



ACTIVITY REPORT

SOCIAL SAFETY COORDINATOR AT BUT

Information on the Social Safety System at BUT

Information on the activities of Contact and cooperation persons for Social Safety at faculties, university institutes and units of BUT

PERIOD

2022 - 03/2024

Submitted by: Social Safety Coordinator - Ing. Bohdana Šlégrová

The report does not contain any specific or identifying information on the initiatives addressed.



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SOCIAL SAFETY AT BUT

No form of unwanted conduct, including sexual or gender-based harassment, aggression, coercion or intimidation, bullying or discrimination based on any grounds whatsoever, is or will be tolerated at BUT. The BUT strives and will continue to strive to foster a culture of mutual respect, which includes the prevention of undesirable phenomena occurrence, at all levels of the University.

Whether the BUT premises are visited by students, staff or visitors, we are committed to ensuring that everyone feels comfortable and safe at all times. We will do our utmost to ensure that the BUT always provides healthy and fair study or working conditions.

The words collegiality, integrity, equality, respect, openness and mutual consideration are key to the BUT.

IN GENERAL TERMS, THE POSITION AND ACTIVITIES OF THE SOCIAL SAFETY COORDINATOR AT BUT

The position of Coordinator was established in March 2023. This position is held by Ing. Bohdana Šlégrová, an employee of the Personnel Department/Department of Personnel Development of the Rectorate.

The Social Safety Coordinator is also responsible for the management **of the HRS4R strategy - The Human Resources Strategy for Researchers / HR Award**, the Equal opportunities agenda at BUT ([Gender Equality Plan at BUT – GEP](#)), methodological and analytical/statistical areas related to HR and payroll.

Ing. Bohdana Šlégrová is a member of the [BUT Ethics Committee](#). She became a member of the BUT Ethics Committee in autumn 2022 as the BUT Equal Opportunities Coordinator.

The office of the Social Safety Coordinator at BUT is located in the Rectorate, Antonínská 548/1, Brno 601 90, office A1/2.38 Personal visit by prior arrangement (via email slegrova@vutbr.cz or phone +420 773 764 880). Telephone consultation on weekdays from 7:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. In case of need, it is advisable to write a text message with contact details.

In April 2023, the Coordinator recommended the definition to ensure the agenda of a so-called Advisory Board as a comprehensive support apparatus in the consultation of the content of the submissions.

The Advisory Board as of March 2024 is composed of:

- Ing. et Ing. Radomír Kraina - Head of Human Resources Department,
- Mgr. Lucie Schimmelová - Personal Data Protection Officer,
- Ing. Pavel Rohlena - Head of the Internal Audit and Control Department,
- Mgr. Jitka Černá - Psychologist, Lifelong Learning Institute (LLI) BUT
- Mgr. Veronika Slezáčková - Methodical support for ensuring Social Safety

Furthermore, the Coordinator cooperates with the Legal Department of the Rectorate and the Student Affairs Office or with other departments, always depending on the content of the complaint.

The activities of the Coordinator and the contact persons are defined in the [Guideline no. 8/2023 - On Social Safety at BUT](#) and in the [Methodical directive no. 4/2023 - Methodical directive on Social Safety at BUT](#). Both standards and annexes are also in English.

The annexes to the Methodical Directive are:

- ✓ 1 model confidentiality agreement,
- ✓ 2 model confidentiality agreement for psychologists,
- ✓ 3 informed consent,
- ✓ 4 consent to release of data,
- ✓ 5 sample complaint form,
- ✓ 6 trust box check record.

The Coordinator always relies on and acts in accordance with the university and faculty standards and regulations as well as the laws and regulations given in the Czech Republic.

The Coordinator reported regularly during the year on her agenda and the system being set up, including suggestions for providing support towards the University management, the Rector's Council, Chief Financial Officer's, Heads of Departments, the HR

Award/GEP/Social Safety Coordination Group, HR Departments and others. Several outputs have been produced for this purpose, notably through newsletters, an article in Events magazine or through the Support and Development of Employees website, which includes both the equal opportunities agenda and HRS4R strategy - The Human Resources Strategy for Researchers / HR Award.

