

1 **Introduction**

2 This document constitutes the comprehensive code of conduct for the University of Southern
3 Denmark's (SDU) student council Syddanske Studerende (SDS). The purpose of the code of conduct
4 is to establish SDS' guidelines in three areas of the organisation: **behaviour, Trustees and conflict**
5 **management.**

6

7 **Behaviour**

8 *How we treat each other*

9 In Syddanske Studerende, we expect everyone to be treated with respect and openness, regardless
10 of background. We encourage our members to be inclusive and considerate of each other, and it is
11 important that everyone feels welcome and safe in the community. We recognise that our members
12 come from different backgrounds and have different beliefs, and we encourage people to be aware
13 of this and respect each other's differences in language and attitudes.

14 At Syddanske Studerende, we find any form of discrimination based on race, gender, sexuality,
15 religion, ethnicity, disability or identity unacceptable. Discrimination can have consequences,
16 including the possibility of being unable to be a part of the community. We endeavour to ensure that
17 all members who have experienced discrimination know their right to file a complaint or to speak to
18 a Trustee if they feel the need to do so.

19 In Syddanske Studerende we take a stand against behaviour that makes members feel
20 uncomfortable, including unwanted physical contact or inappropriate verbal interactions. It is
21 important to note that any form of influence, including but not limited to alcohol, does not justify,
22 explain or excuse unacceptable behaviour. Members are encouraged to speak to a Trustee if they
23 experience any of the previously mentioned offences. All cases of inappropriate behaviour will be
24 treated anonymously and confidentially.

25 *How we speak to each other*

26 Syddanske Studerende relies heavily on the dedication and hard work of our volunteers. Our
27 members are passionate on a wide range of issues within the organisation, from student politics to
28 office décor. When interacting with each other in SDS, it is important to remember that while
29 passion is welcome, it is also essential to show consideration for other members who may not share
30 the same zeal or interest in certain topics. Therefore, it is expected that all members endeavour to
31 speak nicely and properly to each other.

32 In case of disagreement or debate, we strongly encourage you to always maintain a respectful and
33 polite tone without excessive shouting or loudness. We are able to convey our opinions without
34 inappropriate language and are able to emphasise our opinions in a constructive way.

35 In Syddanske Studerende we do not tolerate the spreading of malicious rumours or the use of
36 harmful language against/about others. Actions in violation of this may result in consequences,
37 including the possibility of sanctions.

38 *SDS and interpersonal relationships*

39 In Syddanske Studerende we cherish respectful and close relationships between our members,
40 however, one must remember to strive to create a constructive and positive working environment.
41 This must be kept in mind if/when entering into interpersonal relationships with other members of
42 SDS, so that such relationships do not hinder the work of the organisation or diminish the positive
43 atmosphere in the organisation.

44 It is important to emphasise that it is not acceptable to use your power or position in SDS to obtain
45 romantic or sexual favours from volunteers or other members. Similarly, it is unacceptable to
46 attempt to obtain personal favours from other members, sponsors, potential business partners or
47 current business partners. These guidelines apply to everyone in the organisation, regardless of
48 position, from the chairmanship to organisers.

49 *What do you do if your boundaries have been breached?*

50 Syddanske Studerende wants to ensure that all members feel safe and respected. That's why we
51 offer several ways to approach us if your boundaries have been crossed:

- 52 1. You can contact a Trustee at any time, which you can read more about in the next chapter.
53 We also understand that reactions to unwanted behaviour can vary, which is why we
54 encourage you to take the time you need to process and respond to the experience.
- 55 2. If it feels more natural, you can also talk to your immediate manager or another trusted
56 person. They may treat your enquiry confidentially and contact a Trustee if deemed
57 necessary.
- 58 3. You are welcome to leave an anonymous letter in the mailbox at the entrance to the SDS
59 premises, which only the chairmanship has access to. You are also fully entitled to ask for
60 the letter to be returned and destroyed at any time.

61 It's always okay to react after an incident and we encourage you to speak up if you feel
62 uncomfortable. We want a culture where it is acceptable to communicate your boundaries. If you
63 witness questionable behaviour, it's important to inform the person who has been impacted about
64 our code of conduct and the options available to act upon it.

65

66 **Trustees (§ 11)**

67 *Trustees in detail*

68 In Syddanske Studerende, everyone has the right to contact a Trustee in case of unpleasant
69 experiences or offences, as previously described. The Trustees have the authority to handle minor

70 conflicts, promote a pleasant and welcoming culture in SDS, and refer major conflicts to the Head
71 Trustees (HTP).

72 The Trustees are selected by the HTPs who assess their competences in conflict management and
73 procedures as described in the code of conduct. There must be at least two Trustees of different
74 genders at all times and if a position becomes vacant, it will be refilled within a 14-day period. It is
75 important to emphasise that the Trustees do not act as HR in the organisation, but rather as an
76 accessible source of support for all members in SDS.

