

Code of Conduct

ETHICAL GUIDELINES


ROWKO

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AI has been used to assist in the English translation.

ROTKO's Code of Conduct is an operational guideline governing the operation of the Student Union ROTKO and the tutors of Lapland University of Applied Sciences. The purpose of the Code of Conduct is to serve as a guiding framework that supports activities, inclusiveness and the solving of potential misconduct or inappropriate behaviour. The Code of Conduct applies to all ROTKO representatives, all individuals participating in ROTKO's activities and events, as well as all tutors. The Code of Conduct is continuously applicable in connection with ROTKO's operation and tutoring activities.

The Code of Conduct forms an integral part of ROTKO's operations and values. Its purpose is to establish ethical boundaries for activities, provide clear guidance for addressing problematic situations and create an environment in which everyone can feel equally valued and welcome. With regard to tutoring activities the Code of Conduct also provides more detailed guidance on tutors' ethical conduct specifically from the perspective of tutoring.

Shared rules and principles play a key role in ensuring the comfort, safety and equality of all individuals participating in activities. The Code of Conduct is based on Finnish legislation, which establishes the strictest framework governing these activities.

“No one shall, without an acceptable reason, be treated differently on the basis of gender, age, origin, language, religion, belief, opinion, health, disability, or any other personal characteristic.” Constitution of Finland, Section 6 5th of November 2025.

“No one shall be discriminated against on the basis of age, origin, nationality, language, religion, belief, opinion, political activity, trade union activity, family relationships, health, disability, sexual orientation, or any other personal characteristic. Discrimination is prohibited regardless of whether it is based on a fact or an assumption concerning the person themselves or another individual.

In addition to direct and indirect discrimination, discrimination as referred to in this Act includes harassment, the denial of reasonable accommodations, and instructions or orders to discriminate.”
Non-Discrimination Act, Section 8 5th of November 2025.

“Direct and indirect discrimination on the basis of gender is prohibited.” Act on Equality between Women and Men, Section 7 5th of November 2025.

DEFINITIONS AND KEY TERMS 5

Every individual is unique and therefore experiences harassment in their own way. What may be the joke of the day for one person can be the most distressing remark of the week for another.

Harassment, discrimination and inappropriate behaviour are often used interchangeably. However, each of these has distinct characteristics.

Harassment includes for example intimidation, belittling or mocking speech, insinuating or malicious messages, questioning a person's position or reputation or repeated threats. Sexual harassment also constitutes harassment. Työsuojelu.fi 5th of November 2025.

Discrimination refers to treating a person less favourably based on a personal characteristic. Discrimination may be direct, indirect or involve the denial of reasonable accommodations. Harassment as well as instructions or orders to discriminate also constitute discrimination. Discrimination may also occur on the basis of assumptions. In cases of multiple discrimination, an individual is discriminated against on more than one prohibited ground. Non-Discrimination Ombudsman 6th of November 2025.

Inappropriate behaviour includes for example name-calling, belittling, inappropriate criticism, ignoring, discrimination, harassment or violations of physical integrity. Employment Lawyers 6th of November 2025.

Sexual harassment refers to verbal, non-verbal, or physical conduct of a sexual nature that is unwanted and that intentionally or effectively violates a person's physical or psychological integrity, in particular by creating an intimidating, degrading, humiliating, offensive or hostile environment. It may manifest for example through sexually suggestive looks or gestures, crude remarks, double-entendre jokes, comments on clothing or body, physical touching, demands or proposals of sexual interaction or sexually suggestive communication. Ombudsman for Equality 6th of November 2025.

Sexual assault is a criminal offence that includes sexual harassment. It refers to an act that violates sexual self-determination and may involve physical acts, acts comparable to physical acts or other forms of conduct. Sexual assault may also include indecent exposure, taking photographs, or displaying or sending images or messages of a sexual nature. Naisten linja 6th of November 2025.

Sexist hate speech is a form of harassment and a criminal offence. It refers to offensive expression or speech that spreads, justifies or incites hatred based on gender. The purpose of sexist hate speech is to belittle another person's abilities or opinions and to humiliate them, causing feelings of vulnerability and fear. Naisten linja 6th of November 2025.

Ableism - Refers to the prevailing societal norm of non-disability as a result of which disability is defined as non-normative and leads to discrimination against persons with disabilities. It is reflected in attitudes and approaches towards them for example by questioning their competence. Finnish National Agency for Education 6th of November 2025.

Accessibility (Accessible content) - Refers to the implementation of communications, services and websites in a way that makes them suitable for everyone. It also includes the atmosphere and attitudes that take human plurality into account. This concept refers to the intangible environment such as services, information, websites and attitudes. Finnish Association of People with Physical Disabilities 6th of November 2025.

