

Aalto University Student Union's (AYY) Safer Space Policy

Approved at the meeting of the Board on 21 Jan 2021

Introduction

A safer space is a policy that aims to create an equal and comfortable place for everyone to study, work and spend time. According to AYY's policy paper: *"The interests of current and future students must be realised regardless of their nationality, gender, sexuality, religious or political beliefs, or any other personal matter. The purpose of promoting equality is to ensure that everyone will have an equal opportunity to enjoy the best student life in the world offered by AYY."*

The purpose of this document is to provide policies for a safer operating environment and to make sure that everyone can feel safe and be themselves when acting in the Aalto community.

All those involved in AYY's activities must consider the following:

AYY's events have zero tolerance for all forms of harassment, sexism, racism, bullying and discrimination. In addition to major gestures and issues, harassment can also include minor practices. Harassment may include verbal harassment, touching or staring. If someone asks a person to stop harassing behaviour, they must stop. We want everyone to be able to participate in the activities as themselves and feel safe.

- If you see or experience inappropriate conduct, you have the right to intervene in the situation. If you wish, you can also get in touch with AYY's harassment contact persons or advise the person to get in touch.
- If you are criticised for your own actions, please have a constructive attitude.
- Remember the shared responsibility of the community to make our environment safe for all.
- Consider and respect the boundaries of others. Everyone's identity is determined by themselves, and no one's gender, sexual or political orientation, or nationality can be deduced from their appearance.
- Strive to identify and acknowledge your own privileges. Privileges are affected by differences in how people are viewed and treated by the surrounding world and society, arising from their individual backgrounds. The factors that contribute to these differences are (whether a person wants it or not) often linked to an individual's identity, which can consist of issues such as skin colour, socioeconomic background, gender, sexual orientation, language, state of health and religion
- Respect others and strive to take into account the diversity of the community and the diversity of individuals. Avoid making assumptions about others, as you cannot know the experiences, thoughts, life situation, or self-defined identity of others. However, we tend to make assumptions about others and therefore we should try to be aware of our own assumptions.
- Give space to others and make sure everyone is heard and involved. Accept the fact that not everyone wants to be the centre of attention, and that there are many ways to participate.
- Pay attention to the people around you. Care about how they are doing, how they are feeling, and how your words and actions affect them.
- Respect the physical and mental integrity of others. No means no; do not harass anyone verbally, or by touching or staring.

- Do not pressure anyone to use alcohol or other substances.
- Contribute to a positive atmosphere through your own actions.

This document will be updated by decision of the AYY Board if necessary.