77 All events, gatherings or activities that are under the responsibility of SDS and have more than 25
78 participants must have at least one Trustee present in person or available by phone. The Trustees
79 must not be under the influence when on duty during events, gatherings or activities. In addition to
80 their role as on-call at events, gatherings or activities, Trustees may have other responsibilities as
81 long as it does not affect their availability or ability to assist in emergency situations.

82 Trustees withdraw themselves if they are involved in a case or if their impartiality is questioned.
83 Syddanske Studerende handles all cases individually and fairly, where both parties are given the
84 opportunity to be heard. We strive to resolve conflicts through dialogue and mediation, and in
85 special cases we may seek external professional help.

86 Trustees are subject to a duty of confidentiality, except for any illegal or harmful actions that must
87 be reported to the police in accordance with Danish law. You can contact a Trustee via email at
88 **tillid@syddanskestuderende.dk**

89 *Head Trustees (HTP) in detail*

90 The Head Trustees are elected representatives in SDS who handle major conflicts in the organisation
91 and monitor conflict cases brought forward by Trustees. These positions are filled after the
92 constitution of the board, where both the board and the executive committee (FU) are present. The
93 election of HTPs must be unanimous and there must be two elected HTPs at all times. The HTPs are
94 also considered Trustees in their own right.

95 To fulfil the role of HTP, a relevant education or experience in conflict management is required,
96 which is offered through relevant courses and/or training opportunities. The adequacy of the
97 required competences is assessed by the board. In addition, HTPs have the power to keep records of
98 repeat offences if there are persistent breaches of the code of conduct. It is important to note that
99 anyone in Syddanske Studerende can fill the position of HTP.

100

101

The conflict management process

102 *Conflict management*

103 When conflicts arise in Syddanske Studerende, it is crucial that they are resolved quickly and as
104 objectively as possible. Depending on the severity of the conflict, we follow a logical hierarchy for
105 conflict management, which means that conflicts are first and foremost resolved locally and with as

106 few people involved as possible. This ensures that the board/chairmanship is not involved in all cases
107 and that conflicts are resolved by the parties involved and not the entire organisation.

108 In Syddanske Studerende we distinguish between two types of conflicts: *individual conflicts* between
109 two members, where SDS acts as facilitator(s) to resolve conflicts, and *organisational conflicts*,
110 where disagreements in relation to the code of conduct are handled. In all cases, illegal incidents will
111 be reported to the appropriate authorities.

112 *Individual conflicts and organisational conflicts*

113 Internal conflicts between members are described as individual conflicts. These types of conflicts
114 should be resolved with as few people involved as possible. In case of a need for conflict facilitation,
115 the immediate manager should be contacted first. Trustees can be involved if the situation proves to
116 be too challenging to resolve locally, and they will determine how to handle the conflict going
117 forward. In any case, it is entirely up to the individual member whether to contact their manager or
118 a Trustee, based on their individual needs and who they feel most comfortable with.

119 If a conflict escalates to a point where the Syddanske Studerende as an organisation is negatively
120 affected, the conflict will be re-categorised as an organisational conflict requiring other measures.
121 Organisational conflicts occur when members act in violation of the code of conduct in a way that is
122 detrimental to the functioning and reputation of Syddanske Studerende. These conflicts are handled
123 by the HTPs in close co-operation with the board of SDS, who set the timeframe and procedure for
124 handling the conflict.

125 *Sanctions*

126 When a member violates one of the Syddanske Studerende's guidelines in the code of conduct, the
127 following list of sanctions may be applied, with the degree of severity ranked from top to bottom:

- 128 • Verbal warning
- 129 • Limiting or removing access to an event, gathering or activity (once)
- 130 • Written warning from the chairmanship/board
- 131 • Temporary or permanent restriction or exclusion from participation in SDS events,
132 gatherings or activities
- 133 • Removal of responsibility and/or mandate in Syddanske Studerende
- 134 • Exclusion

135 The list of sanctions follows a hierarchical order, but exceptions can be made in special
136 circumstances with unanimous agreement between the HTPs and the board. However, decisions on
137 exclusion cases require the participation of the board. The exclusion process itself can be read more
138 about as an appendix to the code of conduct. Sanctions can be issued by Trustees, but sanctions
139 more severe than verbal warnings and one-time restrictions or removal can only be issued by the
140 board.

141 A vote of no confidence within the board can result in the same sanctions as mentioned above,
142 however, exclusion cannot be sanctioned in connection with a vote of no confidence.

143

Concluding remarks

144 This document is binding for all members of Students of Southern Denmark across all levels, groups
145 and departments. There can be no exceptions to these guidelines. Changes or adjustments to
146 events, clubs, committees or activities require approval from the board. Any changes to this
147 document can be made with the unanimous approval of the board.

148 A detailed description of the exclusion process and the escalation hierarchy for conflicts can be
149 found as separate appendixes.

150

151 *Implemented in May 2024.*

152 *Last edited in XXXX.*