Accessibility (Accessible design) - Refers to taking human diversity into account in the planning, implementation and maintenance of the built environment. It is part of equality and signifies quality and safety. It is not limited solely to physical mobility. Accessibility also encompasses communication, hearing, vision and comprehension. Finnish Association of People with Physical Disabilities 6th of November 2025.

Aggression - Refers to an emotion rather than an act. Underlying emotions may include for example, disappointment, anxiety, jealousy, shame or hopelessness. [Mielenterveystalo.fi](https://mielenterveystalo.fi) 6th of November 2025.

Diversity - Refers to differences between people such as age, language, gender, national or ethnic background, health status, beliefs, family situation, work ability, educational background, neurodiversity or values. It also refers to the entirety formed by these differences. [Finnish Centre for Occupational Safety](https://finnishcentreforoccupational.com) 6th of November 2025.

Equality - Refers to the equal value of individuals as human beings. In Finland the term particularly refers to equality between genders. [Seta](https://seta.fi) 6th of November 2025.

Inclusiveness - Refers to an approach that is non-discriminatory and equal and that is welcoming and enables the participation of everyone. Inclusiveness and diversity are closely interconnected. [Finnish Institute of Occupational Health](https://finnishinstituteofoccupationalhealth.com) 6th of November 2025.

Microaggression - Refers to an intentional or unintentional act or comment that reinforces and perpetuates racist or otherwise discriminatory stereotypes while simultaneously othering individuals. A comment or question intended as harmless may be offensive and cumulatively burdensome to the person targeted. [Non-Discrimination Ombudsman](https://non-discriminationombudsman.fi) 6th of November 2025.

Minority Stress - Refers to the strain resulting from encountering prejudices directed at one's minority group. [Mielenterveystalo.fi](https://mielenterveystalo.fi) 6th of November 2025.

Non-Discrimination (Equality) - Refers to a fundamental right based on the Constitution of Finland, whereby people are equal regardless of for example, religion, disability, age, gender, national or ethnic origin, language, skin colour or sexual orientation. [Yhdenvertaisuus.fi](https://yhdenvertaisuus.fi) 6th of November 2025.

Othering - Refers to a process in which certain groups or individuals are perceived as deviating from the norm for example on the basis of gender, skin colour, religion, health status, language or sexual orientation. In othering, the "other" is typically regarded as inferior. [Finnish National Agency for Education](https://finnishnationalagencyforeducation.fi) 6th of November 2025.

Plurality - Refers to similarities and differences among individuals through which each person's unique identity and experiences are shaped. In addition to external factors, plurality is reflected more deeply in ways of thinking and personality. It takes into account invisible characteristics and therefore differs from diversity, which often refers to measurable and visible differences between people. [Oppiko Academy](https://oppikoacademy.fi) 6th of November 2025.

Racism - Refers to the evaluation of a particular group of people as inferior to others based for example, on skin colour, culture, religion, nationality, ethnic origin, or mother tongue. Racism often includes perceiving one's own group as superior to others. Finnish Red Cross 6th of November 2025.

Stereotype - Refers to a generalised belief about a group or an individual belonging to a group. It may be negative or positive but it results in viewing a person in a one-dimensional way preventing equal treatment. Stereotypes may expose individuals to hate speech, bullying and racism. Mannerheim League for Child Welfare 6th of November 2025.

Peer guidance or tutoring refers to guidance and support provided by a fellow student to other students. Acting as a tutor is a position of trust, through which tutors can contribute to a positive atmosphere, support new students in integrating and finding their place within the higher education community, strengthen the sense of community among continuing students and represent Lapland UAS at various events and occasions.

A tutor works in a role of responsibility and is therefore required to complete training. Tutors are members of a team and part of a working community and they are expected to approach tutoring in a professional manner. Tutors are also expected to follow rules and principles similar to those applied in professional working communities. Through training, tutors acquire the competencies needed to act appropriately in different situations. For example tutors must be able to take into account students' diverse backgrounds, characteristics, and needs, act ethically and know how to proceed when concerns arise.

The tutor's role as an influential figure can be compared even to that of teaching staff. Tutors' words and actions are listened to closely. For this reason, it is important that tutors carefully consider in advance the image they present of themselves, of Lapland University of Applied Sciences, its staff and studying in general.

Every student must be given the opportunity to form their own views and opinions. Tutors must rely on accurate information and must not spread rumours. Tutors must also treat all tutored students equally, impartially and fairly.

New students may place a higher level of trust in tutors than in other students and may therefore allow tutors closer emotional or physical proximity than would normally be the case. It is extremely important that tutors are aware of this and ensure that their appearance, gestures, actions or words cannot be interpreted as harassment in any situation. Tutors must pay particular attention to the nature of their interaction with tutored students in various social contexts. In all tutoring activities, discretion and confidentiality must be observed. Matters may not be disclosed without the consent of the person concerned. The duty of confidentiality continues even after the tutoring role has ended.

