



INTERNAL REGULATIONS

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Article 1. General	3
Article 2. Board	3
Article 3. Board Meetings	3
Article 4. Advisory Board	4
Article 5. Committees	4
Article 6. General Board Meeting (GBM)	5
Article 7. General Meeting (GM)	5 – 6
Article 8. Mourning Protocol	6
Article 9. Calamity Plan	6 – 8
Article 10. Other subjects	8
Appendix 1. Alcohol- and Drug Policy	9 – 10
Appendix 2. Social Safety Guidelines	11 – 18

ARTICLE 1. GENERAL

1. This regulation is a supplement to the statutes of the Vereniging voor Studenten Psychologie en Pedagogiek aan de Vrije Universiteit (hereinafter referred to as VSPVU), with the aim of clarifying existing rules.
2. Amendments to this regulation may be made following approval by the General Meeting. Proposals for amendments may be submitted by all members.
3. The VSPVU is politically and religiously independent and does not take political or religious positions. The VSPVU may organize or facilitate activities related to holidays and commemorative days with a cultural, social, or unifying character, without promoting any political or religious beliefs.
4. When the VSPVU promotes one of its committees in the name of the VSPVU, the guidelines set out in document 1 (Overview Huisstijl) must be followed. The Board is responsible for providing the necessary materials for this purpose. In addition, the Board reserves the right to make exceptions to these guidelines.

ARTICLE 2. BOARD

1. In accordance with Article 7, paragraph 1 of the statutes, the Board consists of at least a Chairman, a Secretary, and a Treasurer.
2. If there are more than three candidates, the positions of Commissioner of Marketing and Communication, Commissioner of External Affairs, and Commissioner of Faculty and Educational Affairs must be filled.
3. If one or more of the positions referred to in paragraph 2 are not filled, the Board members must divide the associated duties and responsibilities among themselves.
4. At least one member of the Board, or one authorized representative of the Board, must be present and available in the Board Room on all working days from 13:00 to 14:00. If this is not possible due to circumstances, the members must be informed in a timely manner. No meetings shall take place in the Board Room during this time.

ARTICLE 3. BOARD MEETINGS

1. The Board shall meet as often as it deems necessary, with a minimum of once every two weeks, except during holiday periods.
2. The Board shall organize an evaluation meeting at least three times per year. During this meeting, the performance of each Board member and of the Board as a whole during the preceding period shall be evaluated. The findings shall be reported back to the Advisory Board.
3. Board meetings may be held by means of telephone or video conferencing, or by any other means of communication, provided that each participating Board member can be heard simultaneously by all others.

ARTICLE 4. ADVISORY BOARD

1. The Advisory Board may be consulted for advice by the Board. It may also, on its own initiative, provide advice to the Board regarding association matters.
2. The Advisory Board shall receive the minutes of every Board meeting.
3. Members of the Advisory Board are expected to exercise independent judgment; therefore, membership in a committee may be denied to them by the Board.
4. In addition to Article 8, paragraph 6 of the statutes, in the event of the absence or incapacity of all Board members or the sole Board member, the Advisory Board shall be responsible for convening the General Meeting and shall act as Chairman of that meeting until the General Meeting has appointed the person who will be temporarily entrusted with the management of the association.

ARTICLE 5. COMMITTEES

1. The association has the committees as described in document 2 (Overview Committees).
2. The Chairman of a committee has the right to appoint new committee members. This takes place under the supervision and advice of the Board. This means that the Board retains the right to revoke an appointment on the grounds of the association's interests.
3. The activities of the association are primarily organized for members. Therefore, in principle, there must be a price difference between members and non-members for each activity. This difference shall be based on the following three questions:
 - How much does the VSPVU invest (per participant)?
 - Do members benefit from non-members participating?
 - What is a reasonable price for a non-member?If a committee concludes that it is desirable for a particular activity not to have a price difference, this is possible subject to approval by the Board.
4. Committees may determine their own procedures for decision-making and meetings. These procedures must not conflict with the law, the statutes of the association, and/or the association's internal regulations. To provide structure where desired, the Board may offer examples and expectations, such as agenda templates and internal agreements that committees may adopt.
5. Each committee has a contact person within the Board. This contact person is an official representative of the Board and is therefore not a member of the committee. The contact person is expected, where possible, to attend the committee's meetings; in their absence, another Board member is expected to attend the meeting.
6. If a committee cannot reach a decision after voting, the Board has the casting vote.
7. A pilot committee is a trial committee or a committee established for a fixed period. It is therefore not an official committee. A pilot committee has the same rights and obligations as an official committee, with the exception of financial commitments toward such committees. A pilot committee may be dissolved at any time by decision of the Board. The Board shall report this to the General Meeting.

