

Compass
for
Interhuman
Learning
& Support
Tools

This document is an invitation to set the ground for how we work together at BEAR and provide support tools for when difficult situations arise in a spirit of interhuman learning. It is the result of a long and ongoing research amongst BEAR students and tutors with the desire that together we can shape the culture we work in by invoking a practice of accountability and shared responsibility.

Accountability is a way of addressing each other as responsible for our acts and encouraging openness toward potentially changing our behavior. This takes time and patience.

The following definitions and resources form a “compass” for interhuman learning that will help focus active agreements and continuous discussion around these topics in tutor groups and classes. It is important that this document is alive and that we as a community can keep adding to it.

This document does not replace the **ArtEZ Together in Solidarity** statement, the **Student Charter**, the staff **Code of Conduct** or obviously the law in the Netherlands. If any members of our department — staff or students — engage in any form of sexual assault or harassment, abuse of power or discriminatory acts, there will be consequences and that member may be prohibited from coming to ArtEZ, temporarily or permanently.

Since March 2021 we have been organizing research and working meetings with members of faculty and students across all years to address questions such as: what we want a code of conduct to do for us; what it should address; who should develop it; how to keep it alive and updated. During these sessions we also compiled existing codes of conduct from other art and pedagogical institutions. This document is the result of the research at this stage, combining elements from the meetings and supporting material. The research, meeting recordings and full summaries can be found on TEAMS and should be seen as an ongoing process. Any document is a record of its time: as times change so do the things we need to define. The last update was made mid – September 2025.

Compass for What is unwanted behaviour at BEAR?

Unwanted behaviour is behaviour you find so disturbing that it detracts from your studies or work. In the first instance, it is you who decides what counts as unwanted. Examples are discrimination, sexual or other harassment, threats, gossip, bullying, physical or psychological violence. Whether this behaviour takes place openly or subtly — the impact is usually significant. For example: you receive pushy e-mails or are bullied by a fellow student; you are consistently ignored or always lumped with the majority of work assignments in a group setting; a colleague is always making noise and disturbance in the studio for others; leaving a mess behind in a shared space; not respecting the working times of staff; etc.

What one person regards as unwanted, another may not. Therefore, to support with clear communication around boundaries and expectations in a shared learning environment, below is a growing list of unwanted behaviour and what we mean by these terms, based on previous conversations within the department. You are invited to continue this list, keeping in mind that it does not overwrite the existing rules at ArtEZ, but is designed to remind or complement it in ways that are directed to the particularities of how we work together in mutual respect. Your additions, comments and feedback will be collected by the student representatives and shared with the heads, so that the document can continue to grow and develop.

Discrimination

- Discrimination, threats, gossip, bullying, physical or psychological violence are not tolerated.
- No uneven distribution of attention, no deliberate exclusion of students in class activities or extra-curricular events.

Work

Policy

- Leave shared spaces clean after use.
- Check if you are not disturbing others when making noise.
- Don't contact your tutors out of their working hours/days, unless in case of an emergency.
- Not all people wish to be on social media, please check when documenting something at school or in a BEAR program.
- Extra-curricular activities are not mandatory. E.g. a professional gathering outside school should happen without insistence.
- Alcohol and drugs are not allowed within context of working spaces and classes.

Behaviour

- Dare to openly and respectfully be aware of your own behaviour towards others and the other way around. First check-in with yourself, before you start to judge and take actions. Nonetheless, you are always welcome to share your feelings/emotions/thoughts/experiences with the persons of trust.
- Don't over share personal issues. While much of our work as artists emerges from personal experiences, it is not always appropriate to share them in a collective learning environment. If you are not sure what is appropriate, have a discussion amongst your tutor and group about setting some parameters which you can all agree on.
- Don't expect that everybody shares the same beliefs, perspectives or political views as you.
- Not everybody shares the same understanding of terminology and its references. Having a different understanding is not the same as, and does not justify, verbal abuse or discriminatory terminology.
- We all come from different perspectives. Space for dialogue is important, yet dialogue is different from patronizing, judging or feeling the need to educate someone following your ideology.
- Distinguish actions from the actor — describe what you interpret someone to be doing, not what you think they are.
- Don't make assumptions about people's identities, experiences, gender identity, sexuality and/or histories. →

- ... If you don't know what pronouns (she, they, it, ze, he, her, their, its, his, etc.) a person uses, ask them privately: "What are your pronouns?"
- ... When students and staff are hanging out together, outside of the studio or actual classroom (or in their private time), they must refrain from any form of intimacy that risks exploiting/taking advantage of the uneven power balance between them.
- ... Don't use your power for personal gain. Within BEAR and ArtEZ different relations and positions coexist simultaneously between students, tutors and guests in the works they perform. These relations must be navigated with acknowledgement and mutual respect.
- ... Sexual harassment is not tolerated (this includes inappropriate physical contact, insistent groping, touching, hugging, stroking, kissing or unwanted sexual attentions such as sexual comments, compliments, allusions or suggestive invitations).
- ... Sexual assault is a criminal act and ranges from unwanted touching and kissing, to rubbing, groping or forcing someone to touch the perpetrator in sexual ways.
- ... What is consented to in studio practice or in the space of a performance might not be consented to outside of it. This should be discussed and agreed to by parties involved where possible.
- ... When a workshop/meeting/performance requires or inhabits physical contact there must be consent. This must be checked or indicated on beforehand.

