



KONINKLIJKE NEDERLANDSE AKADEMIE VAN WETENSCHAPPEN

Academy policy: Code of Personal Behaviour

This Code replaces the Academy's Unacceptable Behaviour Complaints Scheme, which dates from 1996. The old scheme no longer satisfies current requirements and the Academy also wishes to better communicate its policy in this area and to advocate the following view.

- The Academy is committed to offering its employees a socially safe working environment and does not tolerate any undesirable behaviour on the part of employees towards other employees.
- Undesirable behaviour spoils the atmosphere in the workplace and can be detrimental to the health, self-confidence and performance of employees and therefore to the quality of their work.
- The Academy attaches great importance to respectful interaction between employees and their supervisors. It regards itself as responsible for creating a working environment in which employees can perform to their best ability.

The Code is only one of the Academy's policy measures. Its aim is to create an organisational culture in which it can be taken for granted that supervisors will display good leadership and that every employee working at one of the institutes or the Academy Bureau will make an active personal contribution (i.e. act as good employees), not only by monitoring their own behaviour, but also by being vigilant with regard to any form of undesirable behaviour observed in their own work situation or beyond. Undesirable behaviour should always be raised for discussion, either by addressing those involved directly or by engaging third parties.

The Academy's policy aims to prevent and combat undesirable behaviour. A comprehensive policy of this kind is part of an employer's duty of care in its efforts to achieve an ideal (safe) working environment. The Academy wishes to protect its employees against threats to their integrity by making it clear, both orally and in writing, what behaviour is expected of them.

It is important to have an accessible, prudent and accurate procedure for dealing with reports of such behaviour or with official complaints. The following basic principles apply in this context.

- 1 The option of reporting undesirable behaviour or filing a complaint about such behaviour should be easily accessible to everyone.
- 2 Employees are entitled to expect that their reports/complaints will be dealt with conscientiously, objectively and confidentially. Employees are entitled to expect their interests to be considered with due care. The starting point for investigating a report is behaviour that an employee considers undesirable.
- 5 After a complaint has been deemed valid, appropriate disciplinary action will be taken if necessary.

The Academy Code of Personal Behaviour makes an explicit distinction between reporting undesirable behaviour and submitting a complaint to the Academy's Personal Behaviour Complaints Committee.

Reporting and discussing undesirable behaviour

If employees are unable to put a stop to the undesirable behaviour themselves or to have it stopped, they can turn to one of the external confidential counsellors (unofficial phase) or to one of the internal confidential contact persons if the relevant institute has appointed one. Employees may also speak to the institute's management and/or their supervisor directly (along with or in the presence of the institute's



P&O adviser, if they so desire). It can be very effective to talk to a supervisor, for example if another employee is to blame for the undesirable behaviour. The supervisor can put a swift end to the behaviour in that case. That is otherwise if the supervisor is the one who is guilty of undesirable behaviour. In such a situation, it may be possible to approach the supervisor's direct superior, or it may be more appropriate to call in a confidential counsellor. At this stage, no complaint has been made, and no complainant or defendant has been identified. That will only be the case if a complaint is submitted to the Academy's Personal Behaviour Complaints Committee. One advantage of proceeding in the above manner is that it avoids a more official procedure (for the time being).

It is always appropriate to explore whether the parties can resolve the problem and to consider whether, to what extent, and under which circumstances employees will be able to resume working (with one another). It is very important to resolve the problem and, on that basis, to work on building a more harmonious work relationship, where necessary with expert support or guidance.

Submitting a complaint

Occasionally, a complaint is too serious or, in less serious cases, the parties may find it impossible to talk to each other, whether or not through the intervention of a third party – an internal/external intermediary or a mediator – with a view to finding a solution. In that case, a complaint may be submitted to the Academy's external Personal Behaviour Complaints Committee, either directly or through a confidential counsellor. An expert complaints committee will then conduct an independent external investigation into the events leading to the complaint. The competent authority may then introduce measures based on the recommendations of the complaints committee.

The external agency Berenschot serves as the Academy's complaints committee.