CODE OF CONDUCT

Introduction

Welcome to the Code of Conduct for the Gerrit Rietveld Academie (GRA), which covers both the Rietveld Academie and the Sandberg Instituut and applies to both students and staff. This document describes the vision we as a GRA community pursue and the rules to be followed to ensure everyone's social safety. The purpose of this document is twofold: first, to outline and guide a culture of responsibility and care, and second, to refer you to support when needed. On the following pages you will find:

1. Principles

The GRA endorses and acts upon the 20 May 2021 statement of the arts education sector in the Netherlands KUO:

- In art education, everyone should be able to work and study in a good and professional atmosphere that is safe and transparent, both in teaching and research. It is crystal clear that undesirable behaviour, such as bullying, discrimination, (sexual) harassment, aggression, violence and other forms of transgressive behaviour, is unacceptable and must be prevented.

- In addition to prevention, arts education works towards other goals that contribute to strengthening a healthy and respectful culture within arts education. Important pillars are that every signal is followed up and that there is never looked away, but action is always taken. Furthermore, it is crucial that students and staff can and dare call each other to account for behaviour. Besides, a precondition is also that there are clear places to make complaints and objections known.

- Art education is a form of education that focuses not only on subject-related development, but also on personal development. Here, physical and mental proximity plays a major role. This is both a great quality of art education and also a vulnerability that we as a sector are aware of. There are relatively many individual forms of education and intensive cooperation between student and teacher and among students. This makes it all the more necessary to pay attention to social safety.

2. Vision

This code of conduct is intended as a guide and framework for creating an institution that is socially safe, joyful and meaningful for everyone. The Gerrit Rietveld Academie strives to provide an open environment, one that encourages deep conversations and creates space for all members to reflect, change their minds and grow as human beings and artists. We hope to encourage an inquisitive and curious mind while supporting each other and respecting each other's boundaries. Respect, care, equity, solidarity and safety are our basic values.

We take into account the specific challenges of an art education. During the artistic process, we dive into our personal history, traverse emotional themes and reflect on philosophical and political questions. In our practice, we sometimes share intimate parts of our reality and thinking. As stimulating and satisfying as it is to have the opportunity to share our 'authentic' selves with each other, it also creates vulnerability. Therefore, it is extremely important that we have a robust understanding of social safety and develop skills in respecting each other's emotional labour and interpersonal boundaries.

This code of conduct should benefit everyone in the academy, and in particular people with marginalised identities, including (but not limited to) people of colour, queer and neurodiverse persons. It should be fostered through an active cultivation of self-awareness and humility, which is necessary to understand the impact our behaviour has on each other and on the environment we create together. We recognise that our identities do not limit or define us and that we have more power in some contexts than others.

We aim to create a culture focused on the growth and development of the individual (staff and students) and a safer and friendlier culture in the academy. We strive to be self-aware and self-critical so that we can change for the better. We should try to express our views in a nuanced way and be open to the possibility that we need to adjust our opinions and perspectives. We strive to create space for generosity and forgiveness where necessary. At the same time, we accept that there are certain boundaries that should not be crossed. With all this in mind, we try to adopt an open and curious attitude when deconstructing systemic power and reflect on how power reproduces itself in the pattern of everyday actions and interactions.

We aim to think and communicate collectively about what it means to be an ally. This includes thinking collectively about how we can actively protect people with marginalised identities. It also means thinking about what it means to be aware of your own position and make space for others. We recognise that difficult situations arise where we do not always have the skills to do what is needed.

In this respect, we want to be an institution that supports each other's learning journey and seeks appropriate training. We want to learn to redirect from shame to support. When we find ourselves in challenging situations, it sometimes means taking a step back, slowing down or pausing and listening. We also recognise that people learn at different speeds and learning styles. Our upbringing, neurodivergences, past experiences and current circumstances all shape our ability to process in the moment and determine the speed at which we can learn and unlearn.

We believe in the power of art and each other to work together to create a socially safe environment for all.

3. Wanted and unwanted behaviour[1]

The GRA stands for a safe study and working environment, in which standards of behaviour apply. Discrimination, (sexual) harassment, (micro-)aggression and violence, bullying, gossiping and spreading rumours, substance abuse, theft and fraud are obviously not part of this. What we mean by this is stated in the following paragraphs.

Discrimination and other forms of intolerance
Discriminatory beliefs, systems and behaviours are based on stereotypes, prejudice and fear. Examples include unjust or adverse treatment of different categories/identities of people, based on race, ethnic and/or cultural background, religious background, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, disability, age, class, physical and/or mental differences and/or (chronic) illness. A specific and more systematic form of discrimination is racism. The academy does not tolerate racist, Islamophobic, anti-Semitic, sexist, ageist, ableist, classist, xenophobic, transphobic, homophobic, biphobic, fatphobic or other oppressive behaviour, language and stereotyping.

