



NO

Guidelines for

means

NO

students



HOCHSCHULE
FÜR MUSIK
HANNS EISLER
BERLIN

A **Yes** can only be trusted, when a **No** is respected.

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MYTHS AND TRUTHS

There are several widespread myths at music conservatories. Some are simply mentioned in passing while others are firmly anchored convictions, even if unconsciously. By debunking these myths, we pave the way for new perspectives:

“Having your boundaries violated is part of the job – opera singers have no right to complain”

Human dignity shall be inviolable. This is the very first sentence of the Basic Law in Germany and it applies to the arts as well. All students can set boundaries if they feel uncomfortable, humiliated, or harassed. Setting boundaries should never result in disadvantages.

"Music students need to be broken before they can blossom"

Personal rights also apply in the music industry. As educational institutions, universities have a special duty of care.

"Rules disrupt the creative process"

The process of creating music and art is intimate. And intimacy requires rules which foster trust. Trust is the prerequisite to creativity.

"Those who say no and are prudish create unnecessary delays during rehearsal"

There's a lot to be gained when we talk about our need for more or less closeness or distance. A clear **No** provides you with security and clearly communicates the boundaries to those around you. This prevents misunderstandings and can be established through short and objective exercises. A **Yes** can only be trusted when a **No** is respected.

"But flirting is still allowed, isn't it?!"

Of course, flirting can be fun, but only when both parties are equal. If one person holds power over the other, flirting is inappropriate. Unwanted compliments can quickly turn into harassment.

"Musicians must commit their whole selves to the art of music"

Professionalism means separating work and private life. Everyone has the right to and should protect their privacy. A healthy work-life balance is essential for a sustainable career.

"Complaints about sexualized harassment only serve to discredit successful people and ruin their careers"

Defending yourself and speaking out when your boundaries have been violated requires courage. Additionally, there are many barriers to even doing so. As such, baseless claims are unlikely.

FOREWORD BY THE PRESIDENT

A boundary is a line where one thing ends and another begins. It is not easy to recognize where this line is and when certain actions are considered a violation. There is no standard for this. Understanding boundaries is an ongoing process and discussion to determine what is okay and what is not. We do this in a variety of ways: We communicate our consent or rejection verbally or non-verbally. When interacting and working with others, these are very complex processes that largely take place unconsciously.

Boundaries can be crossed in many different ways. A subtle form is sexualized harassment. Abusive people

exploit their superiority to exert power. I personally have experienced several such situations over the course of my life: The first time was when I was nine years old; a man sexually harassed me on my way home. I had nightmares for weeks.

Ten years and a self-defense class later, a young man on a train sexually threatened and touched me. I was able to loudly yell “No” and seek help. The (male!) police officers were actually the ones who convinced me to file a report. The perpetrator was taken into custody at the next train station.

It’s not easy to say no. It’s not easy to be unfriendly. It’s not easy to ask for help.

And it's not easy to remove yourself from a situation at the right moment. It's common to feel alone in such situations. It takes courage to resist the patterns of behavior we have learned and been taught. However, saying no to someone means saying yes to yourself. This no means saying yes to your own values, health, and self-determination. Silence, inaction and the feeling of powerlessness are what prevent these injuries from healing. They can poison the soul for a long time.

Boundary violations are an issue that affects all schools of music. They are an everyday occurrence, even here at our school. We need to be sensitized not

only to the major violations, but also to the small, thoughtless breaches, as we live in structures that encourage this: The unique closeness at these institutions brings with it a special responsibility. For our Hanns Eisler community and all its members, it is a central concern to create a safe place in the long term. Openness, tolerance, and mutual respect are indispensable for good teaching and artistic development. To do this, we need to take a clear stance, take a very close look, question ourselves, expose taboos, act consistently, and draw boundaries. Because the greatest asset at stake is so fragile and quickly lost: trust. Silence is not a solution, but

develops its toxic effects very slowly
and all the more sustainably.

We, the executive board, are here for
you and take this issue seriously.

Speak with us!

Prof. Andrea Tober



OUR VISION

“The Hanns Eisler School of Music Berlin values a study and work environment shaped by mutual respect, appreciation, and tolerance.

It aims to sensitize its members to all forms of discrimination, harassment, and violence and support a culture of paying attention and confidential dialog. Discrimination, particularly on the basis of gender, ethnic origin, racist or anti-Semitic stereotypes, language, religion, ideology, disability, chronic illness, age, sexual identity, gender identity, marital status, social status, and social origin, should be prevented or remedied. The school is responsible for educating musicians in such a way that they are sensitive to others,

respect their boundaries and confidently set their own personal limits. They should have a clear understanding of responsibility in the music and cultural sector.”

