among others. The Code of Conduct describes various themes and issues that may be sensitive to other people and that everyone should take into account when planning and participating in the activities.

## **Why is it important to me?**

It is important that SHS members act in a respectful manner. The Code of Conduct applies to all activities. Whether you are an SHS member, participant in our events or business partner, you should know what is included in our Code of Conduct so that you can act accordingly. Not reading the Code of Conduct does not mean that it does not apply to you.

If someone does not act according to the Code of Conduct, there are various disciplinary measures for inappropriate behavior. Disciplinary measures can be, for example, an official warning, a ban on student activities at SHS or a ban on entering the Student Union premises. The police will be notified if anything illegal happens at SHS events.

## How should I act?

The most important thing is to act appropriately and respect others and your surroundings. Instead of making assumptions or jumping to conclusions, ask others if you are unsure about something. If you encounter harassment or other inappropriate behavior, tell the event organizer, an equality and harassment ombud or the chair of the board. This is how the situation can be resolved and you will get the support you need. This way, the situation can be dealt with afterwards and this type of situation can be prevented in the future.

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## Purpose

This Code of Conduct helps us to apply the values and practices that the SHS community has agreed to follow in order to live up to our values and objectives. Its purpose is to summarize the principles and policies we want to follow and to set guidelines for the kind of behavior we expect from each other.

## Application

This Code of Conduct applies to all SHS members, SHS employees, participants in SHS events, partners of SHS, all persons holding a position of trust at SHS or working in a sub-organization of SHS. These principles should be followed in all types of interactions between members of the community, whether on-site or remotely.

A person who violates this Code of Conduct or other rules of the SHS may in some cases be dismissed from their position in SHS or its sub-organizations. Any case of potential breach of the Code of Conduct brought to the attention of the SHS will be dealt with by the SHS Equality and Harassment ombud, the Board, the Disciplinary Board and/or any other competent body.

## Our common values

### Equality in general within SHS

SHS strives to promote equality at a comprehensive level. Everyone should be treated equally even in matters that may not have been listed above, but are comparable to the listed points, and SHS will act when necessary.

### Gender and sexual identity

At SHS and among its members, gender and sexual identity is not a determining factor in any way. No one should suffer negative consequences because of their gender, sexuality, sexual and/or gender identity or transition. The interests of all gender and sexualities should be optimized at all levels and in all functions. Positions of responsibility are never linked to gender or sexual identity.

At SHS, we are aware that not everyone identifies according to a binary gender distribution. If it is necessary to ask for gender, an alternative gender is offered as well as an option not to disclose gender. If gender is irrelevant in the context, it is not asked. Heteronormativity should be avoided. Different gender and sexual identities are promoted in SHS communication, events and activities.

### Age

At SHS, all members, regardless of age, shall have the opportunity to participate on equal terms in the activities and events of the Student Union within the limits of Finnish law. SHS and its bodies organize events and activities in a diverse way to suit different age groups.

## **Faith and beliefs**

At SHS, everyone should be able to have and practice their faith and beliefs without derogatory, mean or otherwise offensive comments. No one should feel that they need to hide their beliefs and/or convictions or that they need to defend them. All members of SHS also have the right to express if they have no faith. All activities should be organized in a way that takes these sensitive issues into account.

## **Multiculturalism and ethnicity**

At the SHS, every member should be able to be open about their origin and culture. The SHS, its bodies and members accept and welcome people from all cultures and ethnicities. No one should have to hide or explain their cultural or ethnic identity.

## **Disabilities**

Activities organized by the SHS and its members and partners are encouraged to be designed in a way that enables the participation of people with different forms of disabilities whenever possible. Disabilities can be physical, mental or neurological, among others. The SHS and its members should also take into account the specific needs of a person with disabilities in a proactive way.

Descriptions of accessibility at Casa Academica can be found under "Accessibility at Casa" on shs.fi.

## **Privacy of members**

SHS and its members should allow everyone to combine privacy and life within SHS. No one should ever feel pressured to share information that they are not comfortable with or want to give. The SHS and its bodies should also protect the information they hold about members or other individuals in accordance with the GDPR regulation and other student union policies.