- A. The main agenda of the Coordinator** is to investigate the complaints submitted. She tries to identify these, name them, extract stakeholders and other parties, communicate with management/supervisors and prevent similar situations in the future with her recommendations.
- B. Another part of the agenda is to design and develop systemic measures** to support the provision of social safety at BUT.
- C. An equally important area is the educational and methodological support** of the contact and interested persons for the area of ensuring the social safety system at BUT. Supporting the F/UI in the field of social safety is an important part of the Coordinator's activities. The support consists of methodological and conceptual guidance.
- D. Awareness, information and education of the academic and non-academic community** is a solid part of the whole system.
- E. The equal opportunities agenda is an integral part of the social safety agenda.** The Coordinator confirms the existence of the BUT Gender Equality Plan (GEP), an integral part of the mandatory documentation for the project. She is also approached by F/UIs with questions regarding the ethical area for research, revising texts for project applications in the area of gender, social safety and the HR Award process. Another document is the Certificate of Social Responsibility.
- F. Another role of the Coordinator is to communicate about the social safety system, gender and the principles of the HRS4R strategy - The Human Resources Strategy for**

Researchers / HR Award at the BUT at official and unofficial meetings of different professional groups in the country and outside the country.

G. The Coordinator and Methodological support for social safety are involved in the **EULIST project and the CASEAR network.**

H. BUT signed up for institutional **membership of [ENOHE](#)** in April 2024.

GENERAL INFORMATION ON THE ACTIVITIES OF THE CONTACT AND COOPERATION PERSONS FOR SOCIAL SAFETY AT BUT

Each faculty, university institute of BUT, as well as the Halls of Residence and Dining Services (Student canteens/Canteens) have appointed contact persons as a support for social safety since April 2023. Their names are listed on the website for Social Safety at BUT and also on the F/UI websites for this area.

The activities of contact persons for Social Safety are regulated by the Guideline and the Methodical Directive.

The Faculty of Fine Arts (FFA) is the only faculty at the BUT with an appointed ombudsman. The position of the ombudsman is defined by an internal standard Dean's Directive No. 1/2022 (Social Safety) However, FFA also has a representative within the system of ensuring Social Safety at BUT.

Ombudsman of FFA - Mgr. Tomáš Fris submits separately the Final Report for the year 2023.
[Social Safety at FFA.](#)

The activities of contact persons depend on the powers defined in the [Guideline no. 8/2023 - On Social Safety at BUT](#) and in the [Methodical directive no. 4/2023 - Methodical directive on Social Safety at BUT](#), but also on the individual persons and the level of support from the F/UI themselves.

The contact persons are from the male and female staff and also students. The standard defines a composition of 1 man/1 woman, and a male or female representative for the students. Some of the faculties have more contact persons due to their size.

Contact persons have the specifics of this activity described and added to their job description. In the case of some students, it was then possible to solve this agenda using an Agreement to Complete a Job (ACJ).

The contact persons are funded by the faculty, either in the form of a regular payment to their wage or in the form of remuneration for the ACJ.

Cooperation with the Social Safety Coordinator and across the system of all contact and cooperation persons is also key.

The primary role of these persons is to be a mediator in receiving the suggestion and directing them to possible solutions, or they can listen to the submitter and advise him/her through mentoring. Their role is to recommend who to contact (according to the content communicated). Suggestions in the sense of burdening individual parties, labour law issues, etc. are not addressed at this time.

In the event that a suggestion was sent to them directly to the F/UI/U, they forwarded the suggestion to the Social Safety Coordinator. In this case, the Coordinator was in contact with the following persons and kept them informed about the investigation or involved them in the investigation itself. At the end of the investigation, these persons were then informed of the outcome.