ARTICLE 6. GENERAL BOARD MEETING (GBM)

1. The Board must provide an explanation of the policies pursued and the policies to be pursued at the General Board Meeting (GBM).
2. Each Board member and each committee chairman have voting rights at the GBM.
3. If a chairman is unable to attend the GBM, they must send a delegate from their committee. If this delegate wishes to vote, the chairman must provide written authorization to the Board.
4. Every member has the right to request an invitation from the Board to attend the GBM if they deem it necessary. During this GBM, the member has the right to propose initiatives and express their opinion.
5. Changes to the association's premises shall be put to a vote when this may reasonably be expected. Members must always request permission from the Board before making changes to the premises. The Board shall determine whether approval from the GBM is required.
6. Replacements of association property and new investments must be put to a vote by the GBM if the amount concerned is greater than or equal to €200 and less than €500, as referred to in Article 7, paragraph 5. This does not apply if the expenditure is made from the Board Expenses budget line, as these expenses must already be accounted for to the faculty.
7. The GBM must approve new committee chairmen. Sitting chairmen who wish to continue in the following academic year must be re-elected. If a vacancy remains unfilled, the Board is responsible for finding a solution and may take a decision on the matter.
8. A new committee chairman must receive at least a majority of positive votes. In the case of multiple candidates, all candidates must receive a majority of positive votes, and the candidate with the highest number of positive votes shall become chairman of the intended committee. Prior to this election, it shall be decided when the chairman will assume office. Abstentions are considered votes not cast and therefore do not count.
9. Voting at an GBM may only take place after discussion and after hearing everyone's opinion. Voting as an activity must not be an end in itself.
10. Committee chairmen shall inform the GBM of the progress within their committees.

ARTICLE 7. GENERAL MEETING (GM)

1. The VSPVU is obliged to convene a General Meeting (GM) three times per year. The first meeting shall take place at the beginning of the association year, the second meeting halfway through the association year, and the third meeting before the summer holiday. Committee chairmen are expected to attend an GM.
2. During the last scheduled GM of the academic year, the sitting Board must present a Candidate Board, on which a vote shall be held.
3. The last GM of the association year, which is also the first GM of the following association year, is the annual meeting. During this meeting, the Candidate Board presents its policy plan and budget, which shall be put to a vote.
4. A financial audit must be conducted twice per year, and a report of this audit shall be presented during the annual meeting.
5. Replacements of association property and new investments must be put to a vote by the GM if the amount concerned is greater than or equal to €500. This does not apply if the expenditure is made from the Board Expenses budget line, as these expenses must already be accounted for to the faculty.

6. If the Board considers it desirable to establish a new pilot committee, this may only take place after approval by the GM.

7. If the Board considers it desirable for a pilot committee to become an official committee, or for a new committee to be established, this may only take place after approval by the GM.

ARTICLE 8. MOURNING PROTOCOL

1. If one of the members or honorary members passes away, the Board shall ensure that the mourning protocol is carried out with due care, where possible and desired by the next of kin:
 - 1.1. The family shall receive a message of condolence.
 - 1.2. A wreath or floral arrangement shall be present at the funeral or cremation, in consultation with the next of kin.
 - 1.3. An obituary notice shall be published in a national newspaper, in consultation with the next of kin.
 - 1.4. A message shall be posted on the association's website www.vspvu.com, in consultation with the next of kin.
 - 1.5. An In Memoriam shall be published in the next newsletter, in consultation with the next of kin.
 - 1.6. A condolence register shall be made available in the VSPVU room, in consultation with the next of kin.
 - 1.7. A minute of silence shall be observed at the next General Meeting (GM) in memory of the deceased.
 - 1.8. All activities scheduled up to and including the day of the funeral or cremation, with the exception of trips, shall be postponed, in consultation with the next of kin.
2. If one of the committee members passes away, the funeral shall be attended by at least two Board members, in consultation with the next of kin.
3. If one of the Board members passes away, the members of the Advisory Board and the Board may keep the VSPVU room closed, without the presence of Board members, for a period of at least five working days or for as long as the Board deems necessary.
4. In all cases, the Board has the final say regarding actions taken during a period of mourning.