The tutor's role is indicated by tutor clothing and any other possible designated accessories provided by Lapland UAS. Tutors may for example be provided with a hoodie or a T-shirt to signify their role of responsibility. When wearing tutor clothing or accessories, the tutor's conduct is comparable to working in a professional community and such clothing and accessories are comparable to work attire.

Tutors organise events that allow for alcohol-free participation. Tutor hours may not be collected from events at which a tutor consumes alcohol. Alcohol may not be consumed while wearing tutor clothing or accessories, nor may tutors enter bars or similar licensed premises while wearing such items.

Although tutors are primarily identified by tutor clothing and accessories, it is important to remember that an individual remains a tutor even without them. If a tutor encounters a tutored student while wearing civilian clothing, the tutor should still maintain a professional approach to tutoring.

It is extremely important that new students are informed by tutors at the beginning of the academic term about the tutors' role, responsibilities, duties and tasks. Tutored students must also be informed how to distinguish when a tutor is acting in their official role and when they are in their spare time. It is also recommended to disclose if members of the tutor team know each other exceptionally well or have known each other for a long time, as this may result in particularly informal communication between them. Open discussion can reduce misunderstandings and clarify the tutor's role for all parties.

HARASSMENT CONTACT PERSONS ¹⁵ AND OTHER ACTIVITIES

Everyone has the right to a safe environment free from harassment, discrimination and other forms of inappropriate conduct. This right also applies at Lapland UAS.

A Harassment Contact Person is a support person whom individuals may contact if they themselves experience harassment, discrimination or other inappropriate behaviour, or if they witness a situation in which another person is subjected to such behaviour. Contact may be made in situations involving students as well as situations between a student and a staff member. Harassment Contact Persons are appointed from ROTKO.

Situations involving harassment also include discrimination, bullying and other inappropriate behaviour. If there is reason to suspect that a criminal offence may have occurred, the Harassment Contact Person will advise the individual to file a police report.

For the investigation of issues related to studies, ROTKO has a separate advocacy process. You can familiarise yourself with the study-related advocacy model [**here**](#).

The role of the Harassment Contact Person includes a range of possible responsibilities.

The responsibilities of the Harassment Contact Person include:

- Listening without judgement
- Providing guidance and advice to individuals who have experienced or witnessed harassment, discrimination or other inappropriate behaviour
- Implementing jointly agreed measures to resolve the situation
- Acting as a support person in discussions organised by different operator

Any follow-up actions are always agreed upon together with the reporting individual. The Harassment Contact Person acts in a trustworthy manner and with respect for all individuals involved.

Depending on the situation, the Harassment Contact Person may:

- Discuss the incident with the reporting individual via messaging, telephone, remote connection or in person
- Contact the person accused of harassment and discuss the matter with them
- Arrange a joint meeting for the parties involved to discuss the situation
 - Participate in said meeting as a support person if so requested

- Provide advice and guidance on contacting support services offered by other organisations
- Provide advice and guidance on filing a police report
- Consult other operators or organisations
- Assemble a group of operators to investigate the situation and decide on possible measures, if necessary

The purpose of the Harassment Contact Person system is to provide a low-threshold contact channel for individuals who have experienced harassment themselves or witnessed it.

The Harassment Contact Person provides support so that:

- Individuals do not have to face the situation alone
- Support is available when needed
- Someone explains the available options for addressing the situation
- Someone can provide support when needed
- Someone can refer the matter to another appropriate operator if necessary
- Someone ensures that the matter is addressed

Harassment Contact Persons receive training at the beginning of their term and update their competence through additional training when necessary. A Harassment Contact Person acting at events is not allowed to consume alcohol.

Harassment Contact Persons may be contacted in person, via messaging or in some cases by telephone. Contact details are available on ROTKO's website and in connection with event announcements.

Lapland UAS has established guidelines for situations involving harassment and inappropriate treatment. If they want to, a student may submit a formal harassment report according to these guidelines, in which case the matter will be investigated through the UAS' process. At the reporting individual's request, the Harassment Contact Person can participate in the process as a support person or discussion help.

Lapland UAS has developed Principles of Safer space in co-operation with ROTKO. These principles are also applied in the operation of the Student Union ROTKO and in tutoring activities.

SOCIAL MEDIA AND ONLINE HARASSMENT

The Code of Conduct and the Principles of Safer Space also apply in virtual environments.

Online harassment refers to disturbing or harmful action occurring in digital environments. It may occur for example on social media platforms. Online harassment may appear as the creation of fake profiles, threatening messages or comments, the distribution of personal information or images or coordinated targeting of an individual. Certain forms of online harassment may constitute criminal offences. Depending on the nature of the act, it may qualify as identity theft, stalking, defamation or unlawful dissemination of private information. Victim Support Finland 7th of November 2025.