## **Socio-economic background and personal financial situation**

Within the SHS and among its members, a person's socio-economic background and/or personal financial situation should not influence the way someone is treated.

## **Language**

In the SHS and among its members, everyone should feel welcome regardless of their native language. Languages should be used to promote social inclusion and general participation in decision-making. The official language of the SHS is Swedish, but much of its activities are also available in English. Both international and domestic students are encouraged to use Swedish and English as languages to increase social cohesion.

## Code of Conduct for events

Events are an important part of everyday life at SHS and therefore an emphasized part of the SHS Code of Conduct. These events build our community, and to this end, SHS aims to create an environment where everyone feels safe and welcome to participate. Every SHS event is dedicated to providing a harassment-free environment for everyone, regardless of, for example, their sex, gender and/or sexual identity, age, disability, appearance or body size, race, ethnicity or beliefs, or comparable attributes and characteristics.

SHS has zero tolerance for all forms of harassment and inappropriate conduct or behavior. Examples of harassment can include sexual comments about appearance, unwanted touching, inappropriate sexual gestures or sending suggestions for sexual content in any format. Harassment also includes any form of drunkenness or incitement to behavior that makes someone feel unsafe or uncomfortable. Unacceptable behavior includes any type of violence or use of illegal drugs.

## Expected behaviour at SHS events and activities

✓	Pay attention to your surroundings and fellow participant
✓	Please note that the use of illegal drugs is prohibited at SHS
✓	Violent behaviour is not tolerated at SHS
✓	Bring to the attention of the event organizers, the Board Supervisor and/or the Equality and Harassment Ombud immediately if you notice a dangerous situation, someone in distress or any violation of this Code of Conduct.

## For event organisers

Event organizers are expected to apply this Code of Conduct throughout their event to help SHS create a safe and positive experience for everyone. It is important to take care of the accessibility, safety and security of events in advance and ensure that all organizers know how to deal with potential cases of inappropriate behavior. See point 5. Incident reporting for additional checklists for event organizers.

## Reporting an incident

SHS has zero tolerance for all forms of harassment and inappropriate behavior. A safe environment is a subjective experience, which cannot be judged from the outside and always depends on the context. Silent acceptance is not okay, so we encourage you to always act if you see something inappropriate.

If you see, hear or experience a violation of the Code of Conduct in SHS premises or activities, e.g. at an event, please follow these steps:

<b>1</b>	If you encounter inappropriate behavior yourself or as a spectator, intervene in the situation and ask the person behaving inappropriately to stop if possible.
<b>2</b>	Always consider your own safety before intervening. If an intervention could affect your safety or that of others, instead of intervening, contact the event organizer immediately.
<b>3</b>	If someone is in immediate danger, contact the event organizer immediately.
<b>4</b>	Contact the event organizers, an equality and harassment officer or the chair of the board and tell them what has happened.
<b>5</b>	If possible, write down or document what has happened to facilitate further handling and investigation of the problem or incident.
<b>6</b>	Contact an Equality and Harassment Officer or the Chair of the Board to report the incident. They will deal with the incident for further action.

After investigating the case and hearing all parties involved, the SHS Board of Directors, the Disciplinary Board or other competent body may decide on disciplinary measures against those found to be in breach of this Code of Conduct. More on the disciplinary measures in section 6. Violations of the Code of Conduct.

Contact information for the Equality and Harassment Ombud and the Chair of the Board can be found on the shs.fi website and on social media.

## Violations of the SHS Code of Conduct

The purpose of this section is to help those who have the responsibility to manage and respond to unacceptable behavior. It is important to note that despite the examples listed in this Code of Conduct, it is not possible to define in advance all situations that may arise. Thus, it is recognized that each incident has its own particular circumstances that should be considered. Even situations that are not listed in the Code of Conduct can be sanctioned by disciplinary measures.

Many people may not be aware of the impact of their behavior on those who are subjected to it. Each case must therefore be assessed on its own merits and it is not possible to apply one model to all cases. It is important to note that when assessing the seriousness of an incident or pattern of behaviour, it is less important to categorize the type of behaviour than its impact on the victims.

