



# O'Diako's **Equality Guide**

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## 1 INTRODUCTION

*"Promoting equality and equity affects everyone."*

O'Diako stands against discrimination and upholds the equality of all individuals. Guided by its values of ethics, courage, equality, and student-centeredness, O'Diako ensures that its operations align with these principles. This guide aims to foster equality within O'Diako's activities and encourages commitment to these practices by all involved. In cases where any aspect of this guide contradicts prevailing laws, collective agreements, or O'Diako's regulations, the latter will always take precedence.

Equality and the prohibition of discrimination are enshrined in Finnish law, including the Constitution and the Non-Discrimination Act. These laws ensure that everyone is treated equally, regardless of gender, age, language, religion, belief, opinion, health status, disability, or any other personal characteristic.

This guide outlines how equality is integrated into O'Diako's operations and offers guidance on handling discrimination and harassment situations. Practical examples are provided at the end to assist O'Diako's members in promoting equality. By prioritising equality, we create an inclusive environment where everyone can participate in O'Diako's activities safely and openly.

The responsibility for updating this guide lies with O'Diako's board, with any changes requiring approval by the representative council.

This guide was approved at the board meeting on xx.xx.xxxx

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## **2 DEFINITION OF DISCRIMINATION AND HARASSMENT**

Discrimination occurs when someone is treated unfairly due to certain personal characteristics, either directly or indirectly. Direct discrimination happens when someone is treated worse than others in the same situation because of a personal characteristic. Indirect discrimination arises from seemingly neutral rules or practices that disadvantage individuals based on their personal characteristics, such as language requirements for a job.

Harassment refers to behaviour that deliberately or effectively undermines another person's dignity. The harasser creates an environment that belittles, humiliates, threatens, shows hostility towards, or is aggressive against someone based on characteristics like sexual orientation or disability. It's important to note that harassment is subjective, and what constitutes harassment may vary from person to person.

### **3 PREVENTING DISCRIMINATION AND HARASSMENT BASED ON DIFFERENT GROUNDS**

#### **3.1 LIFE VIEW, BELIEF, AND OPINION**

O'Diako maintains neutrality regarding religion and politics, welcoming diverse perspectives and beliefs concerning life views, faith, and personal convictions. Participation in our activities is inclusive, irrespective of one's beliefs or affiliations, ensuring equal opportunities for engagement. We cherish diverse viewpoints and work towards shared objectives. Nonetheless, expressing opinions should not disrupt activities or cause offence to others. It's crucial to identify situations where personal opinions are not pertinent and to abide by O'Diako's guidelines.

### **3.2 ETHNIC BACKGROUND, NATIONALITY, AND LANGUAGE**

Diak's student body encompasses a variety of nationalities, ethnicities, and native languages, which we celebrate as a source of richness. With Finnish and English as the official languages of education, our communication and activities at the student union also reflect this linguistic diversity. The O'Diako board ensures bilingual communication regarding its operations and events, except for those exclusively conducted in Finnish. In cases where external announcements are solely in Finnish, a summary is provided in English.

O'Diako acknowledges the systemic effects of racism and is committed to anti-racist actions. Any form of racist or discriminatory behaviour is not tolerated and will be addressed promptly. We also remain vigilant against unconscious bias, ensuring that our materials and activities are free from any discriminatory content.

### **3.3 AGE AND LIFE SITUATION**

The O'Diako board often consists of full-time students, but our activities should equally accommodate part-time students. We aim to reach all students through diverse communication channels.

Our activities should cater to all age groups, avoiding stereotypes about students' ages. O'Diako also considers students with families and those who are employed, ensuring our activities are inclusive of everyone, not just the young. When recruiting new student actives, it's important to provide clear descriptions of roles and responsibilities without discrimination based on personal characteristics. We also recognize the changing life situations of our members.