Harassment
Harassment (psychological aggression) refers to the application of psychological pressure, usually from a hierarchical position; there is then an abuse of power. It may involve verbal, non-verbal and/or physical behaviour that has the purpose or effect of affecting someone's dignity.

Sexual harassment
Sexual harassment is behaviour with sexual overtones that creates a threatening, hostile, insulting, humiliating or offensive situation. This includes: verbal behaviour (such as sexually charged jokes, sexist comments, emails and displaying sexually charged images), non-verbal behaviour (such as staring at certain body parts, facial expressions) and physical behaviour (such as unnecessary and unwanted touching, standing explicitly close behind or near someone, forcing sexual services and/or favours, sexual assault and rape).

Aggression or violence
Aggression and violence refers to all verbal and physical acts in which a person is physically and/or verbally attacked or threatened.

Microaggression

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[1] For a more comprehensive list of terms, see the annex to this document.

Microaggression refers to comments or actions people make based on stereotypes and prejudices. These can be subtle insults, hostilities or insensitive remarks. Microaggression can take the form of a 'joke' or a 'compliment' that highlights identity differences in a negative way. The damage that microaggression causes is often unintentional and in most cases needs to be repaired through self-reflection, apologies and space for growth. In some cases, people disguise aggressive behaviour as microaggression, for example by deliberately telling a harmful joke or making a 'subtle' insult to test the limits of what they can get away with, in which case aggression or bullying is involved.

Bullying
Bullying is repeated unwanted negative behaviour against which someone cannot defend themself. This can be a (combination of) verbal, non-verbal or physical behaviour. Examples include ignoring, silencing or deliberately excluding someone, gossiping, making nasty and belittling remarks, deliberately giving meaningless tasks or assignments. Cyberbullying is also bullying and includes (but is not limited to) hurtful, intimidating and defamatory statements online, publicly or privately.

Gossiping and spreading rumours
Gossiping is talking about someone behind their back in a way that is derogatory to them. Spreading rumours is spreading often incorrect information, based on misinformation or assumptions based on limited knowledge and perceptions. Gossiping and spreading rumours can not only be harmful to the person being talked about, but can also damage trust and create barriers to communication with others in the same environment. The academy encourages all its members to raise issues respectfully directly with the person if they feel safe enough to do so.

Substance use and abuse
The use of substances such as drugs or alcohol can adversely affect work performance and endanger one's own safety and that of others. Drug use is never permitted. It is also important to note that smoking is not permitted on school premises. Alcohol should only be consumed at appropriate times, such as social gatherings.

Fraud and theft
Fraud and theft will obviously not be tolerated. We expect everyone to handle the resources of the academy with care. This includes both tangible resources (equipment, rooms) and intangible resources (time). In addition, everyone handles data/information correctly and honestly, and with respect for another person's (intellectual property). Theft of someone's

intellectual property, such as an artwork or plagiarism of someone else's thesis, inside or outside the academy, is not allowed.

<u>Intimate relationships</u>
If a (voluntary and mutual) relationship of a personal and/or intimate nature arises between an employee/teacher and an (adult) student, the employee will inform his/her/their supervisor immediately.

A relationship of a personal and/or intimate nature between an employee/teacher and an underage student is inadmissible under all circumstances. This naturally also applies to a relationship with an adult student if it is of an involuntary and non-reciprocal nature.

If a relationship of an intimate nature arises between employees, this shall be reported to the supervisor as soon as possible.

4. What can you do?

What can you do if you are a student or staff member experiencing or witnessing inadmissible behaviour such as discrimination, aggression, (sexual) harassment and bullying? Or maybe you have experienced something hurtful or inappropriate, or something else negative, unpleasant or confusing and need help and guidance on what to do next?

The GRA has a large network of support available to all staff and students, ranging from people who offer a listening ear, mediators to help with (de-escalating) conflicts and agencies who can help investigate a complaint.

In most cases, the first step is a conversation with a confidential advisor (internal or external) who can help you access other resources and guide you through each option.

Our website lists the people and agencies you can contact. Please note that you can report something anonymously, but the academy cannot take action on your behalf if you remain anonymous.

