

1. Mission statement of the Faculty of Sociology against sexualised harassment, discrimination and violence

The Faculty of Sociology agrees on the following policy within the framework of [the university's policy against sexualised harassment, discrimination and violence](#):

- **Bielefeld University policy Against SHDV**

A new [policy against SHDV](#) is in place at Bielefeld University since 2024. This policy applies to the entire university, including the Faculty of Sociology. On the basis of this policy, the Faculty of Sociology would like to further address the issue and deal with its faculty-specific issues, such as specific (spatial and personnel) conditions.

- **Existence of sexual harassment, discrimination and violence**

As the [Uni-Safe study](#) from 2022 shows, harassment, discrimination and violence based on gender are still part of everyday life at universities. The majority of those involved state that they have experienced at least one form of gender-based violence at their university. Those affected are primarily people read as female and non-binary people, as well as people with disabilities, chronic illnesses or who belong to an ethnic minority.

- **Power hierarchies and responsible behaviour**

Even if the faculty cultivates a culture of "flat hierarchies", the faculty is a hierarchical space characterised by a wide variety of power differences. It is important to reflect on these inequalities and to clarify where and how boundaries are violated. This also includes the fact that sexual acts can also be instrumentalised and be an expression of abuse of power (Section 3 of the university's SHDV policy).

- **Dynamic and ongoing engagement with the topic**

The discussion of this topic encompasses all status groups and should always be open to change. To this end, workshops should be held as needed to raise awareness of the

topic of SHDV, create a space in which the topic can be repeatedly reconsidered and discussed, and provide faculty members with information and guidance. So far, we have held three workshops with different status groups: one for all status groups, one for (international) Bielefeld Graduate School in History and Sociology doctoral students in English, and one for students. These workshops served primarily as an initial situational analysis. In addition, a first written draft on the topic was discussed at the Equal Opportunities Commission's Jour Fixe in the winter semester 24/25.

- **Sensitive and careful treatment of all people**

The faculty sees itself as a space in which power structures can be openly addressed and the possible negative consequences of hierarchical dependencies are constantly reflected upon. We value sensitive and mindful interaction with one another, especially in working relationships where there is a difference in status. Incidents of SHDV must not be tacitly accepted, as stated in § 4 of the university's SHDV policy. Addressing SHDV and incidents of SHDV should also lead to constant and continuous reflection on power structures, constellations, and conditions.