

What can you do as PHD candidate when you experience inappropriate behaviour?

At VU Amsterdam we do not tolerate (sexual) harassment, discrimination, threats, aggression, violence, stalking, bullying, or any other behaviour that undermines another person's personal integrity. Are you experiencing inappropriate behaviour from others? Find out here what you can do and who to turn to for assistance.

Clarify for yourself



- What happened?
- Which behaviour is bothering you?
- Why do you consider the behaviour of the other(s) inappropriate or transgressive?
- What do you want to achieve (for example, that the other person stops the behaviour and apologises)?
- Talk about what happened with someone you trust. Do you want to address the person(s) involved directly or prefer to have someone present for support?



Do you need support or advice? You can go here:

A

(Co-)supervisor or PhD candidate advisor

- For advice and support.
- You can discuss together what is needed to solve the problem.
- If you do not wish to discuss this with your (co-) supervisor of PhD candidate advisor, you can also contact the staff confidential counsellor.

B

Confidential counsellor

- For support, information and after-care for solving the problem informally or filing a formal complaint.
- Everything you say is confidential; the confidential counsellor does nothing without your prior knowledge and consent.
- The confidential counsellor can also refer you to other support services, such as a mediator or an occupational social worker.
- If you wish to file a formal complaint because an informal solution or mediation does not lead to a sufficient outcome for you, you must first inform one of the central confidential counsellors. They can also assist you in submitting the complaint to the Executive Board and the complaints procedure through the Committee for Unwanted Conduct.
- PhD candidates employed by VU can reach out to the [confidential advisor for staff](#). PhD candidates not employed by VU can contact the [confidential advisor for students](#).

C

Social safety coordinator

- Provides help in acutely dangerous situations, such as (online) threats, sexual violence or other forms of violence. If you are concerned about a potential threat or are unsure of the urgency of a situation, they can also help.
- Makes risk assessments and can support in ensuring your safety within VU Amsterdam and can provide support through referrals for help outside the university.
- Aims to restore safety for all concerned.

Ombudsman

- If you are dissatisfied with the way VU Amsterdam handled your report, you can contact the ombudsman. They will assess whether the university has fulfilled its obligations. All promovendi can seek assistance from the ombudsman.
- The ombudsman handles every request confidentially.
- Based on their findings, the ombudsman can advise the Executive Board on trends and developments within VU Amsterdam. In doing so, the ombudsman can anonymise any data of those involved.