Appropriate behaviour must also be observed on social media. If a photograph of another person is to be used for meme purposes, permission must be asked from the individual appearing in the image before editing or distributing it.

Accessibility is a human right, not an optional additional service.

Accessibility includes not only mobility-related factors but also aspects related to communication, vision, hearing and comprehension. Accessibility signifies quality, safety, mindset, appropriate attitude and recognition of diversity. For some individuals, an accessible environment is a necessity. Finnish Association of People with Physical Disabilities 7th of November 2025.

When planning an event, it is important to verify whether the selected venue is accessible. Information regarding the accessibility or inaccessibility of the venue must be clearly communicated in the event information. It is also advisable to indicate whom to contact for further details. If event registration is conducted via a form, the form should include an option for participants to indicate any specific needs of which the organiser should be aware.

Not all disabilities or special needs are visible. The Hidden Disabilities Sunflower is a symbol indicating that the wearer may require support, assistance or understanding that is not immediately apparent. Tukiviesti 7th of November 2025. It consists of a bright green lanyard with sunflower symbols. The programme aims to promote

inclusion and awareness of different forms of functional limitations. CP Association Finland 7th of November 2025.

In the operation and events of the Student Union ROTKO, as well as in tutoring activities, the importance and role of accessibility in ensuring equal opportunities must be recognised. All of operation and event arrangements must strive to promote accessibility to the best of their ability. Invisible disabilities and special needs must also be acknowledged and the Sunflower lanyard recognised within operation. Accessibility is not a burden but is approached positively and optimistically.

ALCOHOL AND ILLEGAL SUBSTANCES

Finnish alcohol culture can at times be pressuring particularly for individuals who do not consume alcohol.

The consumption of alcohol is a personal choice. No one's decision regarding it should be questioned or judged. Even a question intended as sincere may place an individual in an uncomfortable position where they must either decline to respond or disclose personal information they would prefer not to share. Under the influence of alcohol, individuals may engage in inappropriate behaviour or experience embarrassing situations. Intoxication does not remove personal responsibility nor does it justify inappropriate behaviour. Each individual is always responsible for their own behaviour.

Illegal substances have no place at Lapland UAS or within the higher education community. If event organisers have reason to suspect that illegal substances are being possessed, used or distributed at an event, they have the right to report the matter to the police and to remove the individual concerned from the event. If members of the higher education community have reason to suspect possession, use or distribution of illegal substances within the community, they have the right to report the matter to the police and notify other relevant persons as necessary.

Verbal and visual communication in digital environments can easily become challenging.

The operation and events organised by ROTKO as well as tutoring activities are often communicated through social media. Verbal and visual communication can be difficult. It can cause situations where the intended message is difficult to interpret. As a result, differences in interpretation may occur and communication may even unintentionally offend, discriminate or harass. In all communications, the boundaries of good taste must be observed.

Ethical and responsible communication enhances credibility, while accessible communication supports and promotes equality and non-discrimination.

In ethical communication we take into account:

- The promotion of an open communication culture
- Distinguishing opinions and viewpoints from factual information
- The accuracy of information
- The correction of incorrect information
- Recognising the challenges of communication
- Promoting respectful encounters and a constructive culture of dialogue

- Recognising cultural diversity and differing needs The Council of Ethics for Communication 7th of November 2025.

In standard language* communication we take into account:

- The use of common and easily understandable vocabulary
- Explaining and spelling out terms
- The distinction between standard language and easy-to-read language Saavutettavasti.fi 7th of November 2025.
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In communication that considers colours and contrasts we take into account:

- Not conveying information solely through colour
- Ensuring sufficient contrast between text and background Saavutettavasti.fi 7th of November 2025.

**When speaking of standard language we refer to general language which does not contain specialised nor technical terminology.*

Lapland UAS is a place for individuals of various nationalities and backgrounds. They hold diverse opinions, identities and ideologies.

When a diverse group of people gathers together, harassment or discrimination may occur unintentionally in actions, words or speech. The first step towards a non-discriminatory and harassment-free environment is respecting each individual as well as their opinions and forms of expression.

Below is a checklist to help evaluate your operation and identify potential areas for improvement in accessible design, accessible content and inclusiveness:

- Are your activities, events or occasions open to everyone?
 - If not, is there a justified reason for limiting participation?
- Is participation possible regardless of gender?
- Is your environment a safer space for LGBTQIA+ individuals?
- Has accessibility been considered in your activities?
- Are you able to take individual special needs into account?

- Is participation possible regardless of language, religion or cultural background?
- Is bilingualism or multilingualism taken into consideration in your operation?
- Is the diversity of the student community reflected in your operation?

The more questions you can answer “yes” to, the stronger your accessible design, accessible content and inclusiveness are!

An equal and non-discriminatory community requires the contribution of everyone. Together, we can create a better, safer and more inclusive community for all!