

Study Association of Psychology Labyrinth

Policy Confidential Contact Persons



May 2023

General

Study Association of Psychology Labyrinth bears the responsibility of providing a healthy and safe environment for her members. Unfortunately, it sometimes happens that someone may find themselves in an unpleasant situation - at a Labyrinth activity or outside of it - and feel very uncomfortable about it. That person may not be able or willing to talk about it with friends or fellow students but would like to vent or get help. In April 2023, Labyrinth therefore appointed her first two Confidential Contact Persons. These individuals are the first point of contact within Labyrinth for anyone who is in an unpleasant situation or has experienced something unpleasant and wants to talk about it. The Confidential Contact Person is not a confidant and therefore does not guide the reporter during the whole process, but only during an initial conversation. The Confidential Contact Person can, however, refer someone to a confidential advisor at the University or other support organizations. This policy establishes a number of important issues regarding the confidential contact persons within Labyrinth.

1. Framework for the Confidential Contact Person (CCP)

The CCP is the point of contact within Labyrinth for anyone who has encountered inappropriate behavior or who wishes to discuss an incident in confidence.

1. The CCP:

- offers support, guidance and advice and arranges aftercare if necessary.
- provides information on what steps someone seeking support can take to resolve the problem (such as filing a formal complaint or referring to professional advisors within or outside the University).

2. Principles

The CCP is bound by confidentiality. The conversations held by the CCP are confidential. What a person discusses with the CCP cannot be shared with other members of the association without explicit permission.

Only in exceptional situations, when there are greater interests at stake, may the CCP break their duty of confidentiality against the reporter's will (for example: in the case of a serious criminal offense or in the case of a very unsafe situation). The reporter will always be informed of this.

The CCP may consult internal or external confidants of the University in serious situations or incidents. These internal or external confidants are usually well-trained professionals who work part-time or full-time as confidants.

The CCP is easily accessible, visible and can be contacted via email.

The Labyrinth board ensures that the role of the CCP is known to members of the association by providing verbal and written information (+ photo) about the role of the CCP at the start of student membership and throughout the year.

3. Data Protection

The CCP ensures careful and secure storage of information about reports. This information will be stored for no longer than necessary to complete a case and will then be destroyed.

The CCP ensures that the privacy of all parties involved is protected at all times. The accused person also has the right to confidentiality (to the extent possible) and respectful treatment.

2. What is unwanted behavior?

When a person views the actions/behavior of another as undesirable and suffers emotionally or physically as a result of the behavior, that behavior is considered "undesirable behavior. A person may or may not be aware that they are hurting, offending or get another person into trouble.

There are different forms of undesirable behavior, such as bullying, (sexual) harassment, aggression and discrimination. These forms can stand alone, but also often occur together. For example, someone may bully another person through harassment, aggression and/or discriminatory remarks.

What is bullying?

Bullying refers to forms of degrading behavior of a structural nature by one or more persons directed against another person or against a group that cannot defend itself against this behavior. An important element is the repetition of this type of behavior over time. Thus, bullying is not a one-time behavior. This behavior manifests itself in a variety of ways, such as through words, gestures, and actions. Often the perpetrator's goal is to intentionally hurt and humiliate another person.

For example, by:

- Socially isolating: silencing someone, ignoring or showing emphatic contempt.
- Making someone's job difficult: constantly giving them the worthless jobs, deleting files their PC, not providing relevant information, putting a wet sponge on their chair, and so on.
- Mocking: because of appearance, behavior, way of speaking, different lifestyle.
- Gossiping: consistently talking negatively about someone.
- Constantly insulting and ridiculing the same person.

Usually there are bystanders who witness this behavior. Some of them may be afraid of the perpetrator(s) and might join in or laugh along with the bully. Others may want nothing to do with the bullying and will try to avoid the problem. Finally, there may be people who want to say something but don't know how.

What is aggression?