The contact and cooperation persons (persons from the counselling centres or members of the Extended Agenda Coordination Group) participated in meetings and training sessions organised by the Social Safety Coordinator in 2023. These meetings and referrals for training participation will continue in the following period.

Self-education in social safety is recommended for each of the contact and cooperation persons.

SOCIAL SAFETY SYSTEM AT THE UNIVERSITY 2022, 2023 - 02/2024

WEBSITES

Already in the middle of 2022, a website for the Social Safety System at UT was created. It was then gradually upgraded and added to in 2023. The website received its final look in February 2024. **The Red Umbrella** was chosen as the brand for Social Safety at BUT.

TRUST BOXES

To support the whistleblowing system, boxes were placed at various locations in university buildings. So-called Trust boxes are described and marked with, for example, a sticker with a QR code that leads to a website to ensure social safety at BUT. The websites, as well as the stickers and other support, are also in EN.

A list including photos, addresses and locations is provided on the Social Safety website. Information about this list will also be provided on the web on this area at each F/UI/U. The list is in both Czech and English.

STICKER (brand umbrella)

The whole idea was conceived in April 2023 with a view to more effectively communicating the support. The inspiration for this way of informing was gained from in Europe.

The graphic design (for the sticker and banner) was created in cooperation with a copywriter, graphic designer. The QR code on the sticker points to the Social Safety website (Czech or English version).

The sticker is being applied gradually in cooperation with representatives of the F/UI/U. Suggestions for sticking places are within the Halls of Residence and Dining Services (Student canteens/Canteens), Centre of Sports Activities (CSA), the Alfons Counselling Centre, Lifelong Learning Institute (LLI), Central Library (CL), F/UI/U - meeting rooms for students, study rooms, relaxation places - other areas for students and staff (dormitory kitchens, toilets, locker places, trust boxes, Centre of Sports Activities (CSA) changing rooms, student clubs etc.



Sticker, BUT visual

SOCIAL SAFETY EMAIL

With the establishment of the Coordinator position, the creation of an email was proposed. The email, as socialnibezpeci@vutrb.cz / socialsafety@vutbr.cz, is serviced by the Social Safety Coordinator and a deputy.

TEAMS - SOCIAL SAFETY

The Coordinator has established Teams - Social Safety - a single place to store materials as a more efficient way to support Contact and Cooperation persons. Teams was also set up with a view to the possibility of a simpler format for online meetings, for example for training. Teams also allows for faster communication, both group and individual.

TRAINING OF CONTACT AND COOPERATION PERSONS

The contact persons were trained for the first time in May and June 2023, and then as agreed the training was provided by the Coordinators in cooperation with the male and female members of the Advisory Board. This included training in internal processes, the provision of the support system at BUT, in the labour law minimum and the psychological minimum, as

well as in the support system **in the Czech Republic and the experience gained from mutual meetings with other persons in a similar** position. In the case of individual trainings, the Social Safety Coordinator herself provided information. During 2023, contact persons could register individually for webinars and workshops organised by e.g. Lifelong Learning Institute (LLI), Alfons Counselling Centre, School Ombudsman Platform. Furthermore, training and development of staff and employees not only of the counselling centres of Lifelong Learning Institute (LLI), but also e.g. cooperating and contact persons were supported according to individual arrangements with the Coordinator.

SUGGESTIONS AND CASE WORK OF THE COORDINATOR

In the period 02/2023 - 03/2024, the Coordinator received 33 suggestions. Of these, 10 suggestions were made by students, 20 suggestions were made by employees, and 3 suggestions were made by persons outside the university.

Of these, 3 were anonymous. Another 6 complaints were resolved while protecting the identity of the submitter. 4 complaints were not closed due to the cessation of cooperation by the submitters.