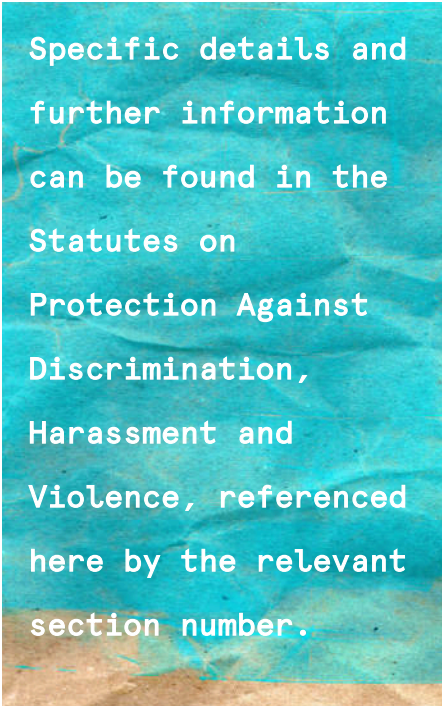
Excerpt from the preamble of the Statutes of the Hanns Eisler University of Music Berlin on Protection Against Discrimination, Harassment and Violence

OBJECTIVE OF THESE GUIDELINES

As a result of the global #MeToo movement, especially in cultural and academic settings, addressing sexual harassment in German conservatories is no longer taboo. Now, preventative measures are in place to educate people about respecting interpersonal boundaries and action is taken against abusive individuals. In 2022, the Hanns Eisler School of Music Berlin (HfM) adopted Statutes on Protection Against Discrimination, Harassment and Violence. These define important terms and lay out how to seek advice and submit a formal complaint. They also specify measures for preventative protection as well as steps and sanctions in the event of reported

incidents. These guidelines explain key elements of the statutes in clear language and provide tips for strengthening your mental resilience. They serve as a sort of “first-aid kit.” We hope that you never need it. Nevertheless, if you experience or observe emotional abuse or physical violence, these guidelines provide numerous suggestions and resources. They aim to encourage those affected to speak up in everyday situations if they feel uncomfortable and to support them in seeking help in the event of discrimination and/or sexualized harassment. At the end of this booklet, you will find information on external counseling centers and recommendations for further action.

As difficult as some situations seem, there are always steps you can take. Should you choose to come and seek advice, we can develop a path forward together. We will not do anything without your permission as only you know best which steps you want to take on your personal journey and at what pace.



Specific details and further information can be found in the Statutes on Protection Against Discrimination, Harassment and Violence, referenced here by the relevant section number.

WHAT IS SEXUAL AND SEXUALIZED HARASSMENT?

According to the General Act on Equal Treatment (Allgemeines Gleichbehandlungsgesetz), sexual harassment is when conduct of a sexual nature is unwanted and one-sided. It can be verbal, non-verbal or physical and take place both online and offline.

Forms of sexualized harassment:

Verbal:

suggestive comments or jokes; intrusive, offensive or inappropriate comments; unwanted contact via email

Non-verbal:

intrusive staring, catcalling/whistling, exhibitionism, distribution of pornographic material, etc.

Physical:

unwanted touch or physical violence

It is important to understand that this behavior has nothing to do with sexuality or initiating a romantic relationship. Instead, it often serves as a way to demonstrate power and exploit someone's dependency. To make this linguistically clear, the term sexualized harassment is used.

Unfortunately, verbal and non-verbal harassment is frequently downplayed. Every form of sexualized harassment during your studies is forbidden. Often it is combined with threats, such as disadvantages during your studies or promises and advantages like good grades or artistic contacts.

The aforementioned HfM Berlin statutes define discrimination, violation of boundaries, the misuse of power, stalking, cyberstalking, and bullying in

Section 3.



Harassment also exists if an act is supposedly meant as a joke or compliment where there was no intention to violate dignity, but the person affected feels harassed.



“FIRST-AID KIT”

In the moment

Object!

If you feel discriminated against or harassed, it is important that you clearly object. You can also use your body language to do this.

Inform the other person in a few words that their behavior is inappropriate and unwanted. It can help to describe what you observed. Short sentences are sufficient; it is not important to be eloquent. Ideally, you should formulate a request that the behavior be stopped immediately. Use body language, gestures and facial expressions too.

If it is not possible for you to react immediately in the moment, you can do so later, the next time or in writing (e.g. by email).

Here are possible things you can say:

“That question is too personal and I won’t answer it. Please don’t ask me such questions in the future.”

“I find your statement discriminatory. I expect you to apologize to me/us.”

“Your behavior violates the HfM’s antidiscrimination policy. Please stop!”

“Excuse me? What are you thinking?”

“Hold on, that comment just now was not okay.”

“You touched my butt. Stop doing that!”

You can form your own sentence based on these examples and use it if another incident occurs. Practice this beforehand, preferably loudly and clearly.

Ask for help!

If you are not alone in an uncomfortable or threatening situation, talk to the other people around you! Make anyone who is not involved aware of the situation and ask for their help.

Talk to people who witnessed the incident and get their contact details in case you need their statement later.

Remove yourself from the situation!