ARTICLE 9. CALAMITY PLAN

1. In case of any kind of calamity, the Board ensures they:
 - 1.1. Follow national and international guidelines
 - 1.2. Follow VU guidelines, if the VU is involved or relevant
 - 1.3. Try to remain in touch with members as much as possible, we can be a "safe space" for them
 - 1.4. Notify members the same day/day after what that will mean for the association, if any news is being shared by the government
 - 1.5. In case of death among members, see mourning protocol in the Internal Regulations
2. Should a natural calamity occur (for example a flood), the Board will take the following steps:
 - 2.1. Contact members via social media
 - 2.2. Follow guidelines of the government
 - 2.3. Follow guidelines of the VU if the VU is relevant
 - 2.4. If on an event or international event see 8.3 and 8.5 respectively

- 2.5. Within five working days update members on the current standings regarding things like meetings, opening times of the room and activities
3. Should a Calamity occur on location (in the Netherlands), the Board should make sure they take the following steps:
 - 3.1. Get people to safety
 - 3.2. Make sure 112 is called
 - 3.3. If necessary, make sure to take care of members, provide first aid if someone present is certified and ensure that members are hospitalized if needed. If members happen to be hospitalized, contact the provided emergency contact(s) about their situations
 - 3.4. Go to a visible safe place for stragglers and text everyone where that location is
 - 3.5. Gather the organizing party (either committee members, board members or a combination of the 2). In case anyone is missing, see required actions at point 8.3.4 & 8.3.6
 - 3.6. Do a headcount to make sure that everyone at the activity is accounted for. This should be done by one of the contact persons from the Board. If they are not present, the committee should take over
 - 3.7. If anyone is missing who was not on the emergency site, make sure to set out a two person search party. This search party would preferably consist of committee members if they are able and willing to perform said task, since the Board is responsible for the headcount. If that is not possible, the people doing the headcount should make a search party. Before searching, make sure to find out if there are leads of where the particular person has last been seen. The search party should only search in short perimeter and safe places. Never search for anyone through rubble
 - 3.8. Gather supplies and blankets if needed
 - 3.9. Wait for emergency teams and follow their orders
 - 3.10. Take the group home at the first safe opportunity
 - 3.11. Notify (Board) members and people at home about the situation to ensure the (Board)members at home can answer any questions as truthfully as possible
4. Should a calamity occur on a trip, the Board will execute the following steps:
 - 4.1. Get all participants to safety and call the alarm number
 - 4.2. Gather the organizing party (either committee members, board members or a combination of the 2). In case anyone is missing, see required actions at point 8.5.3 & 8.5.4
 - 4.3. Do a headcount to make sure that everyone at the activity is accounted for. This should be done by one of the contact persons from the Board. If they are not present, the committee should take over
 - 4.4. If anyone is missing who was not on the emergency site, make sure to set out a two person search party. This search party would preferably consist of committee members if they are able and willing to perform said task, since the Board is responsible for the headcount. If that is not possible, the people doing the headcount should make a search party. Before searching, make sure to find out if there are leads of where the particular person has last been seen. The search party should only search in short perimeter (this perimeter will be established on site) and safe places. Never search for anyone through rubble
 - 4.5. The board will wait for the emergency team to arrive and follow their instructions
 - 4.6. One Board member will check up on hospitalized participants. At least one board member must stay with the group
 - 4.7. The board arranges the trip home if possible
 - 4.8. The Board will notify the other Board members in the Netherlands to ensure they can answer all questions they get as truthfully as possible

