

CODE OF CONDUCT FOR THE INTRODUCTION PERIOD

INDEPENDENT STUDENT ASSOCIATIONS 2024

of the Commissie Kennismakingstijden Maastricht (KMTM committee)

The code of conduct for the introduction period is a translation of the 'Gedragscode introductietijd'. This translation has no legal force.

1. Objective and general principles

The aim of the introduction period of an independent student association is to familiarise prospective members with the different facets of the association, other student associations and the city of Maastricht, and to foster strong bonds between prospective members. As the board and the introduction committee also considers that this code of conduct is not important only during the introduction period, but also during the other activities and events of the student association, the board and the introduction committee of the independent student association to draw this for their prospective members and student members more broadly than just the introduction period.

The Commissie Kennismakingstijden Maastricht (KMTM committee) has drawn up this Code of Conduct for the Introduction Period for independent student associations to use as a guide during the introduction period. The KMTM committee is composed of:

- the Deputy Director of the Student Services Centre (SSC);
- the head of the UM Student Desk (SSC);
- a student member of the University Council;
- a UM psychologist;
- a lawyer;
- Project Manager Student wellbeing;
- the UM confidential adviser for students; and
- an employee of the Marketing & Communications Department - media relations consultant.

The purpose of this code of conduct is to mutually agree on how to organise a valuable introduction time that contributes to a positive start to the Maastricht student life. Appropriate in our contemporary culture, in a safe environment and with respect for the integrity of the participants.

The code takes as its points of departure the following principles:

- The board and the introduction committee of an independent student association are responsible for the policy, the organisation and the implementation of the introduction period as a whole, both within and outside the association building or clubhouse.¹

¹ This includes external visits to other independent student associations and association housing.

- The board and the introduction committee consider it essential to protect and promote the personal integrity, hygiene and physical and mental health of prospective members during the introduction period.
- The board and the introduction committee are responsible for ensuring that the introduction period and the accompanying initiation programme are in line with socially accepted standards.
- The board and the introduction committee are responsible for the adherence of their association to this code of conduct.

2. Responsibilities of the board or introduction committee of the independent student association

Introduction programme

1. The board or introduction committee of the independent student association approves the entire programme for the introduction period, is aware of all initiation activities in advance and has access to all activities.

Composition of introduction committee

2. The board installs the introduction committee.

Alcohol policy

3. The board and/or the introduction committee is responsible for limiting the alcohol consumption of prospective members, members of the introduction committee and its subcommittees, and other members of the student association during the introduction period. Providing current or prospective members under the age of 18 with alcohol is a punishable offence. The board or senate is responsible for ensuring that prospective members are neither required nor encouraged to consume alcohol during the introduction period of the independent student association. The National prevention agreement focuses on reducing smoking, obesity and problematic alcohol use alcohol consumption:

<https://www.rijksoverheid.nl/documenten/convenanten/2018/11/23/nationaalpreventieakkoord>.

For more information about alcohol, see www.alcoholinfo.nl and alcohol and drug policy of the Trimbos Institute.

Drugs ban

4. The board and/or the introduction committee is responsible for ensuring compliance with the ban on the use of drugs within the independent student association, not only by prospective members but also by members of the board and the introduction committee.
For more information about drugs, see www.drugsinfo.nl and alcohol and drug policy of the Trimbos Institute.

Dissemination of code of conduct

5. The board or introduction committee ensures that this code of conduct is communicated to all members of the independent student association at least two weeks before the start of the introduction period. Prospective members are alerted to the existence of this code when signing up for the introduction period. The code can be found on the UM website: from

www.maastrichtuniversity.nl, go to Support/During your studies/Your registration at Maastricht University/UM regulations and decrees/[Guidelines and codes of conduct](#).

3. Safeguarding of personal integrity, hygiene and physical and mental health

Personal integrity

6. Physical or emotional abuse of prospective members is prohibited. This includes:
 - the use of discriminatory terms related to a person's ethnicity, beliefs or social opinions, gender, sexual orientation, background, disability or illness;
 - forcing or pressuring prospective members to engage in humiliating acts;
 - abuse of power;
 - (Sexual) harassment or transgressive behaviour, both verbal and non-verbal