1. Complaints were always formally addressed only after the written consent of the complainant.
2. In the case of an anonymous submission (without any contact), a decision was made as to whether or not an investigation would be initiated according to the content of the complaint.
3. In the case of an anonymous submission (from an anonymous email), a decision was made as to whether or not an investigation would be initiated according to the content of the complaint. Here, information was then requested for completion. With regard to the anonymous communication, the submitter/submitter was informed whether or not an investigation would be initiated to the extent that the anonymous submission could be dealt with. They were also informed of the limits defined by this type of submission. The communication was made in a brief communication of the outcome.

SUGGESTIONS MADE

Suggestions submitted by students

Suggestions related to:

- inappropriate behaviour between students and each other,
- inappropriate behaviour between teachers and students,
- issues related to studying - course evaluations, surveys,
- study-related issues - termination/extension of studies,
- study-related matters - credit requirements, examinations,
- abuse of power role in the case of requirements for doctoral studies.

Suggestions made by male and female employees

Suggestions were made by male and female employees or persons no longer working at the University.

The complaints concerned:

- workplace bullying (mobbing, bossing, staffing),
- labour law issues (termination of contract, dismissal, reprimand),
- disagreement with an evaluation from a senior employee,
- SHAP evaluations.

The suggestions received can be divided into:

1. One-off suggestions with consultation/discussion/intervention directly with the Coordinator or another member of the Advisory Board. Use of interview, consultation and internal mediation.
2. Suggestions where only the submitter/submitter, the identified party, and the supervisor(s) were sufficient extraction with respect to the content of the suggestion. In this case, the F/U management is informed if the content of the complaint required it. Use of interview, consultation and internal mediation.
3. Complaints where, in order to extract information, a more extensive investigation of more than one person was necessary in view of the content of the complaint (submitter/submitter, designated party/parties, manager(s), other witnesses, other departments, F/IU/U management ...). Use of interviews and consultations.

4. Complaints for which, in view of their seriousness, the intervention of a public authority (Police, Municipal District, Court) was recommended. In this case, always dealt with the Legal Department of RE.

Note: Submissions to the local authority or the Police must be made by the submitter(s) on their own behalf. The University then also makes a separate submission. The submitter/submitter may be accompanied to the relevant authority by the person who received the complaint or was made aware of the facts.

If the content of the complaint suggests that psychological assistance should be recommended, this is offered and, where appropriate, the BUT Counselling Centre of Lifelong Learning Institute (LLI) is informed (in the case of employee counselling, this is defined in the Methodical Directive).

For suggestions in points 2, 3 and 4, a summary report is always prepared with recommendations for all parties involved, including recommendations for the management of the F/UI concerned.

Counselling support is provided to the basic extent possible, and in case more visits are appropriate/necessary, the client is advised to contact the psychological outpatient clinic or psychiatric unit or other counselling services. Contacts are offered to the client (in person, with a link to the [Lifelong Learning Institute \(LLI\) website](#), with a link to [the Social Safety at BUT website](#)).

There are no time limits for dealing with complaints. The simpler complaints were dealt with within 30 to 60 calendar days.

More complex complaints were dealt with within a minimum of 60-120 calendar days, sometimes longer. The time taken to resolve complaints is dependent on a number of sub-events that are beyond our control.

To support Casework, a Methodology for Investigating Misconduct Suggestions will be completed in 2024. Its development is intended to help make the process of investigating individual allegations more predictable, from the perspective of all those who are or may be involved in some way. In particular for the contact and involved persons, including managers.

SUGGESTIONS ADDRESSED BY CONTACT AND COOPERATION PERSONS

In February 2024, Contact and Cooperation persons were asked to produce a short-anonymised report (if they had addressed anything in the course of their work).

The report was recommended to include:

- whether they had been contacted;
- what area of social safety was involved;
- who the reporting staff or students were;
- how they dealt with e.g.:
 - ✓ recommended contacting the Coordinator,
 - ✓ recommended contacting the [BUT Ethics Committee](#),
 - ✓ recommended to address with the Study Department,
 - ✓ recommended to be addressed with regard to the content of the complaint by the Vice-Dean (he/she) for Studies, etc.
 - ✓ resolved by advice/consultation...
- If they knew the solution, if they dealt directly with F/IU, information (was resolved - provided).