Leave situations you find uncomfortable or threatening as quickly as possible. You do not need to justify your departure. You have the right to leave at any time, even if it does not appear to be directly dangerous. You can also use a pretext (e.g. a phone call) to think things over in peace. Your well-being and safety always come first.

Important:

It is completely normal to feel you cannot react immediately in such situations. In moments of discrimination, harassment, or violence, victims often feel overwhelmed or paralyzed. Often you only think of a better response afterwards. Do not blame yourself. There is no reason to feel ashamed or guilty. You reacted as well as you could in that moment. Instead, think about how you want to react if it happens again. It is never too late to react: You can still address the person afterwards and prepare yourself well mentally for this.

Directly following the situation

Seek protection!

Find a safe place and try not to be alone. Call someone you trust and tell them about what you experienced. Only talk as much as you want. It can also help to simply have someone you are close with near you without talking about the incident. For example, you can tell your confidant:

"I just want to unwind. Can we go for a walk?"

"I need someone who will listen to me. You don't need to give advice."

Take yourself seriously!

Your feelings are justified, regardless how you feel. It is important that you don't blame yourself – You are not responsible when someone else discriminates against, harasses, or is violent towards you. Your clothing and whether you were drinking are irrelevant. Do not excuse or justify inappropriate behavior!

Consider whether there is anyone around you or any counseling centers which could help you. You do not need to handle the situation by yourself. If the offender is a teacher, it can be helpful to speak with students with the same teacher to recognize any possible behavioral patterns.

Further reading: ["It's not that grey. How to identify the grey area – a practical guide for the twilight zone of sexual harassment"](#)

Don't wait for inappropriate behavior to stop on its own!

Many people who are affected deny or downplay sexualized discrimination out of fear of appearing too sensitive or lacking a sense of humor. However, ignoring an assault is not a solution but rather can be perceived as consent. Even joking or quick-witted reactions are usually not effective, as they can be misunderstood or reinterpreted as an attempt to flirt.

Document what happened!

Create a detailed log as soon as possible to record exactly what occurred. Include every detail you can recall: the date, time, location, people involved (if you don't know their names, describe them), and everything that was said and done. This documentation may be crucial for any future actions, even if you're unsure of your next steps. Retain any evidence, such as screenshots of emails, chat histories, videos, or voice recordings. After a physical assault, it can be difficult, but it's important to document any injuries and property damage. Take photos of damaged or soiled clothing, and bring

them to the Violence Protection Outpatient Clinic at Charité Berlin, where specialized staff can examine them for DNA traces, if needed. This service is free of charge and does not require reporting the incident to the police. The doctors are bound by confidentiality and will securely store the evidence until you decide whether to pursue legal action.

In case of doubt:

It is completely understandable if you are uncertain whether what you experienced is really discrimination, harassment, or violence. It can be especially difficult if you respect the offender's art or personally like them. However, assaults can also occur in close relationships in your private or family environment. Even people you like have no right to violate your boundaries!

It bears repeating: Take your feelings seriously. If you feel disrespected, uncomfortable, unsafe, threatened or

feel your dignity has been violated, these are clear signs that you have experienced harassment or an assault.

Ask yourself the following questions to better assess the situation:

Was the person's behavior appropriate for the relationship between you two?

Did the person honestly care about how you felt in the situation?

Were you treated the same as other students in comparable situations?

Were your boundaries respected?

Was your consent obtained before any sexual activity took place?

If you answered “No” one or more times, this is an indication that you experienced discrimination and/or sexualized assault.

In the days and weeks after

Discrimination, sexualized harassment, and violence can trigger contradictory feelings like fear, sadness, shame, anger, disgust, and cyclical trains of thought. These experiences can have varying degrees of impact, which are often stressful and drain mental energy.

Possible impacts can include:

Feeling you are (partially) to blame or are out of your depth

Self-reproach for being overly sensitive and not cool enough

Uncertainty whether what you experienced was actually discrimination or sexualized harassment

Fear that your credibility will be questioned

Fear of negative consequences if you talk about the incident

Disappointment for not defending yourself sufficiently – we often underestimate how difficult it can be to respond in the moment

Memory gaps, especially in the case of severe experiences, because our psyche tries to protect itself from highly stressful events

It can be difficult to confide in others. Many people tend to keep silent and avoid situations which remind them of the incident. This can mean avoiding classes, exams, or concerts or even considering changing teachers or schools. This can impact the course of your studies and delay graduation.

If your experience remains private, the person who behaved incorrectly will not face consequences. This can lead to the person not even realizing that their behavior was inappropriate. They are also not given the chance to learn. In the best-case scenario, a misunderstanding can be identified and the offending person could apologize. For you, however, a lack of consequences can lead to stress that can last a long time and extend into your private life.