5. What happens to your report or complaint?

So you have reported something or complained about something? What happens next depends on the nature of your report or complaint. Initially, you will receive an acknowledgement of receipt of your report or complaint, followed by communication about what happens next. Repair often (but not always) starts with a conversation, and if necessary, mediation will be offered. In case you file a complaint with the complaints committee, it will advise whether there should be consequences and what they should be (more information can be found here).

The working method of the confidants and the ombuds officer are on the website. You will also find the working method of the GRA on the website.

In accordance with the CAO HBO or other applicable regulations, such as the Higher Education and Scientific Research Act (WHW), the GRA may take appropriate measures if this code of conduct is violated.

Behaviour, which is/can be a criminal offence, will be reported to the police and reported to the confidential inspector of the Higher Education Inspectorate and to the police, in accordance with the duty arising from the WHW.

6. Inclusive and accessible language

The academy strives to create an inclusive, supportive environment for all people, regardless of their differences. It is our responsibility to infuse this spirit of inclusion into every text, publication and direct (spoken) communication with each other. This means using vocabulary that avoids exclusion and stereotyping and is free of descriptions that portray individuals or groups of people as dependent, powerless or less valued than others. All sexist, racist, ableist or other discriminatory terminology is avoided.

Some guiding principles:
- Disability or identity: the person themself should always be the focus, not a disability. Do not reduce a person to only his/her/their identity.
- Gender: use gender-inclusive terms instead of distinguishing by gender. For example, use 'people' or someone's name instead of sir/madam/girl. Also respect the pronouns that people identify with. Remember that transgender people (like non-binary people) can identify with they/them, as well as she/them and/or he/them.
- Racial identity: words like 'minority' or 'vulnerable' (groups) are increasingly outdated because they further stigmatise people and groups. It is better to use 'people/person of colour' instead of 'a member of a racial or marginalised group'. Also capitalise names of nationalities, peoples and races: Black, Indigenous, Asian, Latin American, Caribbean.
- Sexual identity and diversity: use sexual orientation, not sexual preference. Queer is an increasingly accepted and used term among LGBTIQA+ persons themselves. However, keep in mind that in terms of language, sexual identity is also a matter of self-identification. Stay close to what someone identifies themself with.

Colophon

Work on the Code of Conduct was started in 2021-2022 by researcher Afiah Vijlbrief and taken forward in 2022-2023 by Ayesha Ghanchi and Belinda Bantje in consultation with members of the GRA community, including students, staff and management. This vision statement was written as a result of discussions with students and staff during our consultation process. In this sense, the 'we' referred to in this statement is a reference to the many voices from all parts of the academy.

Annex I. Glossary

Ally
Being an ally means actively acknowledging one's privileges (see privilege versus oppression), giving space to others, educating yourself, accepting feedback and actively speaking out when you see something happening, for example sexist behaviour. In a social justice context, this metaphorically means being 'behind' a marginalised group of people, such as showing support and acknowledging power differences.

Example
For example, when a woman of colour is the only person of colour in the room, white colleagues (whether men, women or other genders) are aware of their position, give these women space and insist on getting more racial (and other) groups to the table.

Call-Out versus Call-In
Calling someone out means directly denouncing something he or she has done or said, usually in public with the intention of demonstrating that person's misconduct to others. This misconduct is unacceptable, will not be tolerated and/or is harmful. In contrast, the Call-In is generally done privately, requires more patience and may involve a situation where understanding differences can be explored. In a Call-In, you are focused on reflection rather than reaction.

Example
- Call-Out: publicly address someone for behaviour that could be seen as sexually harassing, racism, homophobia or other forms of bigotry that are unacceptable.
- Call-In: engaging with the person and ensuring that he or she changes the problematic behaviour by talking through and explaining the misconduct with compassion and patience. In other words, with a Call-In, you invest in someone's learning and hold them accountable at the same time.

Remember, it is good to think about how and when we apply a Call-Out in case of oppression. When 'calling out', we must also ensure that there is enough space for the victim to express emotions and experience(s). Otherwise, too much emphasis will be placed on the perpetrator.

CIS gender versus transgender
Gender identity represents a person's deepest concept of their own sex. This can be the same or different from the sex assigned at birth. Traditionally, Western concepts of gender have been binary, categorised as 'female' or 'male'. Nowadays, there seems to be more room for other genders that transcend

the binary definition, such as both female and male, neither or mixed. People who identify with the gender they were assigned at birth are called CIS gender. Those who identify themselves, on the other hand, are called transgender. This in itself makes transgender an umbrella term for people whose gender identity and expression(s) do not match socio-cultural expectations. There are many variations of both binary and non-binary transgender people. Remember that gender is a matter (and process) of self-identification. Moreover, being trans does not imply a specific sexual orientation.

