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# CHARTER OF INCLUSION

## I. PREAMBLE

Dear reader

Our society is very diverse, but unfortunately, minority groups are not always well understood or accepted. Origin, orientation, race, gender, and mental or physical disabilities are factors that often unconsciously determine how you are treated and what opportunities you get in terms of education, social contacts, work and so on. This also applies to student life.

The diversity in our society is reflected in the composition of the student population, which plays an important role in the future of society. Unfortunately, diversity thinking is not yet sufficiently integrated into student life. This manifests itself, for example, in the one-sidedness of the audience at our parties, the themes of club nights, and the topics of lectures and other events. Not everyone gets the same opportunities to participate or feel at home.

Therefore, as representatives of the student circles of campus UZ Gent (Dentalia, HILOK, VBK, VGK and VLAK), the main action points by which we want to make our operation and student life more inclusive. We ask you to sign this charter to indicate your conscious and active desire to work on this, as a commilito, member, student or sympathizer. In this way, we also hope to inspire other students and associations to follow our example. Because change we do together.

## II. MISSION AND VISION

At our university, every student and employee has a unique combination of visible and less visible personality characteristics. Dealing with diversity means utilizing the qualities, talents, experiences and competencies of all students and employees, taking into account the diversity of individuals and groups within the university.

The Faculty of Medicine and Health Sciences is committed to inclusion on the study floor. We want a learning environment where everyone feels at home and can develop their talents, fully in line with the DNA of our faculty: togetherness, integrity and commitment. In addition, we strive to make everyone feel safe and welcome at every event we host.

### III. COMMITMENTS OF THE PARTIES

#### 1. OPENNESS STUDENT UNION

As a student organization, we are open to everyone. This means that during events where our student organization attends, we take care to include everyone in conversations, activities and games without regarding anyone as “different.”

#### 2. DIVERSITY OF GOVERNANCE

Diversity in governance in terms of ethnicity, orientation, race, gender, and intellectual or physical disabilities becomes the norm within our student organization. We strive for a balanced gender distribution in the student organization and promote open communication during elections and when proposing various board positions. We also emphasize the importance of gender neutrality in our organization, so that everyone, regardless of their gender identity, feels welcome. Thus, we want to make it clear that everyone can run for office and have a fair chance to serve on the board.

#### 3. INCLUSION

Inclusion means designing our structures and activities so that a diverse group of people can participate equally. We strive for super-diversity, where heterogeneity and pluralism are central rather than neutrality. Inclusion is a priority in all our activities, and this will also be the basis of our learning activities.

#### 4. DIVERSITY OF AUDIENCES

We aim to bring together a diverse audience and give everyone a chance to get acquainted. We achieve this through open communication that is accessible to all. As confirmation of this, we already bring people together during the induction days. Furthermore, this charter of inclusion will be presented during these induction days to emphasize our commitment to this goal.

##### 4.1 IMAGERY OR STEREOTYPING

We are aware that certain imagery or stereotyping can be hurtful, and we make others aware of this as well. Our goal is to keep all communication neutral and inclusive. If we notice a violation of this, we consider it a violation of the charter. We will therefore take action according to our established disciplinary policy. In addition, we encourage our members to notice or report any violations themselves.

##### 4.2 LANGUAGE

We understand that language can be a barrier for some students, and we are mindful of that. Important communication is therefore offered in both Dutch and English. In addition, we use clear and

understandable language, as well as imagery, on posters, flyers, etc, so that this information is accessible to everyone.

#### 4.3 CRITICAL VIEW OF LIMITED AUDIENCE

We are critically examining how to reach a wider audience, as we currently sometimes only appeal to a limited group. We strive to actively reach a diverse audience, including through social media, by ensuring that every student is a member of their year group on Facebook. To reinforce this, all the student groups are willing to spread information by passing by auditoriums and posters hanging in the hallways so that all students are reached, including those who do not have access to social media.

#### 4.4 REFERENCE

We oblige ourselves to question our own perspective during discussions or conflicts. This means that we are open to other opinions and thoughts. We are willing to listen to everyone and show respect for their views.

#### 4.5 SPECIAL STATUS

We show respect for people with special status and take this into account when planning activities.

### 5. COMPLETING ACTIVITIES

We are being critical in planning activities and actively pursuing themes that promote diversity. We consciously avoid provoking or hurting others and apply this principle to every aspect of every activity. Non-inclusive texts from the cantus that violate the spirit of this charter will not be used.

#### 5.1 MINORITIES

We join forces with organizations working for minorities, such as advertising and sponsorship, to show that we also care for them.

#### 5.2 RECEPTION EVENTS

We make sure everyone feels safe and welcome at our events. At smaller events we remind the full praesidium that this is a priority. For larger events, we provide security, who along with the praesidium are responsible for maintaining order and safety. If a breach does occur by a member or visitor, appropriate sanctions will apply. If someone does not feel safe or welcome, we encourage them to talk about it, possibly with the inclusivity ambassador. In addition, we strive to make our events as wheelchair accessible as possible.

## 6. INCLUSIVITY AMBASSADOR

We appoint an inclusivity ambassador to whom anyone can turn with questions, complaints or comments about inclusiveness. The ambassador is considered impartial and handles all matters discreetly, so this person will be accessible to anyone who needs confidential advice. Therefore, we choose to have someone from the Diversity Committee of the Faculty of Medicine and Health Sciences to be selected for this role.

## 7. VIOLATIONS

In case of flagrant violations of attitudes listed in this charter with significant impact on fellow students, disciplinary action can be taken according to existing procedures at UGent.

### Drafted on (date) at (place):

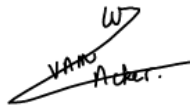
12/06/2024 at Ghent

### On behalf of: (participating circles)

Zana Van Hulle (HILOK)



Wout Van Acker (VBK)



Robbe De Keyser (Dentalia)



Margot De Schryver (VGK)



Tess Timmermans (VLAK)



### With the support of:

By signing this charter, I agree with the above positions and pledge to support student organizations in their mission to make student life welcoming for all. Together, we will bring change.