Take your “gut feeling” seriously. You do not have to tolerate disrespectful behavior. Seeking counseling and taking action can help:

Protect yourself and others who are affected

Make the other person aware that their behavior is unacceptable

Prevent further violations of boundaries

(Re)establish a culture of trust for future cooperation

Bring about and implement appropriate consequences

Pay close attention to your needs and make sure that your mental battery is recharged. Think about what is good for you and how you can recover. Even if you are supporting others who are affected, it is important to strengthen yourself and seek help if necessary.

SELF-CARE EXERCISE WITH YOUR INNER TEAM

In abusive situations, we often hear many different voices within us. They talk over each other and this agitated inner team can be overwhelming. In such cases it can help to listen to each voice individually and give it a name. For instance, anger, fear, the helper, the fighter, the ashamed one, the injured one, the affected one, the outsider... You can add your own!

The following inner team exercise can help you to keep a clear head in difficult situations in the future. You can do it on your own or with someone you trust and then discuss it with them.

Take a new document or a blank sheet of paper and write down:

What voices can I identify within myself?

Let your imagination run wild with the names!

What are these team members saying?

– Write down exactly what they are saying!

Here are a few ideas:

Anger asks reproachfully:

"Why are you so cowardly and don't just say: 'No, stop, I don't like that.'?"

Fear whispers the warning:

"Think about your exam! – Don't botch it."

The **helper** nods encouragingly:

"You are not responsible at all."

The **fighter** stomps their foot:

"We have to do something! If only because of other students who are even more dependent."

How are the voices expressing themselves? Lovingly, or are they shrill and piercing ...?

How loud or quiet are the voices? –
Make a note: *pp* or *ff*

Be aware: Every voice conceals a need of yours. You should actually fulfill each need, but all in good time. One after the other!

Anger, for example, serves the need for justice, fear the need for security, the fighter the need to believe in a better world.

Use a different color to write down which need each voice is concealing!

Other questions include:

How can I treat the individual members of my team with understanding?

Which voice should be silenced? What do I need for this?

Which team member do I want to strengthen now? How can I achieve this?

This exercise encourages self-care. It helps you take better care of yourself and those around you.

Further reading:

"Solidarische Kreativität -
Unterstützung bei
Grenzüberschreitungen und Belästigung
in der Kulturbranche"



POSSIBLE IMPACTS FOR VICTIMS

Reactions to sexualized misconduct are as individual and diverse as the people who experience it. Sexualized harassment does not have to, but can have a (sometimes significant) impact on the well-being of those affected. The spectrum of possible psychological consequences is very broad: from low self-confidence, difficulty concentrating and self-blame, to feelings of threat or depression and traumatization. Physical reactions, too, such as nightmares, sleep or eating disorders, gastric distress, or migraines are not uncommon either. Some people distract themselves by staying busy or increasing their consumption of alcohol or drugs and numbing themselves.

Private romantic relationships and friendships can also suffer from withdrawal behavior.

Depending on the severity of the experience, it can lead to long-term mental and physical illness. In the worst case, it can lead to dropping out of university - and thus to giving up your career aspirations and dreams. It is therefore important not to remain alone with what has happened, but to seek support.

The following steps can be helpful for processing the experience:

- Do things that are fun and distract you

- Allow yourself to rest and be lenient with yourself: It's okay if you don't "function" again straight away

- Get confidential advice about possible next steps from a counseling office

- Seek out therapeutic support

- Learn relaxation techniques

- Attend courses on relaxation techniques, self-assertion or self-defense, e.g. at Berliner Unisport

- Join a self-help group to share experiences and feelings and practice future responses

- Get active, e.g. by joining the student initiative "Initiative gegen Machtmissbrauch an Musikhochschulen" or starting a new awareness group in the AStA

- Submit a complaint to HfM leadership

WHAT DO YOU DO IF YOU OBSERVE DISCRIMINATION OR HARASSMENT?

We do not always know when we are witnessing harassment. Frequently, we are uncertain about how to respond appropriately. It also requires great social courage to intervene in unclear moments. You do not have to address the person causing the problem directly. Instead, you can support the person affected or offer your help. Those affected are often unable to immediately understand what they have experienced. It is therefore important to offer to talk to them afterwards or to accompany them to counseling. Their feelings and needs should always come first.

Ask a question if you've observed a potentially violating situation.

"I'm not sure what's happening here. Can you (both) tell me?"

"Do you need help?"

If you have an uneasy feeling and at the latest when those affected signal distress: Remove the person from the situation, even under a pretext.

"Can we briefly talk just the two of us?"

"I have an urgent question. Do you have five minutes?"

Take the person somewhere they feel safe. They may want to talk about the situation immediately or possibly just take a few breaths. Show your understanding and stay with them. The following questions can help:

“How can I help you right now?”

“Would you like to tell me what happened?”

“Is there someone you trust who I can call for you?”

“I’ll stay with you. Take your time.”

Document what you witnessed or heard as soon as possible: the time, place, persons involved, and what exactly happened. You can do this in writing or using an audio recording, for example with your phone. If the affected person chooses to submit a complaint or report the incident to the police, such records are helpful.