Accountability and Trust

- ... Do not disclose confidential information or personal information about others without the person's consent. Privacy is part of communal care. Don't assume a situation might be ok when in doubt. Seek advice.
- ... Respect one and another's life outside BEAR. Be aware that all, staff and students, also move through life besides BEAR.
- ... In the event of unwanted behaviour, after care can play an important role. Depending on the situation and your wish, your tutor, head or coordinator will keep checking with you to make sure the situation has improved.

Support

Tools

Mind

Asymmetries

BEAR and ArtEZ is made of asymmetries. People come from different places, inhabit different bodies, have different experiences, are situated differently in power structures and have different boundaries.

There are many different types of asymmetries to consider: access or ability in Dutch and English vary, travel and health costs for international students are higher, or accessibility to facilities is not always possible. Everybody, to a certain extent, partakes in multiple systems of inequality by inhabiting different positions, roles and narratives. We want to create a space where this can be actively addressed.

Blind spots and biases are real. The fact that one does not see them doesn't mean they do not affect or harm others. In creating a culture of awareness, listening and speaking with one another, the hope is to destroy the grounds on which violence, abuse or harm can happen. This means that listening, offering support and holding people to account in a compassionate way is favored over shunning people without offering resources to learn and change. This said, if you engage in any form of sexual assault or harassment, abuse of power or discriminatory acts, know that you can be asked to leave. In all cases, serious or smaller incidents, we encourage you to always raise the flag in the event of a problem.

Compass
If You Have
Experienced
Unwanted
Behavior

for

Interhuman

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&

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Tools

Have
experienced
unwanted
behaviour

Is it something
that can be solved by
listening to each other?
Where possible, always speak to the
person with whom you are experiencing
a problem first; tell them what you are
feeling because of this.

If you find it difficult to
approach the person alone, inform
a fellow student, colleague or member of
staff about what you will do beforehand and
or ask them to join you for support.

If you feel unsafe and
see no possibility of addressing the
problem yourself, then call in the help of a
tutor, coordinator or head, or go to the stu-
dent counsellor. Let them know how you
would prefer the complain to be
processed.

Serious
unwanted behaviour
If the situation appears to be immedi-
ately serious or if through previous steps
the parties are unable to find a solution
together, speak immediately with the
head of department.

The heads responsibility
is to act as impartially as possi-
ble and they are there to maintain
a safe learning and working climate.
In very serious situations, the head will
immediately connect with the confidential
counsellors or director of Art & Design.

Have
witnessed
harmful
behaviour

If you are observing harmful be-
haviour on others, find a sensitive and
discreet way to check in with the person
you perceive as being harmed to see if
they are ok with the situation or if
they need support.

If the aggression or harassment is
subtle or you are unsure about what the
situation is, you can discuss it with the
heads of department, coordinator or
student counsellor.

If you are witnessing physical,
sexual or psychological violence, don't
be a bystander and immediately inform
the heads of department.

If the complaint concerns
the head go then to the confiden-
tial counsellor directly. In such a case,
an employee can also turn to the director.
It may happen that you decide you want to
file an official complaint about undesirable
behaviour. You can do this at the Complaints
Committee for Undesirable Behaviour. The
confidential counsellor can tell you how
to do this and guide you through it.

Have been
approached
because your
behaviour has
caused harm or
concern

If you feel you are be-
ing 'called out' unfairly, discuss
this with a tutor, coordinator, head,
or student counsellor.

If you are approached
because your behaviour has
caused harm or has become a
concern, please take the time
to listen.

Depending on the particular situation,
you will be obliged to justify your actions
to the heads of department, confidential
counselor, director of Art & Design or exter-
nal mediator. You will receive a formal warn-
ing from heads and/or director. Serious
harmful behaviour might lead to immedi-
ate expulsion.

In severe cases the Executive Board can
terminate your registration or ensure that you
are not allowed to register with ArtEZ.

You

Tips on how to address unwanted behavior in a conversation

It is not always the case that you need to fill in a complaint or go to the external confidential advisor. It is often effective for all concerned to discuss a question, a reproach or a mistake directly with those concerned.

Referring to “norms” or “socially acceptable behaviour” is meaningless as guidance and highly exclusionary; what is normal to one group may not be to another, and people with different backgrounds and cognitive positions will not share a framework for normal behaviour.

