

FASoS Code of Conduct

Summer 2019



As a student of Maastricht University and the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences, you have joined an academic community with high standards about professional and ethical behaviour. This *Code of Conduct* explains those shared FASoS values. If we all behave according to those values we can ensure a respectful and productive study environment, and avoid undesirable and unwanted situations. Importantly, this *Code of Conduct* is not meant to restrict freedom of opinion and expression in any way, but to foster respectful interaction and cooperation between students, and between students and university staff. Three core values are central to our community: respect, commitment, and honesty.

Respect

Respect means we believe in the worth and qualities of fellow students and university staff, and their right to be treated as we would wish to be treated. Respect for one another should be shown at all times. Communicate courteously and respectfully with other member of the FASoS community, whether face to face in class or outside, or in any form of electronic or written communication; always be open to others' opinions and remember that no one has a monopoly on the truth. Please also show respect for the property of others, including the facilities of FASoS and other buildings of the university, and treat equipment and furnishings with care.

Commitment

Problem-Based Learning (PBL) is the learning philosophy used throughout Maastricht University, and all teaching programs at FASoS are based on PBL principles. PBL requires that you as a student take an active part in educational activities, participate in discussions, and work together with other students. When working in groups, do your best to make a constructive individual contribution to the task, and to take responsibility for the quality of the final outcome.

A stimulating study environment is key to good learning. This is where all of us, students and staff, have to take responsibility. This makes commitment an essential requirement in an academic environment. That means coming to class regularly and being intellectually engaged and active in classes, lectures, discussions and other related activities.

Honesty and Trust

Honesty and trust are indispensable in an academic environment. If you act honestly, your fellow students and teachers will trust you, just as you expect to be able to trust them. When you agree to do something, make sure you adhere to these appointments (e.g. finish the job in time). If you are unable to keep a promise, always tell others in good time so you don't let them down. In a university context, honesty also means taking exams independently, indicating your sources in your academic writing, being truthful when filling out forms, etc.

If, despite your best efforts, problems arise between you and another student or a staff member, always solve them in a civil and respectful way, remembering that offence can often

be caused by lack of information about the other person's situation. If you cannot solve the problem by talking it over politely together, you should contact your course coordinator, student advisor or the UM confidential advisor (see below for contact information).

Impermissible behaviour

If you keep to the core values above, destructive and inappropriate behaviour should not occur.

Damage and misuse

FASoS will take action against you if you intentionally or carelessly damage property. It is forbidden to use your UM account to send spam or other undesired messages, or to hack into the UM network, its servers and workstations; and introducing viruses to the UM network is strictly forbidden whether accidentally or on purpose. It is also important to respect the privacy of others, and sharing others' personal data with third parties without their permission is not allowed.

Indecent behaviour

We do not allow inappropriate or violent behaviour, in any social setting, including social media. This includes any kind of discrimination, whether on the basis of race, gender, sexual identity, age, religious or cultural beliefs, class, or disability; as well as disparaging comments about the intellectual or social abilities of others. Inappropriate or unwelcome sexual behaviour or comments are also forbidden. Sexual assault or abuse, as well any violent behaviour, is obviously strictly forbidden. In short, there is zero-tolerance for disrespectful or unpleasant behaviour of any sort at Maastricht University.

If you feel you have been a victim of, or if you have witnessed any behaviour you believe to be inappropriate, please contact the student advisor, your mentor, or the UM confidential advisor for students (see below for contact information).

When anyone, students or staff, fails to obey the above guidelines, appropriate disciplinary measures will be taken, and sanctions may be issued by the Faculty and/or the University. These may include denying access entirely or partially to UM buildings and domains. In cases where the Dean decides to apply a sanction for more than six months, this is always done in consultation with the Executive Board. Unlawful behavior will always be reported to the police.

You can find more detailed information about your rights and obligations as student in the ['Student Charter'](#).

Although so far this document has talked about behaviour expected of you as a student, these rules also apply to relationships between staff and students. You have the right to expect respectful, committed and honest behaviour from university staff. Please contact the student advisor or your mentor if you feel you have been treated inappropriately by a member of staff. Of course, you can also contact your course coordinator or programme director. When doing so, use your UM email account since that is our formal means of communication, always provide your name and ID number, and explain your concerns as specifically and clearly as possible. We will try to reply promptly.

Who to contact when you have a problem?

Mentor:

You should contact your mentor if you are having difficulty with settling in, with courses generally, with study techniques, or with finding your way around the FASoS system. Your mentor will give you their contact details during the first mentor meeting.

Course coordinator:

You can contact your course coordinator if you are having difficulties with a particular course than you have not been able to resolve with the tutor, or if you have a conflict or disagreement with the tutor you have not been able to resolve through discussion with them. You can find the contact details of the course coordinator in your course book.

Programme Director:

You may wish to contact your programme director if you are having difficulties that have not been resolved by your course coordinator, or if you have a problem that you feel unable to discuss with your course coordinator. Your programme director will give you their contact details during the first week of the academic year.

Student advisors:

You should contact your student advisor if you have any personal problems such as stress, overwork, depression, emotional difficulties, or if you feel you have been victim of any form of discrimination or inappropriate behaviour that you feel unable to discuss with anyone else, for whatever reason. While all FASoS staff will respect your confidentiality, student advisors are specially trained to handle delicate and difficult personal situations.

Miranda van den Boorn, Pia Harbers and Adina Petre

<https://intranet.maastrichtuniversity.nl/en/faculty-arts-and-social-sciences-studenten/bachelor/organisation/office-student-affairs/student>

Student Representatives

Open office hours: Tuesday from 11.00 – 16.00 in the Student Representatives Office at GG 86 – Room 2.020 (two floors right above Banditos).