5. In case of an epidemic, a variety of things may happen. For example events may be cancelled, the VSPVU room might have to close or even university might close. The Board will handle as follows:
 - 5.1. Notify the members through all active communication channels (e.g. mail, Instagram, WhatsApp)
 - 5.2. Use social media to notify members if any large changes occur for the members (e.g. room opening to some extent)
 - 5.3. Do as many social activities online as you can (if a committee doesn't organize something, organize something new as Board)
 - 5.4. Check with the Faculty Board if the Board is allowed to go to the VU
 - 5.5. Check with the Faculty Board if the Board is allowed to work at the VU
 - 5.6. Check with the Faculty Board if there is a maximum amount of people allowed in the VSPVU room
 - 5.7. Check with the Faculty Board if members are allowed to pick up personal belongings in the VSPVU room
6.
 - 6.1. If the Board should decide to act differently than above guidelines due to that being beneficial to the specific situation, the Board always has the right to do so. This is due to the varying nature of these situations
 - 6.2. If no one of the Board is fit to take steps, then RVA and/or committee should take over if (mentally and physically) able to do said task.

ARTICLE 10. OTHER SUBJECTS

1. Members should preferably be a member of only one committee. In cases of equal suitability, preference should be given to the member who is not already active.
2. Committee members are not granted a separate status that entitles them to be exempt from payment conditions. If someone believes they can claim a separate status, the Board shall make a final determination on the matter.
3. Each person may be authorized by only one other person with a blank (undirected) vote. Any subsequent authorization must explicitly be for, against, or neutral. The responsibility for monitoring this lies with the Board.

APPENDIX 1. ALCOHOL- AND DRUG POLICY

Alcohol Policy

Alcohol will be tolerated on the activities of the VSPVU, provided that this is appropriate. The use of alcohol will not be appreciated for activities such as a lecture or an excursion.

To consume alcohol, the person must be 18 years old or older. If there are doubts about the age, identification can always be requested. When it is clear that an under-aged person consumes alcohol, the alcohol will be taken away, and an official warning will always be given. An extreme measure may be that the person will be removed from the activity.

The Board has, at all times, the right to decide to ban alcohol on an activity. When this is decided, this will be announced prior to the event.

In the case of a violation of the published rules, or in the case of such excessive alcohol consumption, the member in question may receive a request for a meeting with (a member of) the Board. Following this meeting, the Board can decide to issue an official warning and to deny access to activities, the exact duration will be determined by the Board. When a member receives a second official warning, this leads to denial of access to activities, the exact duration will be determined by the Board.

If a member of the committee violates the rules relating to alcohol use on his or her own activity, the Board will always give an official warning and in the extreme case the Board may decide to deny the member in question from participation in committees that have a special responsibility towards members.

The Board always holds the right to apply a different consequence, depending on the situation. When a member disagrees with the given consequence, one can ask the Advisory Board for a revision of the given consequence.

Members are always responsible for (the extent of) their alcohol use. The VSPVU is not responsible for this.

Drug Policy

On domestic activities, when the location allows, the use and possession of soft drugs will be tolerated. When the location prohibits the use of soft drugs, this rule will expire. Soft drugs, in this case, only means weed and hashish, the use and possession of all other drugs will not be allowed even if the Dutch law allows them.

If it is suspected that a member has violated this rule, he or she will be asked to have a conversation with (a member of) the Board and awaiting this conversation the Board may decide to remove the member from the activity. If the member has actually violated the rules, the Board will issue an official warning at all times and can deny access to activities, the exact duration will be determined by the Board. When a member receives a second official warning, this leads to denial of access to activities, the exact duration will be determined by the Board.

The use and possession of any form of drugs is not allowed on activities abroad. If a member violates this rule, he or she will receive an official warning and will be obliged to destroy the existing drugs. In the case of drugs use on a foreign activity, this will always, irrespective of whether it concerns a first or a second official warning, lead to denial of access to activities following the foreign activity, the exact duration will be determined by the Board.

If a member of the committee violates the rules regarding drug use on his or her own activity, the Board will always give an official warning and in the extreme cases the Board may decide to deny the member in question from participation in committees that have a special responsibility towards members.

The Board always holds the right to apply a different consequence, depending on the situation.