Health

7. Each prospective member will be offered sufficient clean/drinkable water, preferably running water/non-alcoholic drinks. That's about two litres of water/non-alcoholic drinks spread over the day. The prospective members will always have the opportunity to drink during the introductory period. The prospective members should not be forced to consume food or drinks in any way.
8. Members and prospective members limit/prevent the intake of substances that can be harmful to health, such as laughing gas, poisonous or caustic substances and food or drinks. Members and prospective members shall not be forced to smoke.
9. All prospective members must fill in a medical intake form. If a prospective member draws attention on this form to special circumstances of a medical and/or psychological nature which suggest that he/she ought not to participate in (parts of) the introduction period, the medical intake form shall be submitted for advice to a member of the student association who is in at least the second year of their studies (if possible, a master's student in Medicine). The recommendations made by this member – which may include not admitting the prospective member to the introduction period – shall be complied with in full. In case of doubt about the suitability of the prospective member for the introduction programme, contact the UM psychologist on the KMTM committee.
10. If a prospective member cannot participate in (parts of) the introduction period for medical or psychological reasons and/or due to a disability, an alternative programme or solution shall be offered wherever possible. The arrangements shall in all cases be in accordance with the Equal Treatment Act (*Wet gelijke behandeling op grond van handicap of chronische ziekte*).
11. Prospective members must be informed about who has access to the medical intake form.
12. Pursuant to the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR), the student association is responsible for the personal data (including medical data) of prospective members and shall treat these data in accordance with the GDPR.

13. The medical data of prospective members must be treated confidentially by all members of the independent student association, and may only be viewed by members of the association who need this information in order to perform their tasks. Medical data must not be accessible to all members of the association without good reason. Medical data must be stored securely, for example by means of passwords and encryption. Furthermore, medical data must be permanently destroyed no later than three months after the end of the introduction period. The independent student association shall incorporate the destruction of personal medical data into its work processes, or will develop a new procedure for this.
14. Appropriate steps need to be taken to ensure appropriate on-site first-aid provision. For every 50 attendees, there needs to be at least one person with a valid emergency assistance (BHV) diploma present in order to make appropriate referrals in the case of accidents or incidents. For medical help, a valid first aid (EHBO) diploma is the minimum requirement.
15. If there is a pandemic or other health risk, the guidelines of the National Institute for Public Health and the Environment, RIVM (<https://www.rivm.nl/>) and the UM safety protocols must be followed. The board is responsible for the enforcement of these regulations.

Sleep

16. Prospective members must get *at least* six consecutive hours of sleep per night. Only one night during the introduction period may be treated as an exception to this rule. If prospective members' sleep is interrupted, they are given the opportunity to compensate for the interruption(s). If prospective members have study activities the next morning, they must be given adequate time for sleep. Study activities which are scheduled immediately before or after introduction activities always have priority.

Time-out

17. Prospective members are given the opportunity to make use of a 'time-out'. The board or introduction committee ensures that the form which this time-out takes is recorded in the programme and/or the schedule for the introduction period.

Hygiene

18. Prospective members have adequate opportunity to engage in good hygienic practices during the introduction period. This means that, as a minimum, they are given the opportunity to
 - wash themselves daily as needed and brush their teeth;²
 - make use of sanitary facilities (which are fit for purpose and available in sufficient quantity) as needed.³

In the case of contagious disorders, appropriate preventive measures shall be taken.

Mental health

19. The board and the introduction committee pay close attention to the psychological wellbeing of the prospective members. Both the board and the introduction committee follow the recommendations of the UM psychologist as listed in Appendix 2, which forms part of this code of conduct. By signing the code of conduct, the board indicates that it is aware of the recommendations and shall act in accordance with them.

² It goes without saying that prospective members must be able to use their own toothbrush.

³ An adequate number of clean toilets and hand-washing facilities must be available.

4. Coordination with other introduction periods or faculty activities

20. The activities of the faculty introductions always take priority over the introduction period of the student associations. The introduction programmes of the student associations are scheduled such that they do not interfere with tutorials, lectures or other mandatory faculty activities, and also take into account travel time.

5. Confidential adviser and UM psychologists

21. During the introduction period there are confidants within the independent association. These persons have been appointed within the independent association. These persons are independent, they are not part of the board, senate or KMT organisation. They have direct access to the board and the introduction committee.
22. Prospective members have direct access to the confidential advisers of the independent student association at all times. These advisers take an active role in monitoring the medical and psychological wellbeing of prospective members (see point 17).
23. Prospective members are informed that the university has a UM confidential adviser and UM psychologists. Prospective members are given the phone numbers of the UM confidential adviser and UM psychologists.
24. Current and prospective members with questions about the principles and implementation of the code of conduct can address them to the KMTM committee, kmtm@maastrichtuniversity.nl.
25. At least half of the board members (umbrella board) of Onafhankelijk Maastricht and the (new) confidential counsellors are obliged to attend annual training on social safety.

6. Duty to report incidents

26. Incidents should always be reported as soon as possible by telephone and by e-mail to the Deputy Director of SSC, Mrs Birgitte Hendrickx.
In the unlikely event that the Deputy Director of Student Services Centre cannot be reached by telephone and there is reason to assume that the incidents may lead to questions from the press (media attention/social media), this must be reported by the independent external agency media), the independent association should report this immediately by telephone and by e-mail to UM spokesperson Ms Josephine Knegtering.
Within 24 hours of the incident occurring, the spokesperson must explain in writing (by letter or email) the context of the incident and, if applicable, what administrative measures have been or will be taken by the Board.
27. The SSC Deputy Director reports incidents to the UM Executive Board.