If the person affected so chooses: Reflect together about the different courses of action they can take.

If necessary, seek advice from the appropriate counseling offices (p. 45).

If the person is physically injured, appears very confused, is in an emotionally unstable state and/or you are not sure whether they may be a

danger to themselves: Call in professional support. Contact the emergency number (112). In the event of physical sexualized violence, the Violence Protection Outpatient Clinic at Charité Berlin should be consulted as soon as possible.

People respond differently to harassment and boundary violations. Every person is different and encounters between people are complex. It is also important to be aware of different cultural needs and forms of expression with regards to closeness and distance. These differences are already evident in rituals such as greetings and farewells,

which can range from waving, nodding and shaking hands to hugs and kisses on the cheek, depending on the culture.

No matter what, the affected person is the one who decides the further steps. This means:

Respect their pace and boundaries.

Do not do anything without their consent or request.

Always keep to any agreements.

Do not try to “rescue” the affected person. You are already providing valuable assistance by stepping in, listening, and being patient.

Acting independently, for example by informing acquaintances, superiors, official bodies, the police, or the public, is usually done with good intentions. However, these actions can put additional strain on those affected or even cause them harm. It is not always possible to foresee the consequences of such steps, but the consequences must in turn be borne by those affected.



WHO CAN YOU TURN TO FOR HELP AT THE HFM BERLIN?

If you would like advice, you can first contact the following offices at the HfM Berlin confidentially for initial advice and referrals:

General Students' Committee (AStA):

stupapraesidium@stud.hfm-berlin.de or gleichstellung-asta@stud.hfm-berlin.de

Women's and Equal Opportunities Officer:

frauenbeauftragte@adm.hfm-berlin.de

Open Door for Ideas and Complaints:

feedback@adm.hfm-berlin.de

Representative for Students with a Disability or Chronic Illness:

studium3@adm.hfm-berlin.de

Academic Advising:

studium1@adm.hfm-berlin.de; studium2@adm.hfm-berlin.de

Conflict Resolution Team:

vertrauensteam@hfm-berlin.de

Counseling for Musical Physiology:

carolina.lares-jaffe@doz.hfm-berlin.de or
anja.freytag@doz.hfm-berlin.de

These offices will inform you about your rights and possible further steps. You can find the names of these people on the HfM Berlin website. They can also recommend specific offices at the HfM Berlin or external counseling centers in Berlin. Together we will discuss what actions you can take. All counseling is:

Voluntary: You can leave at any time.

Confidential: Counselors are bound to confidentiality and may only pass on information with your consent. The limits of confidentiality will be discussed during your conversation. **(Section 6(5))**

Anonymous: You can also seek advice anonymously or via a trusted person. You can also use the mailboxes in the foyers of both HfM buildings. The names of those affected and accused will not be passed on.

WHY SHOULD I FILE A COMPLAINT?

Filing a complaint is important to make incidents visible and to prevent the aggressor's discriminating or harassing behavior from going unnoticed and possibly repeating itself. If misconduct is not reported, perpetrators can feel reinforced in their behavior. A complaint could also encourage other affected persons to share their experiences. Reports from several people can also be helpful when taking legal action.



HOW DO I FILE A COMPLAINT?

A formal complaint can be submitted informally in writing, by email, by telephone or in person. This can be done either via the counseling offices or directly to HfM leadership. Complaints should include the following information:

A description of the incident

Information about the person the complaint is being lodged against

Names of witnesses

Any evidence available

Information about which offices have already been informed and whether any measures have been initiated

Once a formal complaint procedure has been initiated, the counseling office informs HfM leadership, which assesses the situation.

Discussions are held with all involved parties and the facts of the case are examined in detail. As a rule, anonymity is thereby removed. It is helpful to use wording from your notes about the incident if the facts need to be put in writing later. All actions taken are with your consent. You can withdraw your complaint at any time.

WHAT MEASURES CAN BE TAKEN AGAINST OFFENDERS?

Measures and sanctions following violations of the policy depend on the position of the accused person under employment, labor or university law. Depending on the specific circumstances, informal measures may first be initiated in individual cases, such as discussions between HfM leadership and the accused person. The anonymity wishes and protection needs of the persons concerned are safeguarded as far as possible. The measures vary depending on whether the accused person is employed at the HfM or is a civil servant.

Conducting a formal discussion

Oral or written directive

Disciplinary warning letter

Termination with or without notice

Relocation

Temporary leave of absence to establish the facts of the case

HfM leadership may impose a temporary ban on students from lessons, practicing and/or entering the premises for up to three months.

As a last resort, criminal charges may also be pursued.