When a member deals in illegal substances in the VSPVU room and/or on activities the people whom are involved will be reported to the authorities.

When a member disagrees with the given consequence, one can ask the Advisory Board for a revision of the given consequence.

Members are always responsible for (the extent of) their drug use. The VSPVU is not responsible for this.

APPENDIX 2. SOCIAL SAFETY POLICY

This document has been drafted to create non-binding guidelines for the implementation of the Social Safety Guidelines. The text below serves as a guideline/framework for future Boards. Every situation that threatens someone's social safety is entirely different and should be treated as such. This document cannot cover every possible scenario, and therefore the sitting Board remains authorized at all times to make final decisions. These guidelines are intended to support future Boards in making decisions regarding the matters addressed in this document.

The goal of this document is to make the reporting procedure as accessible as possible, with an important principle being that a solution is reached that is acceptable to the person that has reported the issue, from now on referred to as the reporter. We aim to ensure a safe and secure environment for your academic studies. This document delineates the appropriate channels for seeking guidance, assistance, or lodging reports on incidents.

At the start of the year, the Board assigns three Student Confidants of the VSPVU. To maximize diversity, the Board will try to have at least one of them who identifies as a man and at least one of them who identifies as a woman. One student confidant is required to be a current Board member. One of them is required to be an 'external student confidant', which is a person who is not involved in the VSPVU. The external student confidant is required to be involved in a study association, preferably from our neighbouring associations VIB or MFVU. The other student confidant is required to be involved in the VSPVU, but not as a Board member. All Student Confidants are expected to follow a student confidant training.

It is important that the members of the association will be introduced to this document on a yearly basis, to ensure they are aware of the guidelines that should be followed.

Contact

In case of an event as mentioned in paragraph 3, any person can make a complaint within the VSPVU to one of the following contacts:

1. Het Bestuur

The Board can be reached through the general Board email address:

- Board - board@vspvu.com

The individual Board members can be reached through their individual email addresses:

- Chairman – chairman@vspvu.com
- Secretary – secretary@vspvu.com
- Treasurer – treasurer@vspvu.com
- Commissioner Communication and Media – commissionercommunicationandmedia@vspvu.com
- Commissioner External Contacts – commissionerexternal@vspvu.com
- Commissioner Education – Commissionereducation@vspvu.com

2. The Advisory Board

The Advisory Board can be reached through the Advisory Board email address

- Advisory Board – advisoryboard@vspvu.com

3. The Student Confidants

The Student Confidants each have their own student confidant emails, through which members can contact them to discuss any issues they are experiencing.

- Board student confidant – boardconfidant@vspvu.com
- Internal student confidant – internalconfidant@vspvu.com
- External student confidant – externalconfidant@vspvu.com

4. Anonymous

For anonymous reporting, the reporter can fill in the online form on the VSPVU website.

What cases does this document address?

Cases that may be addressed in this document are listed below. This list does not encompass the complete list of cases of the underlying purpose of this document. The Board, Advisory Board or the Student Confidants may decide which cases will be proceeded with.

1. Discrimination - can be characterized as treating people differently, negatively, or adversely because of one or more of the following prohibited grounds of discrimination. Examples:
 - 1.1. Race, colour, ancestry, place of origin, political belief, religion, age, sex, sexual orientation, marital status, family status, physical or mental disability, or (pardoned) criminal conviction.
2. Sexual harassment – can be characterized as a form of discrimination that involves unwanted or non-consensual sexual advances, comments, gestures, or physical contact of a sexual nature. Examples:
 - 2.1. Unwanted sexual advances or propositions
 - 2.2. Physical touching or assault
 - 2.3. Making sexual comments or jokes
 - 2.4. Sharing sexually explicit materials or pictures
 - 2.5. Staring or leering in a sexually suggestive matter
 - 2.6. Making sexual gestures or facial expressions
 - 2.7. Making unwanted physical contact of sexual nature.
3. Physical bullying – this type of bullying can be characterized as physical violence or aggression, such as hitting, pushing, or theft. Examples:
 - 3.1. Hitting, punching, or slapping someone
 - 3.2. Pushing, shoving, or tripping someone
 - 3.3. Kicking or stomping on someone
 - 3.4. Pinching or pulling someone's hair
 - 3.5. Spitting on someone
 - 3.6. Damaging or stealing someone's property
 - 3.7. Intentionally bumping into or crowding someone
 - 3.8. Restraining someone or holding them against their will
 - 3.9. Making threats of physical harm or violence
4. Verbal bullying – this type of bullying can be characterized as the use of words to hurt or intimidate someone, such as teasing, name-calling, or threatening. Examples:
 - 4.1. Name-calling or using derogatory language