AREAS OF SUGGESTIONS FROM STUDENTS

Areas of concern raised by students with the Contact and Cooperation Person. Including solutions or recommendations.

- **Inappropriate behaviour between students**

Recommended solutions/solutions:

- ✓ interview and consultation,
- ✓ mediation.

- **Student x student harassment**

Recommended solutions/solutions:

- ✓ contact the local police station,

- ✓ coordinate assistance (Faculty – Study Department, the Alfons Counselling Centre, Coordinator, Contact Person, Management of Halls of Residence and Dining Services, Vice-Dean of Studies),
- ✓ arranging for the replacement of the accommodation unit within the Halls of Residence,
- ✓ individual study modification/adaptation for a limited time,
- ✓ interviews and consultations,
- ✓ mediation.

- **Academic failure**

Recommended solutions/solutions:

- ✓ individual consultations to ensure academic success (communication with the Study Departments, Vice-Deans for Studies),
- ✓ recommended contacting the Coordinator,
- ✓ recommended adjustments of the study plan (communication with Study Departments, Vice-Deans for Studies, interviews and consultations),
- ✓ recommended consultation on study adjustments via the Alfons Counselling Centre,
- ✓ psychological counselling recommendations,
- ✓ interviews and consultations.

- **Mental problems of students**

Recommended solutions/solutions:

- ✓ referral for consultation through Lifelong Learning Institute (LLI) psychological counselling,
- ✓ interviews and consultations,
- ✓ referrals for outside help.

- **Inappropriate behaviour from staff towards students**

Communication problems within the management work. Powerful behaviour. Verbal aggression. Behaviour approaching stalking.

Recommended solutions/solutions:

- ✓ interview and consultation,
- ✓ recommendations to contact the Coordinator,
- ✓ resolution through mediation,
- ✓ resolution by apology,
- ✓ resolved with F/UI management,
- ✓ resolved with the managers of the employees concerned.

AREAS OF SUGGESTIONS MADE BY MALE/FEMALE EMPLOYEES

Areas that have been brought to the attention of the Contact and Cooperation Person by the employees themselves.

The suggestions related to:

- Workplace bullying (mobbing, bossing),
- Employment issues (termination of contract, dismissal, reprimand).

Recommended solutions/solutions:

- ✓ recommended to contact the Coordinator,

SUPPORT TO THE SOCIAL SAFETY SYSTEM AT BUT 2024-2025

In 2024, the described agenda of the Coordinator will be maintained. The social safety system will be supported by an additional person who will be part of the team in the Human Resources Department not only for this agenda.

It is important to continuously strengthen, consolidate and develop this theme into the internal life of the University.

The Coordinator and the cooperation team will further develop systemic measures aimed at fostering a safe, team-based, collegial and respectful environment.

Measures will be supported by informing and educating both contact and cooperation persons, as well as academic and non-academic staff. E-learning appears to be the most appropriate form and presentations, again in English.

A two-way system between focal points will continue to be actively promoted and the Coordinator. A follow-up system of training, both methodological and case-based, is planned and practical support in the field.

To strengthen the social safety system at BUT, the plan is to reach out to student ambassadors and female ambassadors as communicators of this topic and to use social networks as a means of informing the largest possible group, in this case mainly students.

Student male and female representatives (from SKAS and other official societies) can understand and connect needs, demands and understand obligations (university, legal).

Preventive and awareness-raising work and the development of competences of both learners, lecturers and non-academics is important.

One of the objectives for the period 2024-2025 is to consolidate and strengthen the role of the Coordinator and contact persons for social safety in the university environment. Lower awareness of the importance of this issue and role, as well as occasional reluctance to change established practices, can lead to a sense of lack of support and trust from staff and students.

