Order and disciplinary regulations for students of the Vrije Universiteit Brussel

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Field of application

Article 1

These order and disciplinary regulations apply to all students, including guest students, of the Vrije Universiteit Brussel.

Principle

Article 2

Students who are part of the university community are expected to behave with a sense of responsibility, show respect for others and their environment, and demonstrate self-discipline. In that sense, the disciplinary rules should be regarded as a final instrument on which to fall back if all other means fail. At the same time, it should be emphasised that students have the right at all times to critical free speech.
Order measures

Article 3

§ 1. Lecturers are responsible for order and discipline during their teaching and examination activities. They have the right to impose appropriate measures on students who treat them disrespectfully or who disrupt classes, for the purpose of restoring order (by ordering them to leave the room, for example).

§ 2. In order to safeguard order and safety on campus, order measures can be taken by the Rector, the vice rectors, the (vice) deans and the heads of department.

Acts which may give rise to disciplinary sanctions

Article 4:

§ 1. A student may be subject to disciplinary proceedings in, for example, the following cases:
   a. commission of acts that qualify as offences, such as:
      • use of violence (in any form) against members of the university community or intentional damage to their property;
      • damage to university buildings or goods as a result of deliberate action;
      • theft of tangible or intangible property of the University or unauthorised use thereof;
      • use of false certificates, attestations or diplomas;
   b. carrying out of any acts that compromise the dignity of persons or prevent the University from fulfilling its mission as laid down in the Organic Statute;
   c. disruption of good order within the university community;
   d. damage to university buildings or goods as a result of gross negligence.

§ 2. Where one student is charged with more than one offence, the disciplinary body may decide that, for reasons of consistency between the facts, this shall give rise to only one disciplinary proceeding.

§ 3. If the disciplinary body decides that several cases are connected, it may decide to combine them. Such a decision does not imply that the students concerned will receive the same sanction.

Sanctions

Article 5:

§ 1. The following disciplinary sanctions, or a combination thereof, may be imposed:

1. warning;
2. termination of the student's rental contract in VUB's student accommodation;
3. disciplinary suspension for the use of certain facilities for students (library, learning platform, restaurant, tutoring, etc.);
4. disciplinary suspension for taking one or more course units or certain educational activities;
5. disciplinary suspension for all educational activities and all facilities for students;
6. disciplinary suspension for all educational activities and all facilities for students, including one or more examination period(s);
7. exclusion.
§ 2. A disciplinary suspension for taking one or more course units and/or participating in course activities and/or the use of facilities for students, whether or not including examination period(s), may be pronounced for a maximum period of one year;

§ 3. Exclusion may be pronounced only for acts where intent has been demonstrated and results in the person involved immediately ceasing to be a student. The person concerned may only be re-registered after a period of at least two calendar years and after admission by the Vice Rector for Education and Student Affairs. This period of two calendar years commences on the day after announcement of the decision.

§ 4. The expiry of the duration of the disciplinary sanction shall mean that the sanction in question may no longer be taken into account, except in cases of repeated infringement as regards the matter for which the sanction was imposed.

Disciplinary bodies

Article 6

The disciplinary bodies are:

- the Vice Rector for Education and Student Affairs (hereafter: the Vice Rector):
  The latter shall lead the investigation and take a decision in accordance with Article 10. He may delegate his powers under these regulations to one of the members of the independent academic staff appointed for this purpose by the Board of Governors on the recommendation of the Vice Rector.

- the Disciplinary Committee:
  The latter shall take a decision in accordance with Article 17.

- the Disciplinary Committee on appeal:
  Disciplinary Committee under the auspices of the Board of Governors; The latter shall take a decision in accordance with Article 20 § 1.

Investigation

Article 7

After a report or complaint to the Vice Rector, the investigation will be led by him.

The Vice Rector may be assisted by a member of the independent academic staff or, in the case of the Secretariat, by a member of the administrative technical staff who is not an interested party.

Anyone making a complaint or notification must clearly identify himself at least with regard to the Vice Rector, but may request discretion.

Article 8

§1. The disciplinary file shall be examined within a reasonable period of time.

§ 2. At the request of one of the persons concerned or on his own initiative, the Vice Rector may invite the persons concerned to an interview with a view to reconciliation and/or reparation of the damage. If agreements are made during this meeting, the duration of the implementation is also determined. Disciplinary investigations shall be suspended pending the implementation of these arrangements.

Protective measure

Article 9
The Vice Rector may take a protective measure in the interests of the order and safety of the university. The measure and its duration shall be justified. The student is invited to be heard at the latest within seven calendar days after the imposition of the protective measure.

**Closing the investigation**

**Article 10**

At the end of the disciplinary investigation, the Vice Rector decides:

a. dismissal  
b. warning  
c. referral to the Disciplinary Committee.

**Article 11**

§ 1. A copy of the Vice Rector’s decision is sent to the student.

§ 2. If a disciplinary sanction is contemplated (cf. Article 10 b. or 10 c.), the student will be informed in writing of the alleged facts and of the nature of the decision contemplated against him. The student is entitled to assistance from a person of his choice and to inspect the file.

**Article 12**

Any protective measure shall automatically lapse in the event of a decision of dismissal or reprimand by the Vice Rector.

**Article 13**

When the Vice Rector takes a decision to admonish a student, the student may lodge an appeal within a period of 14 calendar days after notification, by registered letter addressed to the chairperson of the Disciplinary Committee. In a reasoned notice of appeal, the student may request to be heard. The appeal shall not suspend the enforcement.

**Disciplinary Committee**

**Article 14**

§ 1. The Disciplinary Committee shall be composed of the Rector (or his representative), who acts as the chairperson of the Disciplinary Committee, three members of the academic staff and three students.

§ 2. The members of the academic staff, who form part of the Disciplinary Committee, shall be designated by the Board of Governors.

Where appropriate, the representative of the Rector will be appointed by the Board of Governors on the recommendation of the Rector.

The student members shall be appointed by the Student Council.

§ 3. The members of the Disciplinary Committee shall in this capacity be bound by secrecy.

§ 4. A lawyer shall act as the secretariat of the Disciplinary Committee.

**Article 15**

In the event of referral to the Disciplinary Committee, the student shall be summoned by the chairperson of the Disciplinary Committee at least 14 working days before the hearing. At the hearing, the student can present his defence.
Article 16
The hearing of the Disciplinary Committee shall take place behind closed doors.

The Disciplinary Committee may take any investigative measures it deems necessary, including the hearing of witnesses.

Article 17
After hearing the student, the Disciplinary Committee, by a simple majority of votes, takes either a decision to dismiss or a decision to impose a disciplinary sanction (or a combination of sanctions) as stipulated in Article 5 § 1. If the votes are tied, the decision will be made in favour of the student. Any protective measure shall lapse after judgment has been given.

Appeal
Article 18
§ 1. The student shall have a period of 14 calendar days from the written notification of the decision to lodge an appeal.

§ 2. The reasoned notice of objection must be sent by registered mail to the chairperson of the Board of Governors.

§ 3. In the reasoned notice of objection, the student may request to be heard.

§ 4. The appeal shall not suspend the enforcement out of the decision

Article 19
A member of the Disciplinary Committee may not be a member of the Disciplinary Committee on appeal.

Article 20
§ 1. After taking all the investigative measures deemed necessary, the Disciplinary Committee on appeal shall take a decision by a simple majority of votes. Should there be a tied vote, this shall be interpreted as being in favour of the student.

§ 2. The decision shall be notified to the person concerned by registered mail within 14 calendar days of its enforceability.