When a person is physically or verbally (mentally) harassed, threatened or attacked, we define this as aggression. Aggression causes a negative, unsafe atmosphere within the association. Examples of verbal aggression include: insulting and threatening, making intimidating remarks or consistently putting enormous pressure on someone. Physical forms of aggression include kicking and hitting.

What is sexual harassment?

Sexual harassment refers to all forms of sexually explicit verbal, nonverbal or physical behavior. This behavior is perceived as unwanted and unpleasant by the person subjected to it. The sexually harassing behavior may be intentional or unintentional. Sexual harassment ranges from asking inappropriate intimate questions about one's private life, repeated invitations to sexual acts, making suggestive or offensive comments, stalking, and groping to sexual assault and rape.

What is racism and discrimination?

Racism is a form of prejudice that assumes that members of racial groups have distinctive characteristics and that these differences cause some racial groups to be inferior to others. Racism generally includes negative emotional reactions to members of the group, negative stereotypes and racial discrimination against individuals; in some cases, it leads to violence.

Discrimination refers to the different treatment of members of different ethnic, religious, or other groups. Discrimination is usually the behavioral expression of prejudice and therefore involves negative, hostile, and hurtful treatment of members of rejected groups.

3. Practicalities for the CCP at Labyrinth.

1. Who are the Confidential Contact Persons?

Within Labyrinth, there are two Confidential Contact Persons. The board aims to always have one person from the Advisory Board and another member as CCP. These CCPs have an appointment for at least one year, but preferably longer and for a maximum of three years.

When one of the CCPs quits the position, the board will open applications for a new CCP. The board will choose the new CCP and will announce this at the General Assembly and on Labyrinth's social media channels.

2. Contact

CCPs can be reached by emailing one of the following email addresses: vcp1.labyrinthleiden@gmail.com and vcp2.labyrinthleiden@gmail.com. The website, among others, will show which of the two CCPs manages which e-mail address.

The CCP should always send a response to such an e-mail within 48 hours.

If the person wishing to engage a CCP does not have a preference for one of the two CCPs, it is helpful if the person indicates this in the initial email to the CCP. In this way, the burden on the CCPs can be better distributed.

3. Visibility of the CCPs

To make it known to all members who Labyrinth's CCPs are, they are posted on the website with an introductory text, a photo, and the email address. A message is also posted via Instagram highlighting new CCPs also with a photo. Furthermore, CCPs are featured with their photo in the highlights on Labyrinth's Instagram page.

The Labyrinth board will ensure that the previously posted Instagram message is put in the Instagram story four times a year. The board will also ask the administrators of the Instagram accounts of Leiden Social Sciences and Leiden Psychology to post the message several times in their stories.

Furthermore, the CCPs will be featured in Labyrinth's monthly newsletter. Finally, the board will mention the CCPs during the first committee meetings.

4. Training for the CCPs

Labyrinth's CCPs need to be well versed in how to perform their function, how to conduct confidential interviews, how best to report and to whom to refer. For this reason, a new CCP must attend at least one training course on the job. For example, every year the Study Association Deliberation Platform (StOP) organizes a training for confidential contact persons of study associations. This free training is given by Winston & Partners; Leiden University's confidential contact persons for undesirable behavior also come from this company.

If the CCPs have the time, they are warmly encouraged to attend multiple training sessions.

5. Contact with the board

The CCPs are expected to have regular contact with each other about the function, naturally without discussing the exact content of reports and without violating the anonymity of the reports. In addition, the CCPs will have two contact persons from the board each year, with whom they will schedule a meeting at least every six months. These meetings serve two purposes:

1. Report to the board:

The CCPs discuss with the contact persons from the board if there are things that stand out in the conversations/contact they have with students. This is intended to keep the board informed if, for example, there are many reports of the same nature about behavior at Labyrinth activities. The anonymity of the reports will also not be violated in this process.

2. Improve function:

Because CCPs learn how best to proceed while performing their duties, it is helpful if they share this information with each other and the board. They are also expected to continue thinking about how to improve the function of CCP in general.