7. Sanctions

28. Should an independent student association fail to comply in full with this code of conduct, the SSC Deputy Director may, following consultation with the UM Executive Board, impose one or more sanctions on the board or the introduction committee of the association. To this end the SSC Deputy Director hears both sides of the story and determines his standpoint after consultation with the Executive Board. The sanctions may be either material or immaterial and are determined in proportion to the severity and nature of the incident which violated the rules as set out above.

Possible sanctions include (non-limiting):

- an official warning;
- complete or partial termination or suspension of UM's relationship with the independent student association and its subcomponents;
- suspension of grants and other resources, or the requirement to return these grants/resources;
- withdrawal of permission to take part in the lottery for the INKOM groups.

The KMTM committee is informed of the (intended) sanction(s) and is, if needed, involved in the decision-making process.

8. Validity of code of conduct and handover to new board and/or introduction committee

29. Each year, the new board of the independent student association is asked to sign the applicable code of conduct for the introduction period. The current code remains valid until the new one has been signed. The old board and/or introduction committee ensures that the new board is aware of the existence of this code of conduct.

This Code of Conduct for the Introduction Period was adopted on March 2024 by the Commissie Kennismakingstijden Maastricht (KMTM committee).

On behalf of the Executive Board
of Maastricht University

On behalf of the independent
student association

Birgitte Hendrickx
Deputy Director, Student Services Centre

Name of association:
Name of student:
Position:
Signature:

Gedragcode

Appendix 1

to the Code of Conduct for the Introduction Period of the Commissie Kennismakingstijden Maastricht (KMTM committee)

As a student organisation, what could you pay attention to in order to have the most enjoyable Introductory period possible for prospective members?

Guidelines from the KMTM Committee:

Toilets:

Sufficient toilets should be provided that are easily accessible, well lit and not too far away. They should also be accessible (and lit) at night.

Sleeping areas:

Spacing between sleeping places should be at least 80 cm, this because of hygiene and in order to e.g. transmission of viruses/bacteria (e.g. meningitis/meningitis) prevention. You should also sleep in your own sleeping bag because of hygiene. The outbreak of scabies has been increasing sharply in student houses recently, for example.

Water:

Running water from the tap should be available at the location (no watering can/garden hose). Stagnant water can be dangerous due to legionella contamination.

Insurance:

Remember students are insured. An accident is in a small corner. Therefore, consider health insurance, <https://www.maastrichtuniversity.nl/support/during-your-studies/money-matters/compulsory-health-insurance>, but also a liability insurance. We advise students to register with a GP in Maastricht: <https://hapmaastricht.nl/en/>

International students:

Give more attention to the international student. Provide information such as a packing list also in English.

Building safety:

Make sure the building is safe, such as keeping emergency exits clear, fire extinguishers, smoke detectors, first aid box etc.

Activities:

Activities should not be too mentally and physically demanding. If you plan an activity, there should be a certain reasoning behind it, e.g. teamwork, creativity, etc.

Appendix 2

to the Code of Conduct for the Introduction Period of the Commissie Kennismakingstijden Maastricht (KMTM committee)

How can independent student associations ensure that the introduction period is as enjoyable as possible for prospective members?

Recommendations by the UM psychologist

1. As an independent student association, make sure you have a clear and concrete idea of what prospective members should learn or experience during their introduction period.
2. Identify the most appropriate assignments, exercises and games to achieve these learning objectives.
3. Keep in mind that, from a pedagogical perspective, rewarding people is much more effective and long lasting than punishing them.
4. Consider how you can create a sense of bonding and belonging between and among current and prospective members.
5. Ensure that you have comprehensive written guidelines in place, setting out what does and does not count as acceptable behaviour.
6. Ensure that the board or senate takes responsibility for:
 - a) communicating these guidelines to all members of the association
 - b) actively promoting the guidelines, and
 - c) making agreements about holding one another to account with respect to these guidelines (potentially by means of rewards/sanctions).
7. Ensure that members take issues raised by prospective members seriously, whether they concern important emotions or complaints.
8. If you have an introduction period/initiation programme, ensure that prospective members are informed in advance about the process involved, i.e. how the student association intends to reach its chosen objectives. This enables prospective members to make an informed decision on whether they want to participate or not.
9. Limit the introduction period to a realistic period of time: more than one or two weeks can be detrimental to members' studies and other activities and can have a negative impact on the group process.
10. Prospective members must not be forced in any way to incur additional costs that are not necessary for the smooth running of the introduction period.
11. Keywords during the introduction period should be terms like respect, challenge, encouragement, support, self-insight, setting limits, tapping and developing personal qualities, and cooperation between current and prospective members. Try to prioritise and promote these. Change the world, starting with yourself!
12. In case of doubt, consult the UM psychologist and/or the confidential adviser of the KMTM committee.
13. Make sure you are registered with a GP in your neighbourhood and that you have a valid health insurance.

Gedragcode