

Process for filing a complaint according to § 9 of the Statutes on diversity and protection against and dealing with discrimination at the University of the Arts Bremen (anti-discrimination Statutes)

Instructions for filing a complaint:

- At the University of the Arts Bremen, the president is responsible for dealing with discrimination complaints. The president as the Complaints Office can assign a person or an office with carrying out the process.
- A complaint must be submitted to the Complaints Office via e-mail or in person, in order to record the complaint. A complaint should contain the following information: description, place and date of the incident, individuals involved, witnesses, evidence (if available), and information about measures already taken or about other persons who have been previously informed, if any.
- There is no time limit for filing a complaint, unless deadlines are established by law.
- The Complaints Office will document all of the essential procedural steps as well as all hearings and established facts. After the process is completed, any data collected, written documents, and notes are stored in accordance with data protection law and will be destroyed afterward.
- All individuals involved are required to maintain confidentiality, if legally possible. Fundamentally, however, no one is entitled to an anonymous handling of a complaint.
- To protect the individual rights of everyone involved, care must be taken to keep the circle of those involved as small as possible.
- The Complaints Office must immediately hold a hearing for the accused as soon as the hearing for the complainant has been completed. Alternatively, a written statement can be submitted.
- If the process is delayed, the persons involved will be informed about the status of the proceedings and the reason for the delay.
- If the accused and the complainant so desire, a trusted individual may take part in the hearings.
- The Complaints Office, or the person or office assigned to carry out the process, may call upon responsible administrators from the relevant departments (for instance, in case immediate measures must be taken) and expand the hearings to include participants or witnesses in order to clarify the facts of the case.
- Based on the results of the investigations, the president will decide upon sanctions or other measures to be taken pursuant to § 10 of the statutes, or else to put a halt to the proceedings. The results will be shared in writing with the individuals involved.

Before submitting a complaint, it is strongly advised that the complainant take advantage of the free and confidential counseling offered by the agencies and counseling services listed in the overview.

Besides counseling for individuals, another possible option is to carry out a low-key intervention in accordance with § 7 for the purpose of reaching an understanding with the person or persons perceived to have engaged in a discriminatory act. Anyone belonging to the University of the Arts Bremen may consult with the ADE (Arbeitsstelle gegen Diskriminierung und Gewalt at University Bremen) to make use of these services.

Overview: Complaint procedure

Upon submitting a complaint to the HfK's Complaints Office in writing, via e-mail, or in person, the **complaints procedure is initiated.**

Fact finding investigation

The Complaints Office will begin the fact-finding investigation and hear the complainant promptly. During the initial hearing, the complainant will be informed of their rights, responsibilities, and the next steps in the process. The individual will (again) be advised of the different options for support and counseling services.

Response from the accused

The Complaints Office will inform the person accused of the essential content of the complaint. The hearing or the solicitation of the accused's response will occur immediately after the complainant's hearing.

Interviewing other persons when necessary

The Complaints Office may expand the fact-finding investigation to hearing statements from other persons (participants or witnesses).

Initiating immediate action if necessary

The Complaints Office or the assigned person or office will investigate to verify the facts

The Complaints Office will determine

- which measures or sanctions related to labor or employment law, university regulations, legal status, or judicial statutes should be initiated in accordance with §10 of the anti-discrimination statutes
- if precautionary measures should be taken to prevent further discrimination, (sexual) harassment, violence, and/or continued abuse of power
- if the process should be discontinued when the facts are not sufficient enough to prove discrimination, (sexual) harassment, violence, or abuse of power
- if a decision should be made as to whether to take further measures or initiate a review, if necessary

The complainant and the accused will be informed of the results of the review in writing

The goal is to carry out and conclude the process as quickly as possible.

If the accusation is not confirmed, care will be taken to ensure that all those involved will not be subjected to further harm, unless the complaint was lodged against the complainant's better judgment.