It may make sense to press charges with the police, e.g. in cases of repeated harassment or serious cases of sexualized coercion and violence. Reporting a crime is an effective way of preventing perpetrators from committing further assaults and ensuring that the crime is recorded in police statistics. However, the proceedings can be an additional burden, as those affected may have to report on the crime several times in front of unknown persons and in public. They have to face the sometimes challenging questions of the defense. It is only possible to withdraw a criminal complaint under certain conditions. As a rule, the accused person learns who

filed the complaint and it can happen that the accused files criminal charges against the other party for libel or defamation. The step of filing a criminal complaint should therefore always be carefully considered and should always be accompanied by a lawyer. The costs of an initial consultation can be reimbursed by the women's and equal opportunities officer.

(Section 8)

UNIQUE FEATURES OF MUSIC CONSERVATORIES

Music conservatories differ significantly from academic universities in some respects, which can contribute to sexualized harassment during your studies:

The pressure to perform is immense and often starts in childhood with learning an instrument. Competition for roles, performances, and recommendations is also intense later in your career and can lead to feelings of loneliness.

Physical and emotional closeness is essential in one-on-one lessons.

Balancing closeness and distance both requires clear boundaries and makes it more difficult to set them.

Physical touch and emotionality as means of expression are commonplace during studies and rehearsals.

The influence of teachers on the careers of “their” students through networks in the music industry fosters dependent relationships.

A hierarchy gap between world-famous and lesser-known musicians promotes power inequality among colleagues.

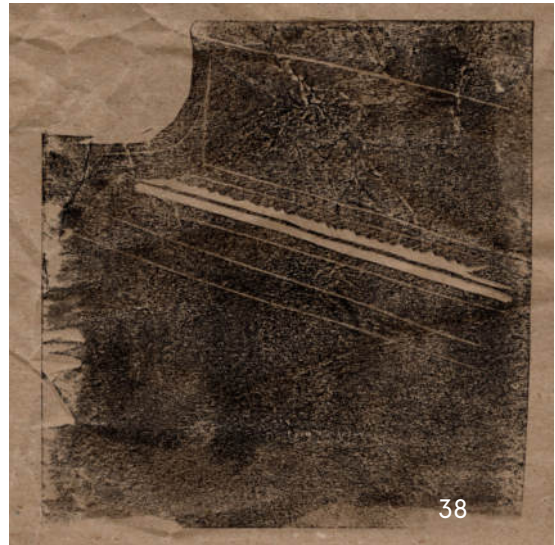
The familial environment is a resource that also makes it difficult to clearly separate private and professional life.

Artistic projects are often created under time and production pressure.

This leaves little time for formulating needs, team reflection, or constructive conflict resolution.

In the music industry, employment contracts are often temporary and poorly paid.

Existential worries can be exploited to force the violation of boundaries.



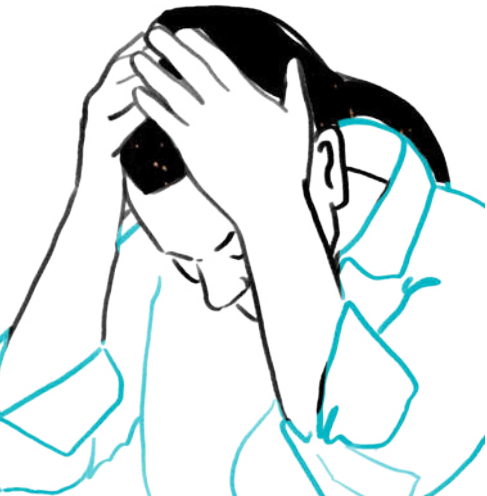
WHO IS AFFECTED BY SEXUALIZED HARASSMENT AT MUSIC CONSERVATORIES?

In November 2023, thirty student representative bodies from Germany, Austria and Switzerland published “Demands for the Prevention and Intervention of Offensive, Inappropriate and Abusive Behavior at Universities of Music” (Forderungen zur Prävention und Intervention von übergriffigem, unangemessenem und missbräuchlichem Verhalten an Musikhochschulen). Among other things, they call for boundary violations to be recognized as a structural problem. Their demands are based on around 600 incidents of abuse of power that have been collected and documented. The magazine SPIEGEL reported on these insults, humiliations, and sexual

assaults at music conservatories in an article titled “How can someone be so young and so boring?” (Wie kann man so jung und so langweilig sein?) on 16 March 2024.

A representative study conducted by the University of Music and Theatre Munich (Hochschule für Musik und Theater München) in April 2024 illustrates the extent of the problems. The results show that students are particularly affected by abuse of power, especially those who are perceived as female and are between 18 and 29 years old. However, only around a quarter of students took part in this survey. This data also shows that the perpetrators are predominantly male and primarily

over 40 years old. They are often in teaching or management positions. At the same time, there is also misconduct and abuse of power within the student-teacher community. In this regard, everyone must learn to critically examine their own behavior and pursue further training in maintaining professional boundaries in artistic education.



Further reading:

"Forderungen zur Prävention und Intervention von übergriffigem, unangemessenem und missbräuchlichem Verhalten an Musikhochschulen"

"Wie kann man so jung und so langweilig sein?"