Consent
There are many types of consent that need to be expressed and understood within an art academy context. We often hear of the term 'consent' when it comes to sexual relationships, but the concept of consent applies more broadly at the academy, when it comes to giving permission for each other's use of stories, ideas or images and voice in each other's work. Especially since the academy is a place where ideas and personal stories are exchanged and where people often appear in each other's work. Consent is an individual's permission for a particular action to take place. We speak of mutual consent because both parties must explicitly consent to any action being taken. Note that if someone does not explicitly say 'no', it does not automatically mean 'yes' – silence does not mean consent.

No reproduction of another student's image, voice or story should be used in anyone's work without explicit consent.

If a student uses partial or full nudity in his/her/their work, and especially if this work involves physically touching others, there must be an agreement of consent.

Discrimination and racism
Discrimination and racism are often used together and sometimes even interchangeably. However, there is an important distinction.
Discrimination is the unfair or unequal treatment of people based on personal characteristics that do not matter in the specific situation. Racism is a specific form of discrimination and goes deeper into a more systemic level based on race. As such, racism is best understood as the discrimination, marginalisation and oppression of people of colour based on a socially constructed racial hierarchy that favours white people. Therefore, racism perpetuates inequality, oppression and disadvantage of people of colour.

Example
   - An example of discrimination is denying a flat to someone in a wheelchair or denying membership of a

sports centre to someone based on his/her/their homosexuality.
- Racism is a daily, everywhere and ever-present reality. It is ubiquitous, both consciously and unconsciously. For example, being scolded based on your skin colour or imitating a Southeast Asian person by doing an accent. Another example of racism is attributing different traits to different races, such as coloured people being less developed and poorer, while white people are smarter and richer.

Equality versus equity
Equality means giving each individual or group of people the same resources or opportunities. Equity recognises that each person has different circumstances and allocates exactly the resources and opportunities needed to achieve an equal outcome. A term increasingly used alongside equality is 'equipollence', which has more or less a similar meaning.

Example
If we gave a rich person and a poor person €1000 each, this would be equal (it would come across as 'equality'), because they would both get the same amount of money. However, if we give the rich person €1000 and the poor person €2500, we can say that we are trying to achieve equality by 'fairly' giving the poor person more resources based on their financial situation, because the starting point of both people is different to begin with. This same notion of equity applies to disadvantaged groups of people.

Inadmissible behaviour
Inadmissible behaviour refers to behaviour that is absolutely unacceptable and crosses personal boundaries. Since personal boundaries can be subjective in nature, it refers to behaviour that we collectively know should not be. It is therefore also highly context-specific and changes over time. However, we can say that impermissible behaviour is; (sexual) harassment, denigration, threatening, bullying, aggression & violence (directed at another), abuse of power, and -isms (including racism and discrimination).

Intersectionality
Intersectionality is a concept and a lens through which we can understand social relations and hierarchy. Intersectionality is about the interconnectedness of social categorisation between both visible and invisible identity characteristics such as race, class, sexuality, gender, disability, religion, appearance and age. This theory argues that these intersections are overlapping and interdependent operating systems of discrimination and oppression. As such, it exposes inequality and distribution of power. Intersectionality

applies to all of us because we all experience the intersections of our identities uniquely, whether we are in (a) position(s) of power or not.

Example
Systems of power and oppression affect the following people differently:
- black Muslims (plausible afrophobia/racism and Islamophobia);
- black trans man (plausible afrophobia/racism and transphobia);
- deaf Asian trans woman (ableism, sinophobia/racism and transphobia);
- white poor lesbian woman (plausible homophobia, classism and sexism);
- white older queer man (plausible homophobia and ageism).

Marginalised groups/identities
Marginalised groups or identities include people with stigmatised identities who are usually not represented in positions of power, and if they are in power at all, there is still an unequal power dynamic vis-à-vis others (e.g. people of colour vs white people, queer vs non-queer, women vs men). This means they are underrepresented in several areas, such as research, politics, media and language.

Example
Examples of marginalised groups include women, people with disabilities, queer people (LGBTIQA+), brown and black people, and people with cognitive disabilities.

Micro-aggressions
Based on stereotypes, prejudices and biases (see 'stereotypes and prejudices' below), people may (unintentionally) engage in micro-aggressions towards someone from a marginalised group. These may include subtle insults, hostilities, insensitive remarks or general rude behaviour. Sometimes even with the intention as a 'joke' or 'compliment', seen from a normative perspective. As such, one is "treated differently". Micro-aggressions highlight identity differences in a negative way.