- 4.2. Insulting someone's appearance, intelligence, or abilities
- 4.3. Making fun of someone's ethnicity, religion, or cultural background
- 4.4. Spreading rumours or lies about someone
- 4.5. Mocking or belittling someone's interests or hobbies
- 4.6. Using sarcasm or mocking tones to humiliate someone
- 4.7. Threatening someone with physical harm or violence
- 4.8. Criticizing or shaming someone for their behaviour or actions
5. Social bullying – this type of bullying involves damaging someone's reputation or relationships, by ways such as spreading rumours, excluding someone from social groups, or manipulating friendships. Examples:
 - 5.1. Excluding someone from a group or activity
 - 5.2. Spreading rumours or gossip about someone
 - 5.3. Ignoring or giving someone the silent treatment
 - 5.4. Insulting or mocking someone in public or on social media
 - 5.5. Undermining or sabotaging someone's accomplishments or reputation
 - 5.6. Encouraging others to shun or reject someone
 - 5.7. Threatening to end a friendship or relationship as a form of control
 - 5.8. Creating a negative image of someone through manipulation or false information
6. Cyberbullying – This type of bullying takes place online or through technology, such as using social media to spread rumours or harass someone or using text messages to threaten or harass someone. Examples:
 - 6.1. Sending threatening or abusive messages via text, email, or social media
 - 6.2. Sharing private or embarrassing photos or videos of someone without their consent
 - 6.3. Posting hurtful comments or messages on someone's social media accounts or online forums
 - 6.4. Creating fake profiles or impersonating someone online to humiliate or bully them
 - 6.5. Spreading rumours or gossip through email, social media, or messaging apps
 - 6.6. Participating in online shaming or mobbing, where a large group of people publicly attacks or humiliates an individual
 - 6.7. Using technology to stalk, harass, or intimidate someone
 - 6.8. Encouraging others to participate in cyberbullying through likes, shares, or comments on social media
 - 6.9. Using social media to manipulate or control someone, such as threatening to share embarrassing information unless they comply with certain demands
7. Psychological bullying – this type of bullying can be characterized as manipulating someone's emotions, such as playing mind games, intimidating someone, or undermining someone's self-esteem. Examples:
 - 7.1. Belittling or minimizing someone's feelings, thoughts, or ideas
 - 7.2. Gaslighting, which involves manipulating someone into doubting their own perceptions or reality
 - 7.3. Threatening to harm someone's reputation or relationships
 - 7.4. Using guilt or manipulation to control someone's behaviour or actions
 - 7.5. Ignoring or rejecting someone to make them feel isolated or unwanted
 - 7.6. Insulting or criticizing someone's appearance, personality, or abilities
 - 7.7. Intimidating or making someone feel afraid through verbal or nonverbal cues
 - 7.8. Using sarcasm or passive-aggressive comments to undermine someone's confidence or self-esteem
 - 7.9. Mocking or ridiculing someone in front of others
 - 7.10. Blaming someone for things that are not their fault or accusing them of wrongdoing without evidence.

8. Abuse of authority - can be characterized as an individual improperly using the power and authority inherent in a position to endanger a person's functioning, undermine the performance of their function, or in any way interfere with or influence a person's work or personal life. Examples:
 - 8.1. Intimidating by using fear to control others behaviour
 - 8.2. Threats that involve an intention to harm or cause distress to manipulate someone into compliance
 - 8.3. Blackmailing by threatening to reveal damaging information unless demands are met
 - 8.4. Coercion by forcing someone to do something against their will through pressure or manipulation.