"Vollerhebung zu Machtmissbrauch, Diskriminierung und sexualisierter Gewalt bei den Mitgliedern der Hochschule für Musik und Theater München"

SURVEY ON INTERACTIONS WITH EACH OTHER

In 2023, the HfM Berlin conducted a survey on how its members interact with each other. A total of 123 people took part: 39 students, 47 teachers, and 33 administrative staff. The results of the survey are worrying: 28 percent of respondents, i.e. 34 people, stated that they themselves had experienced discrimination at our school. In addition, almost half of the respondents reported having observed discrimination at the HfM.

It is particularly striking that female and non-heterosexual persons are more frequently affected by discrimination. Those affected reported situations in which they were exposed to a strong hierarchical disadvantage and were

belittled in front of others. In light of these experiences, many of those surveyed expressed a desire for more appreciation and more respectful interaction within the HfM community. That is why there is now also a code of conduct.

ON THE CHALLENGE OF PORTRAYING INTIMATE SCENES ARTISTICALLY

When engaging with repertoire, it is important to analyze and critically reflect on power dynamics, role models, and structural forms of discrimination.

Sexual, erotic, violent and/or racist acts must sometimes be depicted artistically during your studies. If this is the case or if such content is part of the artistic and practical training, special conditions apply at the HfM. Before presenting or working with such content, teachers must inform students comprehensively and obtain their explicit and voluntary consent. In addition, those involved must be allowed to withdraw their consent in whole or in part at any time. In

addition, reflection discussions should be offered to discuss the effects of the content presented. [\(Section 4\(3\)\)](#)

Five principles that have been established for safe rehearsal work in the area of intimacy coordination can serve as a guide. They are also known as the five Cs:

1. Context:

All actors and members of the production team understand how intimacy serves the story and staging.

2. Communication:

Ongoing communication is ensured among all participants, with opportunities for discussion and reporting discomfort and/or transgressive behaviors.

3. Consent:

Every participant establishes their individual limits, including actions and forms of touch they find acceptable within a production.

4. Choreography:

Based on the agreed upon consent,

safe choreography is created and implemented during rehearsals and performances. Deviations from this are only possible following prior consultation and consent.

5. Closure:

Following a rehearsal or performance, a closing ritual marks the end of the intimacy, thus drawing a line between the personal and the professional.*

Since 2023, HfM Berlin has been working selectively with intimacy coordinators and plans to expand this practice in the future.

AFTERWORD BY THE WOMEN'S AND EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES OFFICER

It happened in my late 20s when I started my first job full of enthusiasm.

I was sexually harassed. I know how lousy it feels. There was no counseling or complaint office where I worked. I was distraught and chose to defend myself. After grueling internal debates, the colleague finally had to leave. But only because of the pressure after my case became public. I was considered "difficult" and a "tattletale" by my colleagues. As a result, I terminated my employment contract early and gave up my career aspirations.

From this incident, I learned how important it is to be able to tell a person what you have experienced in confidence and to be able to

understand it together. Today, I am committed to ensuring that the Hanns Eisler School of Music Berlin is a safe place for students where transgressions are taken seriously and not minimized. As speaker of the Bukof's Committee of Artistic Universities, I publish articles on respectful collaboration. It is important to me to talk about the need for more or less closeness or distance. My vision is to exchange ideas before misunderstandings arise, boundaries are crossed or power is abused. Many members of the HfM Berlin share this vision. This is important, because we can only achieve this together.

COUNSELING SERVICES

The internal initial and referral counseling centers can be found on p. 31 of this guide. We also recommend the following external services:

Themis Advice Centre for Sexual Harassment and Violence in the Arts and Media Industry

Tel. 030 23 6320 20

beratung@themis-vertrauensstelle.de

<https://themis-vertrauensstelle.de>

Federal Anti-Discrimination Agency

Free legal counseling for all sectors and forms of discrimination

Tel. 030 18555 1855

beratung@ads-bund.de

<https://www.antidiskriminierungsstelle.de/EN/homepage/homepage-node.html>

Violence Against Women Support Hotline

Tel. 08000 – 116 016, available 24/7 with translation support in 18 languages

<https://www.hilfetelefon.de/en.html>

Berlin Crisis Service

Tel. 030 – 390 63 10, available 24/7

www.berliner-krisendienst.de

Wildwasser

Association against the sexual abuse of girls

Tel. 030 – 282 44 27

www.wildwasser-berlin.de

Weißer Ring

Counseling and support for men and women in cases of sexual harassment and assault

Tel. 116 006 (free hotline, 9am to 10pm)

<https://weisser-ring.de/>

Stalking Opferhilfe

Support for victims of stalking

Tel. 030 – 44 32 37 17

info@stop-stalking-berlin.de

www.stop-stalking-berlin.de

Tauwetter

Help for men who were sexually abused as boys

Tel. 030 – 693 80 07

www.tauwetter.de

Police (in case of emergency)