It is important we use the following non-violent communication guidance:

- Distinguish actions from actor. Describe what you interpret someone to be doing not what you think they are.
- Explain what you ARE feeling about what someone is doing. Feelings are different from thoughts. Whereas thoughts interpret, feelings inform. Feelings are messages that point to our needs. We are responsible for our feelings.
- YES, AND ... instead of YES, BUT. Practice avoiding “devil’s advocate-ing” (arguing for the sake of arguing), just stick to making additions (repeating and adding).

Sometimes it is difficult to address or recognize unwanted behaviour. It is important that we keep checking in with each other and ensure that is it possible to make mistakes and learn from them. E.g. Check in and check out rounds as a pair or group are an opportunity to briefly reflect on needs for the day ahead. They allow for tutors and students to address needs or handling situation directly in class.

Please note and be aware: No matter what, you'll always be heard. Whether it is regarding an issue for yourself or another: sharing is never a wrong decision. And everything that is shared will be handed respectfully and not disclosed.

Contacts

Heads of Department

Edward Thomson
Office OK74,
Wednesday / Friday
e.thomson@artez.nl
0615497128

Priscila Fernandes
Office OK74,
Monday / Tuesday
p.fernandes@artez.nl
0655456811

Heads have a responsibility to keep an impartial role in difficult situations and will escalate a problem depending on the severity or reach out for a solution.

Student counsellor

Nicoline Lodeweges
n.lodeweges@artez.nl
026-353 56 57

Are your studies not going the way you had hoped? Need some help and support? Our student counsellors will help you look for possible solutions. Or perhaps you're just not feeling great and you'd like to talk about it – you are always welcome at the student counsellor's office.

Student Psychologist

Our student psychologists offer short-term help with study problems related to, for instance, stress, anxiety, fear of failure, ADHD, ADD or autism. They can also help with personal problems that make studying difficult, such as depression, ruminating, family problems, grief and loss, difficulty making or maintaining friendships, insecurity or low self-esteem. Visit first the Student counsellor to get a referral to the psychologist.

Mores

www.mores.online

If you have (had) problems with undesirable behaviour, you can also contact Mores. This is an independent reporting point for undesirable behaviour in the cultural sector. For more information, go to the Mores website.

Support

Coordinator / SLB

Maritt Kuipers
Office OK74,
Tuesday, Wednesday, Friday
ma.kuipers@artez.nl
0643039835

Maritt is our coordinator and Study Career Counsellor (SLB). The Study Career Counsellor offers the student support in the learning process.

Tools

Student facilitator

Martine van Lubeek
Office OK74,
Tuesday/Friday mornings
m.vanlubeek@artez.nl
0612504345

Martine is a recent alumni, our student facilitator and also Study Career Counsellor (SLB). She is there to help students in finding their way within ArtEZ.

Confidential counsellors

Jacco Teunis
info@jacgo.nl
0615073671
Erika Hendriks
info@erikahendriks.nl
0643685361

If you are confronted with serious unwanted behaviour in your study situation, you can inform your head of department, but you can also choose to go to a confidential counsellor.

Complaints Committee for Undesirable Behaviour

info@schattenbergadvies.nl
0644418193

It may be that you decide you want to submit an official complaint about unwanted behaviour. You can submit your complaint to the Complaints Committee for Undesirable Behaviour. The confidential counsellor can tell you how and can support you in doing so.

Art & Design Director

Sharon Gesthuizen
s.gesthuizen@artez.nl

If a complaint concerns the head go then to the confidential counsellors directly. In such a case, an employee can also turn to the director.

More informal situations to bring feedback...

Student Representative

In each tutor group there are two student representatives. If you have feedback about your studies, please let them know. If you want to add, give comments or feedback on this document, please also communicate with them. Every 6–8 weeks the heads and coordinator of the department have a meeting with student representatives to collect your feedback. Would you like to be a student representative? Let your tutor know.

Student Facilitator / Martine van Lubeek

You can reach Martine when you have questions about how to get things done around ArtEZ or who to contact for a particular situation. Martine is a previous BEAR student and knows all the practicalities of studying here. Martine also takes care of the rental of BEAR equipment.

Working days:
Tuesday and Friday mornings
m.vanlubeek@artez.nl

General BEAR Meetings

These happen twice a year between tutors. Feedback from student representative meetings will be discussed there.

Important Links

Many of these resources have been mentioned above. For ease of reference please find them listed here and continue to add related links for further learning:

If viewing the printed version, you will find these documents available at ArtEZ intranet.

TOGETHER IN SOLIDARITY

Student Charter (students)

Terms and conditions of ArtEZ (students)

Regulations for complaints and reports of undesirable behaviour

Confidential Counselors (students)

Code of Conduct (tutors and staff)

Confidential Counselors (tutors and staff)

Social Safety at ArtEZ

Statement on Social Safety in Art Education

Creating Futures Together – Institutional Plan from ArtEZ 2022–2026

BEAR

ArtEZ University
of the Arts

September, 2025