How to report

The reporting party can be the victim directly affected by the incident or anyone else involved. If a report is made by someone other than the victim, permission from the victim is necessary before proceeding with the handling of the report.

To keep the barrier for reporting as low as possible, reports or complaints can be made via telephone, email, online form, or in person. When reporting by phone or in person, it's important that the recipient writes a detailed report. An online form on the website is available for anonymous reporting. Following an anonymous report the Board will follow the same procedures as closely as possible.

The report may include, if available and desired to be shared:

1. Date/time/location.
2. Parties involved.
3. A (detailed) description of the event including involved parties and possible witnesses.

Procedure

The Board, the Advisory Board, and/or Student Confidants are entrusted with the responsibility of maintaining complete confidentiality and determining which complaints warrant further action, deliberating on which ones to take action on.

To ensure transparency and respect for all parties involved, it is necessary that the reporter obtains explicit permission from the victim before discussing the matter with any other entities within the association. Parties involved may chat with friends about the reported incident, however neither of the parties is allowed to talk about the procedure of the complaint. Moreover, individuals involved in the complaint process—the reporter, victim, or accused—retain the right to request the exclusion of specific members of the Board, the Advisory Board, or Student Confidants from the discussions or handling of the report or complaint.

Recognizing the significance of impartiality and support, individuals involved in the proceedings—the reporter, victim, or accused—have the prerogative to request the presence of an independent external advisor during discussions. Should the victim grant permission, the Board may engage the expertise of an independent outside counsellor to further enrich these deliberations. In case professional expertise is deemed necessary by the Board they are authorized to contact the Social Safety Coordinators of the VU for professional expertise without permission of the victim. In this case anonymity of the victim and accused is ensured.

Following each discussion, it is obligatory upon the informant to accurately document the proceedings in a comprehensive report. This report serves as a foundation for transparency and accountability. The reporter, victim and accused are authorized to request sharing and confirmation of their own documentation. However, dissemination of this report to other entities within the association necessitates the explicit approval of the victim or accused, safeguarding their privacy and dignity.

Ultimately, the decision-making authority resides solely with the Board, underscoring the importance of their discernment in resolving complaints effectively and fairly.

A clear disclaimer highlights the need for sensitivity and permission: should the Board and the Advisory Board bear witness to a situation as outlined in paragraph 3, seeking permission from the expected victim becomes a prerequisite for subsequent actions on the matter, reinforcing the commitment to upholding the rights and autonomy of all involved parties.

It is important to note that if a reporter shares information that makes an informant believe one of the parties involved are a direct threat to themselves or others, the informant may contact first responders without permission of the involved parties. It is up to the informant to decide whether or not this is the case.

Timeframe

It is important to establish a timeframe that balances the needs and interests of all parties involved, ensuring that the matter is handled as well as possible while upholding procedural fairness. Sufficient time must be allocated to conduct a thorough investigation, adhering to all procedural principles meticulously. However, promptness is equally crucial to prevent undue delay in resolving matters. Therefore, within one week after the initial report, the informant will send a confirmation email to the reporter stating that the procedures have commenced. Afterward, the informants will aim to complete the procedures within 4-6 weeks.

If a complaint has been made to a Board member

After the complaint has been made, the informed Board member will have a conversation with both the victim and the accused to gather a complete story. Anonymity will be guaranteed for all involved parties. After gathering all the required information, the Board Member is in charge of completely anonymizing the complaint. The informed Board member will then explain the complaint in the manner requested by the informant. Depending on the preferences of the informant, anonymity will be guaranteed.

Following this, the Board will hold a discussion and decide on further sanctions. Board members should strive to be as objective as possible during this process, to reach appropriate repercussions. After all the details are discussed and appropriate repercussions are decided, the outcome of Board discussion and/or possible decisions by the Board will be communicated in person, or if not possible via phone call.

Additionally, an email confirmation with the result of the discussion by the Board and/or possible decisions by the Board will be sent while maintaining anonymity of all parties. Furthermore, we may also consult or collaborate with the Social Safety Coordinators from the VU, further enriching our approach to addressing the matter.