In 2024, a Methodology (Handbook) for dealing with complaints about negative forms of behaviour will be developed and behaviour. The Methodology is intended to underpin and improve the procedures for dealing with the actual suggestions, including recommendations. The Methodology is intended to be used mainly for contact and cooperation persons, as well as for F/UI/U managers and management.

In 2024-2025, a revision of the Guidelines and Methodical Directive on Social Safety will be carried out. The revision is already appropriate in view of the experience gained over time and as a response to the perception of this issue in the Czech Republic and Europe.

In the course of April and May 2024, 3 online seminars and 1 workshop with physical participation will be held for Contact and Cooperation persons, which is organized in cooperation with an external body - **Mobbing Free Institute**.

The sharing of experiences between persons and participation in joint events (webinars, workshops, as well as meetings and briefings) have a major impact on the development and improvement of the university community in many ways and levels and help to create a safe and equitable environment for all.

Regular information, meetings or methodologically and case-oriented educational seminars, together with dialogue, strengthen the position not only of the contact persons but also of the whole system in our university environment.

Progressive training of heads of institutes/department heads/departments/departments in the F/UI, as appropriate secretaries, AS faculty members, Dean's College will be started in the second half of 2024.

Training with physical participation, 2-3 hours in length, directly at the F/UI or at an exit meeting or similar.

Internal trainers: Ing. Bohdana Šlégrová, Ing. et Ing Radomír Kraina - Head of Human Resources Department, Mgr. Lucie Schimmelová - Personal Data Protection Officer, representative (he/she) from the Legal Department.

Presentation from the training will be available (including links and contacts).

The presentation will also be prepared in English - for self-study with possible consultations.

Areas of training:

- Labour law minimum,
- Social safety system at BUT,
- Methodological support in the personnel area (selection/admission procedures - recruitment process, forms, etc.),
- SharePoint - Information for Employees,
- Support and Development of Employees Web
- HRS4R strategy - The Human Resources Strategy for Researchers / HR Award,
- Gender Equality Plan (GEP)

Collaboration and sharing of topics with other public universities in the country is an integral and very important part of this. And also, with the School Ombudsman Platform (SOP), the [National Contact Centre for Gender & Science](#).

During the 2nd half of 2024, e-learning on Social Safety/Ethical Principles/Gender and other related topics will be prepared for the BUT environment. E-learning will be prepared for Academic/non-Academic community separately. Training on Social Safety and Ethical Principles in the form of e-learning will also be provided in 2024 at MU and CUNI, where the draft wording of each topic/issue has been developed.

SUPPORT FOR AGENDA ACTION (Social Safety, Equal Opportunities, HRS4R/HR Award Strategy)

2022

CRP18+

Central Development Project. Social safety in Czech universities in the context of academic ethics. [WEBSITE.](#)

Programme to Support Strategic Management of Universities

Institutional resources

2023

CRP18+

Central Development Project. Preventing unethical behaviour on campus and promoting competence in victim care. [WEBSITE.](#)

Programme to support the strategic management of universities

Institutional resources

2024

Programme to Support the Development of the Higher Education Sector 2024

Strengthening methodological support and the system of ensuring social safety at HEIs.

Support programme for the development of higher education for 2024-2025

Human Resource Management Strategy for 2024-2025

Programme for the Support of Strategic Management of Higher Education Institutions

Institutional resources

SOURCES

1. Own materials of the Social Safety Coordinator, Ing. Bohdana Šlégrová
2. Social Safety Website, <https://www.vut.cz/en/but/employee-support/social-safety>
3. **Combined first and second report on the activities of the Theatre faculty of Academy of Performing Arts in Prague (DAMU), Ombudsman** (May 2022 - December 2023); DAMU Ombudsman, Petr Polák
4. **Final report on the activities of the University Ombudsman and the so-called Contact Persons (ombudspersons) at the faculties and units of the CUNI for the year 2023**, Office of the University Ombudsman (Office of the Rector of the CUNI Rectorate)