### **3.4. GEOGRAPHICAL LOCATION**

In its operations, O'Diako considers the various campuses of the network university of applied sciences and strives for equality among them. The student union represents all students and ensures their inclusion in its activities and communication. Special attention is given to the regional coverage of services. A student's location should not impact the quality of advocacy, for instance.

Students from all campuses should have equal opportunities to participate in activities such as the representative council and the board. Meetings always offer remote access, and reasonable travel expenses for elected officials are reimbursed. All members receive equal orientation and training opportunities to participate in activities.

### **3.5. SEXUALITY AND GENDER**

At O'Diako, we foster an inclusive environment where everyone is valued for who they are. Discrimination based on sexual orientation is strictly prohibited and will be addressed promptly. This principle applies to all forms of communication, and derogatory jokes or remarks are not tolerated.

Sexual orientation is a personal matter, and it should not impact one's ability to participate in activities. We reject stereotypes related to sexual orientation and avoid categorising students based on their orientation.

We recognize and respect gender diversity. Gender is self-defined, and we do not make assumptions about anyone's gender. Pronouns are

provided in advance to accommodate individual preferences. In situations where asking about gender is necessary, such as for accommodations, there should always be an option for individuals to choose "other" or "prefer not to say."

Roles and tasks are assigned based on skills and abilities, not gender. We encourage individuals of all genders to apply for any role they are interested in. Gender equality is prioritised in event planning, and performance standards are not set based on assumed gender differences.

## **4 ACCESSIBILITY**

### **4.1 GENERAL**

Accessibility encompasses spaces, environments, services, or goods that are suitable for everyone, ensuring ease of use and timely, easily understandable access to information. We understand that accessibility extends beyond physical barriers to include aspects such as access to information and mental well-being. Ensuring accessibility is a top priority in O'Diako's operations. Our office is designed to be accessible, with clear pathways maintained. Guidelines, such as those for using the office kitchen, are provided in written form and in two languages.

O'Diako strives to accommodate various challenges, such as hearing, vision, and learning difficulties, to support students in their studies. However, each individual has the right to request special arrangements or choose not to. Any potential barriers are addressed on a case-by-case basis. We ensure that no assumptions are made about our members or other students. Personal health information is not solicited, but significant factors that may affect participation should be disclosed voluntarily.

O'Diako also ensures that conditions such as allergies do not hinder participation. Strong fragrances are avoided in the office and at events, and pets are not allowed indoors. Food allergies are also considered, with allergens kept separate from other food items to prevent strong allergic reactions.

## 4.2 ACCESSIBLE COMMUNICATION

We make sure our communication is easy to access by taking these steps:

- Following accessibility guidelines for all our communication
- Updating our website to meet accessibility standards
- Using both Finnish and English in our communication
- Providing alternative text for services like Instagram and Facebook
  
- Adding text to videos and audio for accessibility
  - Audio descriptions for stories, labelled as "video file"
  - Subtitles for all published videos, at least with summaries.
  
- Ensuring clear colours, fonts, and backgrounds in our posts
  - Using contrasting colours
  - Making text easy to read in terms of size, font, and colour
  - Left-aligning text
  - Avoiding all caps text
  - Using fonts and colours according to our communication guidelines
  
- Sharing detailed information about events:
  - Accessible venue details
  - Free assistance available
  - Options for alcohol-free beverages
  - Collecting dietary preferences in advance
  - Upholding principles for safer spaces

## 4.3 EVENTS

O'Diako's events are open to everyone by default, but they can also be tailored for members or specific groups. Events held in



collaboration with unions may target particular fields of study, but communication in such events must remain inclusive. O'Diako never restricts event participation based on factors like gender or age.

Observers are always welcome at events. For example, sports events offer various activities, but participation isn't mandatory. Event venues are chosen with accessibility in mind, including public and outdoor spaces. Accessing event locations is made simple and barrier-free (e.g., clear transportation instructions provided in communications or on [kide.app](#)). Registration, marketing materials, and event guidance or hosting are designed to be accessible.