If a complaint has been made to an Advisory Board member

If the complaint has been made to a member of our Advisory Board, this person gathers the required information from both the victim and the accused and informs (part of) the Board if given permission by the victim. They will explain the complaint in the way that has been requested by the reporter. If no permission is granted by the victim, the Advisory Board is solely authorized to take an advisory position towards the reporter.

After all the details are discussed and appropriate repercussions are decided, the outcome of the Board discussion and/or possible decisions by the Board will be communicated in person, or if not possible, via phone call. Afterwards, an email confirmation with the outcome of the Board discussion and/or possible repercussions by the Board will be sent.

If a complaint has been made to a student confidant

Student Confidants can discuss issues they find difficult with each other as long as they keep the involved parties anonymous. Additionally, with the victim's permission, the Board can be informed and advised. If no permission is granted by the victim, the Student Confidant is solely authorized to take an advisory position towards the reporter.

If a complaint has been made about a Board member

If a complaint is lodged against a Board member, the initial step involves a conversation with the Board. Reports and complaints regarding a Board member can be directed to various channels, including the Board itself, a delegation of the Board, the Advisory Board, or the Student Confidants. Should the severity of the situation warrant, a meeting with the Advisory Board will be convened to address the actions and potential sanctions concerning the Board member. With the victim's permission, the Advisory Board or Student Confidants may inform or consult the Board or its delegation. In instances concerning the Board as a whole, the reporter may approach the Advisory Board or the Student Confidants, or alternatively, a written request signed by a minimum of 10 members can initiate a General Meeting. Subsequently, a joint meeting involving both the Board members and the Advisory Board will be held to further deliberate on the matter. Should it be determined that the Board member's actions are indeed severe, they must adhere to the imposed sanctions.

Template for writing a complaint

In the email it is important to be as clear as possible when the action has had happened, as well as providing the information about unwanted actions

Dear,

I would like to write a complaint regarding X actions,

This has happened at a Y event at Z time.

(Details about the actions of the offender).

Withdrawal of complaint

Anyone who files a complaint retains the fundamental right to withdraw it at any time, without needing to provide further explanation or justification. In other words, the individual's decision to withdraw a complaint should be respected unequivocally. However, it's essential to note that while the complainant has the autonomy to withdraw their complaint, the Board reserves the prerogative to assess whether to proceed with the case based on its potential impact on the association, even if the complaint has been withdrawn.

Regarding the process, the withdrawal of a report can take place through various means and channels, mirroring the options available for filing a complaint. This includes the possibility of withdrawing the report by communicating directly with any relevant party, such as the Advisory Board, Student Confidants, or the Board itself.

Decisions

Decisions by the Board may encompass the following:

1. Formal conversation: a conversation will be held by someone from the Board, an RVA member, possibly a Social Safety Coordinator and victim and/or accused.
2. Group discussion: a discussion will be held by the Board with all involved parties.
3. Referral to higher authorities (Social Safety Coordinators): the Social Safety Coordinators of the VU will be contacted in case the Board feels unqualified to deal with the case or any of the involved parties prefers to.
4. Additional measures: the Board may implement additional measures for the victim and/or accused during VSPVU events.
5. Suspension from the association: temporary suspension in the form of banishment from certain activities.
6. Expulsion from the association.*
7. Discontinuation: the procedure may be discontinued when there is a lack of available information and/or the victim wishes to discontinue.

Note: every decision will be made based on the impact of the action and with consideration of the wishes of the victim and accused. *When in line with the Statutes of the VU.

Process of appealing

Both the victim and the accused have the right to appeal any decisions concerning their report or complaint made by the Board. This is done by responding to the email including the Board's decision. The appeal process involves separate meetings with both parties, with the presence of at least two Board members, and at least 1 member of the Advisory Board. Note that the ones present in the meeting are not involved in the complaint. The Board, with advice from the Advisory Board, will then determine how to proceed with the appeal. In case no agreement can be reached between all parties, VU Social Safety may be contacted for advice and guidance.

Aftercare

Following the handling of reported incidents, we recognize the importance of providing ongoing support to all parties involved. For cases under review, we offer the reporting party the option to engage in a follow-up discussion approximately one month after resolution, respecting individual preferences.

It's important to note that incidents resolved early in the investigation phase may not fall under this protocol.