Tel. 110

Violence Protection Outpatient Clinic at Charité Berlin

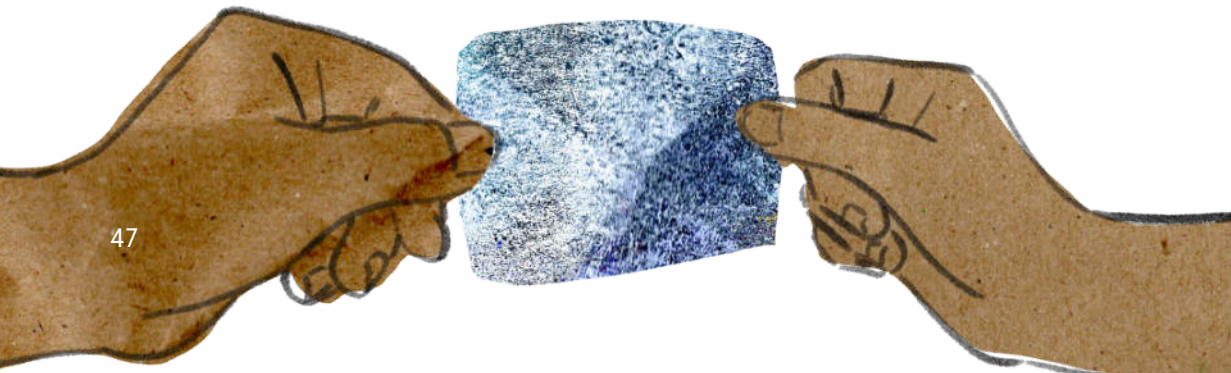
Resources available in 14 languages

<https://gewaltschutzambulanz.charite.de/en/>

Berufsverband Intimitätskoordination und Kampfchoreografie (BIK)

Professional association for intimacy coordination and fight choreography

<https://b-ik.art/ueber-uns>



RESOURCES FOR FURTHER READING

Forderungen zur Prävention und Intervention von übergriffigem, unangemessenem und missbräuchlichem Verhalten an Musikhochschulen” by 30 student representative groups from Germany, Austria, and Switzerland, 2023 https://www.fzs.de/wp-content/uploads/2024/02/Forderungskatalog_Initiative-gegen-Machtmissbrauch-1.pdf

“Handlungsempfehlungen zum Umgang mit sexualisierter Diskriminierung und Gewalt an Kunst- und Musikhochschulen” published by Bundeskonferenz der Frauen- und Gleichstellungsbeauftragten an Hochschulen (bukof) <https://bukof.de/wp-content/uploads/23-04-18-bukof-Handlungsempfehlungen-zum-Umgang-mit-Sexualisierter-Diskriminierung-und-Gewalt-an-Kunst-und-Musikhochschulen.pdf>

“It’s not that grey. How to identify the grey area – a practical guide for the twilight zone of sexual harassment ” Vienna, 2020, Sara Hassan and Juliette Sanchez-Lambert <https://shop.oegbverlag.at/amfile/file/download/file/718/product/124298/> https://www.sarahassan.at/wp-content/uploads/2023/11/Its-not-that-Grey_Period_Guide_2019_online.pdf

“Ich war mit der Einstellung ins Studium gekommen, dass man sich nicht so anstellen darf und das zum Beruf gehört.” Fee Brembeck, 17.07.2024, VAN-Magazin <https://van-magazin.de/mag/initimitaetskoordination-hochschulen/>

“Institutions of Higher Music Education as Power-Sensitive Places of Learning”, Antje Kirschning in: Music, Power Relations and Beyond: Critical Positions in Higher Music Education, Edited by: Christa Brüstle, Lucia Di Cecca, Itziar Larrinaga, Mojca Piškor, Eva Sæther, David-Emil Wickström, 2024, 199-207 <https://musikene.eus/prihme/?lang=en>

“Wessen Freiheit ist gemeint? Über den Weg zu mehr Schutz für Studierende darf und soll debattiert werden”, Antje Kirschning, nmz 12/2023, p. 15 <https://www.nmz.de/bildung-praxis/hochschulen-akademien/wessen-freiheit-ist-gemeint>

“Kunst braucht Nähe. Nähe braucht Regeln. Vom professionellen Umgang mit Grenzen in der musikalischen Ausbildung an Musikhochschulen”, Antje Kirschning in: “Sexualisierte Belästigung, Diskriminierung und Gewalt im Hochschulkontext – Herausforderungen, Umgangsweisen und Prävention” (Eds. Sabine Blackmore, Heike Pantelmann) 2023, pp. 83-94 https://link.springer.com/chapter/10.1007/978-3-658-40467-3_7

(All links last accessed on 23.10.2024)

PUBLISHING INFORMATION

Published by the Hanns Eisler School of Music Berlin executive board and women's and equal opportunities officer.

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10117 Berlin

<https://www.hfm-berlin.de/hochschule/struktur/frauenbeauftragte/>

Please make an appointment via email: frauenbeauftragte@adm.hfm-berlin.de

Berlin, December 2024