Email: studentrep@maastrichtuniversity.nl

<https://intranet.maastrichtuniversity.nl/en/news/open-office-hours-fasos-student-reps>

UM confidential advisor for students:

Wendy Geijen, Bonnefantenstraat 2, room B1.23, 6211 KL Maastricht

Phone: +31 6 2803 5033; E-mail: wendy.geijen@maastrichtuniversity.nl

To keep you updated, we share all information we consider relevant to you via the Student Portal, and also via email and the FASoS Weekly. These are the official channels of communication at FASoS. You should check these sources several times a week.

In addition to this FASoS *Code of Conduct*, we advise you to read the description of the tasks and responsibilities of students (see below). This document is an initiative of and written by the student-representatives.

BA programmes FASoS

Task description, responsibilities and practical guidelines

1. How does PBL work?

As student you will attend course lectures and tutorials, prepare tasks, and read research and reflect on your own. All students follow Problem Based Learning (PBL), the didactic model and learning philosophy Maastricht University is renowned for. Lectures are based on the educational requirements of each course and contain all the relevant academic information. You are strongly recommended to attend the lectures. Tutorials build on the lectures and go further into the course content. Clarification of any unresolved questions arising either from the academic literature or from the lectures is provided during the tutorial. During the tutorial, following the PBL formula, students discuss and try to solve problems and questions arising from the literature that they themselves have identified (learning objectives). The tutor monitors and guides the discussion, and thus should have limited input in the discussion: his or her main role is to clarify concepts when confusion arise and keep the tutorial focused on the subject matter. Some meetings, such as presentations or practical exercises, may be marked as compulsory; however, to succeed in your learning, you need to attend and actively participate in all meetings in a period. Participation is assessed according to criteria relevant for an effective tutorial group meeting, such as frequency and quality of contribution, constructiveness, or group interaction. The module coordinator may decide whether attendance will be assessed as part of the participation. It is important to come prepared to the tutorials (i.e. to do the research and reading) so that you have the knowledge required to participate in the discussion. This means that a successful PBL tutorial depends on preparation, good time management, and engagement from all students, including you.

2. What does it mean to be a FASoS student

The focus of study at FASoS is on European or Western culture and society. You will need to take a broad interest in these areas, as the programs combine many disciplines such as philosophy, history, politics, culture, and technology studies. To succeed you need to be interested in combining multiple disciplines to address a given topic or problem. The international and intercultural aspects of the programs are unique to FASoS; so be open to engage in this environment. You will need to have adequate spoken and written proficiency in the language in which courses are taught, whether English or Dutch. You will also need to be able to study alone and plan your own time, preparing adequately and attending course lectures and tutorials, and participating in tutorials. Personal time management is at the heart of student life. Pay special attention to deadlines for applying for courses and handing-in assignments, or you will find yourself in trouble. Not meeting a deadline will mean failing the course and losing ECTS credits. This can mean a negative Binding Study Advice (BSA) in your first- year, so that you don't get into the second year, missing the chance to go on an exchange to study abroad in your third year, or even getting a study delay (which will cost you). To make sure this doesn't happen, you need to have a structured daily timetable so you can keep on top of all those academic obligations. Maastricht University and FASoS follow the motto of "Go the extra Mile". This means not just doing the minimum to scrape through but putting in that extra effort, so that in the end you can be proud of yourself. It also means taking on responsibility and striving to improve society around us. Always try to be self-reflective, question the status quo, and think outside the box. Research skills play an important role in Maastricht, and you need to be able to push yourself academically.

3. Your core tasks as a student

The work of the student revolves around five core tasks:

- Studying the course material to understand and achieve the learning objectives
- Preparing for, and attending, lectures and tutorials
- Actively participating in PBL during tutorials
- Completing and handing in assignments on time
- Evaluating the course

4. Preparation for the course

Make sure you prepare sufficiently for each lecture and tutorial session. The required reading can be found in the course book, and includes book chapters, articles, and other sources. These are usually available either in the university library or online; in some cases they will be provided by your tutor, in others you may have to do research to find them yourself. Compare and share your research strategies with other students so you can learn from each other. Preparing for tutorials gives you a much better chance of actively and constructively contributing to discussion in class. Further readings are often suggested to give you a more in-depth or broader perspective of a topic. Although it means a little extra work, it is always worth using this chance to get more out of your studies.

5. How the tutorial works

Tutorials take place in small groups, around 10 to 15 students, making it easier for each person to contribute to the debate. PBL involves three main stages: setting up a problem (clarification of terms or concepts, brainstorm, establishing learning objectives); self-study and research outside the classroom; and finally, bringing back what you have learned to the class discussion to fulfil the learning objectives. Active participation in all three stages is essential to achieve the learning goals and pass the exams or assignments. Our research shows that students who miss multiple classes have a lower chance of passing the course. We believe that students who don't do the reading are also likely to fail. Finally, we suggest to follow carefully European, cultural, political, technological and societal developments to connect your academic life with ongoing societal debates.

6. Your feedback: improving the quality of education at FASoS

During the last tutorial of each course, we ask you to complete an IWIO evaluation. This is your chance to say what you think of the course, the tutor, and the method; to tell us what went well, and to suggest improvements. The Faculty and the Student Representatives also organize regularly sessions to gather feedback on specific topics not covered in the IWIO evaluations, and students can participate in these. We try hard to improve our approach to teaching and learning, and students' views are a crucial element to improve the education; new ideas and suggestions are always welcome.

7. Practical information

More practical information for each course can be found on the Student Portal and university website.