Events ensure that non-alcoholic options are always available alongside alcoholic beverages, providing genuine alternatives for those who choose not to drink. No one is pressured to consume alcohol, and there's no need to explain preferences for non-alcoholic options. If food is served, efforts are made to accommodate special dietary needs beforehand, without inquiring about the reasons for such diets.

## **5 OPERATING IN INSTANCES OF HARASSMENT AND DISCRIMINATION**

### **5.1 HARASSMENT CONTACT PERSONS**

O'Diako appoints two harassment contact persons from among its employees or representatives. Students can reach out to them if they experience harassment or discrimination. Upon the student's request, these contact persons engage with the parties involved and discuss the situation. If necessary, they offer advice on support services or convene a group to decide on further actions. They support the student and take further steps only with the student's consent.

For each event, at least one designated harassment contact person is appointed to handle reports during and after the event. This person commits to maintaining sobriety during the event. Both the designated harassment contact persons for O'Diako and those appointed for events are bound by confidentiality and respect the privacy of the reporters.

## **5.2 REPORTED INCIDENTS OF DISCRIMINATION AND HARASSMENT**

We take reports of discrimination and harassment very seriously. At O'Diako, we're committed to preventing harassment and intervening promptly when it happens. Every report is treated with respect, and we avoid making judgments about anyone's experience. Additionally, we actively support efforts to combat harassment and work to prevent it from occurring.

We make it easy for individuals to report incidents. Contact forms with QR codes are available at events and in advertisements, providing clear contact information for the harassment contact persons for that specific event. The contact details of O'Diako's harassment contact persons are easily accessible through the website, social media links, email, or in person.

O'Diako provides training to its activities on handling different situations and ensures a safer environment for everyone. When we receive a report of harassment, we ask about the reporter's preferences and only take action if they wish us to do so. We respect their decision and avoid pressuring them for resolutions. During the investigation, we listen to all parties involved while considering power

dynamics. We offer support to the person who experienced harassment or discrimination and assist them in seeking help, such as making a police report or a falcony report.

If someone behaves inappropriately, they are asked to leave the event or situation. We aim to de-escalate the situation and address further steps regarding the person's behaviour if necessary.

## 6 PRACTICAL EXAMPLES

- Provide harassment forms with QR codes at events and prominently display contact information on campuses and in ads.
- Harassment contact forms are available on the website, accessible via email or in person.
- Ensure real options for alcohol free participation at events:
  - Don't pressure anyone to drink.
  - Respect those who choose not to drink without questioning.
  - Always offer alcohol free alternatives.
- Consider various dietary needs for event catering:
  - Ask attendees to prenotify any special dietary requirements.
  - Respect privacy regarding dietary choices.
  - Include at least one vegetarian option at all events.
- Prioritise accessibility in event planning:
  - Inform attendees of any potential accessibility issues beforehand.
  - Request attendees to communicate any specific needs beforehand.
- Avoid unnecessary gender inquiries:
  - Provide options like Male, Female, and Other/Prefer not to say if gender information is required.
- Minimise strong fragrances indoors.
- No pets allowed at O'Diako's offices or indoor events (except service animals).
- Ensure transparent communication:

- Reach all campus students with bilingual communication.
- Communications include all students, not just the day time students.
- Communications are done bilingually
- Extend bilingual communication throughout events, not just beforehand.
- Respect diverse opinions while maintaining a respectful environment:
  - Personal beliefs or politics should not hinder participation in O'Diako's activities.
- Keep O'Diako activities open to all:
  - No discrimination based on personal traits.
  - Ensure fairness and impartiality in activities.
  - Activities can be targeted towards members, specific target audience or communities for field specific events.
- Organise activities without assumptions:
  - Treat all genders equally.
  - Use neutral language when uncertain.
  - Distribute tasks equally regardless of gender.
  - Avoid gender stereotypes.
- O'Diako products should be inclusive and free from discriminatory content.
- Prioritise student-centric activities, considering students in different life situations.
- Avoid exclusion based on assumptions, such as language proficiency.

Machine Translation:

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