We would like to stress that measures described in this document can also be taken in parallel with police or court action. None of the measures described in this document should replace reporting to and cooperating with authorities when crimes have been committed or when someone's safety is threatened.

## **Possible disciplinary measures for violation of the Code of Conduct**

The purpose of this chapter is to make SHS members and participants aware of the possible disciplinary measures that can be imposed by the Board of Directors or the Disciplinary Board in case of violation of the SHS Code of Conduct. This is done to ensure that the procedure is as transparent as possible. Before any further decision is taken on possible disciplinary measures, all parties involved and other relevant persons, including the person accused of unacceptable behavior, are contacted in order to get as complete a picture of the events as possible. Disciplinary measures are recorded in the minutes of the Board meeting.

The disciplinary measures are considered and decided by the Board or the Disciplinary Board. You can read more about the rules of procedure of the Disciplinary Board in the Disciplinary Regulations. The possible disciplinary measures for violation of the Code of Conduct include but are not limited to:

### **AN OFFICIAL WARNING FROM THE SHS BOARD**

The purpose of the official oral or written warning is to immediately address the situation and/or violation with the person accused in order to prevent it from happening again. An official warning is generally valid for one year from the Board's decision, but may be shorter or longer based on an overall assessment of the case. If the person violates the Code of Conduct while a warning is in force, SHS reserves the right to impose further disciplinary measures, including a ban on SHS events and/or activities for a certain period of time. Disciplinary action and discussion of the events will give the person the opportunity to change their behavior.

### **PROHIBITION TO HAVE KEYS TO SHS PREMISES**

A person may be considered unsuitable to have access to SHS premises. The duration of the ban can range from one week to a permanent ban.

### **PROHIBITION TO HAVE KEYS TO SHS PREMISES**

A person who has behaved inappropriately may be banned from Casa Academica and other events for a period of time deemed appropriate.

### **PROHIBITION FROM STUDENT UNION ACTIVITY, WORK OR HOLDING A POSITION OF TRUST AT SHS**

A person may be considered unsuitable to represent SHS in any capacity. The duration of the ban can range from one week to a permanent ban.

## **Communication of the Code of Conduct**

The SHS Board is responsible for communicating this Code of Conduct to SHS members, and the main communication languages used are Swedish and English. The document and its policies will be communicated through SHS communication channels to all members as well as to external partners and guests to create a common ground for the SHS community.

This Code of Conduct has been implemented as part of the SHS objectives and strategy and is mandatory to accept in order to participate in events and activities. In addition, this document or an equivalent summary will be attached to the event description of all events run under SHS, at the latest from the beginning of the academic year 2023-2024. This ensures that all participants are aware of the policies to be followed at SHS events and within its activities to the fullest extent.

The provisions of this document will be applied both in internal and external marketing and communication as well as in business partnerships. In addition, internal and external safe environment resources such as SHS contact persons, equality and harassment ombud and student health services will be promoted in SHS channels to create a safer student experience for all SHS members, guests and partners.

## **Practical application**

### **How to behave?**



Here are some tips on how to behave at our events and in our operations to ensure a good and safe experience for everyone:

1. Make yourself visible when approaching someone new. No need to surprise anyone.
2. Ask for consent. Can I join you? Can I buy you a drink?
3. Avoid following or staring at someone for too long as it can make them uncomfortable.
4. Give people their own personal space. Avoid filming or photographing people without their permission.
5. Do not take advantage of someone who needs help. Someone who has difficulty communicating or cannot take care of themselves cannot give consent to sexual interactions either.

## How to intervene

If you see a situation that appears to violate our Code of Conduct or where intervention may be needed, here are some ways that you as a bystander can help:

1. If you or a bystander encounter inappropriate behavior, intervene in the situation and ask the person behaving inappropriately to stop if possible.
2. Always consider your own safety before intervening. If an intervention could affect your safety or that of others, instead of intervening, contact the event organizer immediately.
3. Delegate the situation to the event organizer, board supervisor or an equality and harassment officer or ask them to help you break up the situation.
4. Create a distraction by, for example, pretending to be a friend of the person being harassed and create an opportunity for them to leave.
5. Document the situation, as it may be useful later.
6. If none of the above helps, wait out the situation and follow up with the person once the situation has passed.