

Meaning and responsibility

A shared conceptual framework is a fundamental first step for solving problems. There is general agreement on the meaning of social safety. Yet, how exactly this functions in practice – who needs to act, how and when - is unclear for many. While this is problematic, this particular issue is relatively easy to tackle in communication and with training.

Staff and students emphasized that social safety is a ‘feeling’.



empathetic culture



support each other



lend a helping hand



freedom



being able to be oneself

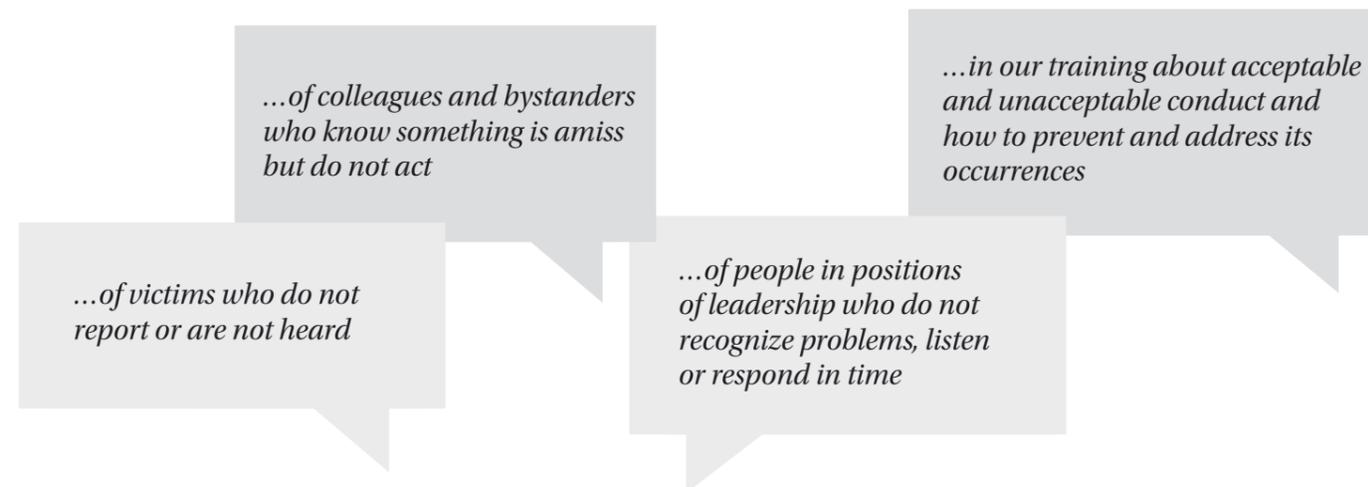


respect

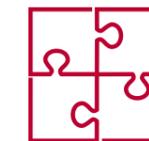
Problem analysis and recommendations of the Social Safety Taskforce: ‘Breaking the silences’

January 2021

Silences...



Recommendations



Social safety expertise team



Periodic social safety self-evaluation



Awareness campaign

Manifestations of feeling unsafe

Different and overlapping forms of transgressive behaviour occur in academic institutions, including within the UvA.

1. Academic sabotage
2. Sexual harassment
3. Physical or verbal harassment
4. Belittling and micro-aggressions
5. Exclusion

- Incidents are not always clear cut for victims and bystanders. There is often a large grey area in which a border may or may not have been crossed at any given time.
- Incidents are rarely isolated but structurally linked to various forms of intimidation.

In its final report, the Task Force addresses everyone who studies or works at the UvA. It is a call to break the silences surrounding transgressive behaviour. Knowledge flourishes in creativity, debate and experimentation – not fear. An environment in which you help and support each other is essential in this.

With the report the Taskforce aims to empower students and PhD candidates, support and scientific staff, academic leaders and administrators to break the silences and to act proactively within their own roles and capabilities.

Read more about the Taskforce Social Safety



Scan the QR-code for more information

Causes of social safety

Power relations and hierarchy

Do you feel psychologically safe to say something in case of unequal power relations?

The social safety system

Where can one go and what will be done with a complaint?

Diversity and structural inequality

Do you feel heard?

Solutions and measures

Staff and students proposed various solutions to improve social safety. In the report of the Taskforce the recommended measures and solutions are categorized in four domains:

1. Strengthening the organization and prevention
2. Monitor and signal
3. Physical and online environment
4. Perceptions of the social safety system