Remember, micro-aggressions can be a form of racism or discrimination at both the macro (institutional) level and the micro (individual) level. Rather than being separate, these phenomena are intertwined and one flows from the other. In other words, micro-aggressions can be seen as symptoms of larger oppressive systems.

Examples
▪ 'Wow you speak Dutch very well.' – assuming a person of colour has little or no command of the Dutch language;

▪ 'Where are you actually from?' – assuming that someone has no right to be Dutch as well and emphasising his/her/their 'otherness';
▪ 'You are quite beautiful for a black woman.' – stating that being black is not normally beautiful when measured against white beauty standards;
▪ 'That's such a difficult name, I won't even try to remember it.' – making non-Western (sounding) names inferior and may be seen as a lack of interest or respect. If you hear this over and over again, it may even eventually affect your self-esteem and self-image.

Perpetrator versus victim
An offender can be someone who has committed a criminal offence, but it can also be an individual or a group of people who cross moral and ethical boundaries. On the other side of the line, people targeted by these perpetrators are victims. Note, however, that there are often no clear black-and-white situations, but rather a grey area where, for example, the perpetrator also feels like a victim.

Example
A person might make hate speech on an online platform regarding refugees by posting xenophobic (e.g. racist and perhaps Islamophobic) comments. In this way, refugees are dehumanised and victimised.

In today's society, it is quite easy to attack someone online, so there is often little to no space for victims to speak out (or defend themselves).

Remember that while we can talk about victimisation in a broader sense (for example, in terms of racism and how it negatively affects people of colour), someone may not call themself a victim because he/her/they do not experience a situation as such. Moreover, someone may be a victim in one case and a perpetrator in another and vice versa.

Phobias & -isms
Phobias & -isms include all discriminatory beliefs, systems and behaviours based on stereotypes, prejudice and fear. There are several phobias & -isms among them: racism, anti-Semitism, transphobia, fatphobia, xenophobia, ageism, ableism, etc.

Privilege versus oppression
Talking about privilege means talking about power. Power is best understood as the ability to decide who has access to resources; the ability to direct or influence the behaviour of others, yourself and/or the course of events. Privilege represents the undeserved access to these resources that is only readily available to some people as a result of their

privileged social group membership. Oppression, on the other hand, is a system that maintains advantages and disadvantages based on social group memberships and operates, intentionally and unintentionally, at individual, institutional and cultural levels.

Example
One example is white privilege. This is the advantage white people have in getting a job, going to college, getting good healthcare, etc.

Note: someone can have a stigmatised/marginalised identity but still have (some) privilege over others within the same marginalised group. For example, a black woman with a master's degree and a high-status job is likely to enjoy more privileges than a black woman with low social status and no education (= intersectionality). It also goes the other way. For example, a white man living in poverty (e.g. poor housing, healthcare and working conditions) is less advantaged compared to a white man with a middle income.

Queer
Today, the term queer is becoming increasingly mainstream and many LGBTIQA+ people identify as such, where previously it was used mostly in activist (and sometimes academic) circles. Queer can be understood as an umbrella term that stands for breaking normative and binary views on sexuality (and gender). Queer refers to an open and broad sexual (and gender) identity and as such does not identify with a fixed sexuality (or gender).

Stereotypes and prejudices
Stereotypes are exaggerated and unsubtle statements, thoughts and ideas about certain groups of people. They can be positive or negative. Prejudices relate to negative attitudes and feelings towards a certain group of people (affective, emotional).

Note: Both stereotypes and prejudice usually happen unconsciously and are both important predictors of discrimination and racism. The more you have, the more likely you are to discriminate.

Example
   - A stereotypical image of Moroccan boys is that they would all ride scooters.
   - A prejudice about Moroccan boys is that they all engage in criminal activities. Therefore, people do not trust Moroccan boys.

Structural and institutional racism

Structural racism is the overarching system of racial prejudice in institutions and societies. Institutional racism then refers to organisations, the workplace, organised systems and so on, where racist practices also take place.

Example
Unfair policies that structurally hit people of colour harder. Think of racial profiling by the police, the blackface of Zwarte Piet in the Dutch Sinterklaas tradition or the use of problematic language to dehumanise certain ethnic groups.

Unconscious bias
Stereotypes and prejudice most often form the basis of unconscious bias. Stereotypes and prejudices are confirmed through various cultural and social platforms such as books, papers, film, television, online platforms, video and images; and also language. Stories we tell and listen to interpersonally confirm and perpetuate (existing) stereotypes in our minds. The brain does this to classify and process information. However, it can be quite problematic when this concerns groups of people, where the brain wires false information that then seems to be 'the truth'.