

A photograph of a modern TU Delft building with a glass facade and a blue and white grid pattern. The TU Delft logo is visible at the top of the building. In the foreground, there are green trees with yellowing leaves, suggesting autumn. The bottom half of the image is a solid blue and green gradient.

**TU Delft**

**Plan for change:  
towards a socially safe  
TU Delft**

# Content

<b>Foreword</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>1 Introduction</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>2 A socially safe top university</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>3 Culture change first</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>4 Continuous dialogue</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>5 Socially safe for all</b>	<b>18</b>
<b>6 Social safety governance</b>	<b>21</b>
<b>7 Monitoring social safety</b>	<b>25</b>
<b>Annex 1: Suggestions</b>	<b>27</b>
<b>Annex 2: Meetings</b>	<b>30</b>
<b>Annex 3: Outcomes Mentimeter</b>	<b>36</b>
<b>Annex 4: Suggestion box</b>	<b>39</b>

# Foreword

A few months ago, we received a confrontational report from the Inspectorate on social safety in our organisation. We were shocked by this, because we want to be an organisation to be proud of and a place where everyone is happy to work. A place where we work together constructively, where we treat each other with respect and do not exclude anyone. Where discussions can take place without unintentionally harming each other. Where people dare to speak up and be heard. An organisation where courage is shown and we are not afraid to admit that mistakes are made. Simply an organisation that we all want to belong to. An organisation where everyone jumps into their car, train, bike or laptop with a smile on their face every day.

We can be that kind of TU Delft. We believe in it. Over the past few weeks, we have worked together to map out a route to get there. Because we are not yet where we want to be. Some colleagues have been and still are in a tight spot, they feel they have not been treated fairly, they do not feel comfortable or they have been harmed. We need to do better and everyone can and should do their bit.

In the time it has taken us to come up with this plan, a lot has been learned about what works and what doesn't. We are learning from each other so that together we can get better. Many colleagues, students and alumni spoke up, dared to be vulnerable and overwhelmingly shared ideas. This sometimes involved a lot of emotion and this was necessary. Gradually, we have turned these emotions into a path that leads to the TU Delft we want to be. We are not there yet, even now that we have drawn up this plan. This plan is only the beginning of this route and will be constantly adjusted in the coming years based on what we learn on our journey. We feel and see an overwhelming desire to move forward together, a curiosity about what lies ahead and a belief that we can do it together.

Let us head out to become an organisation that we are proud of in every respect. So that we can come to TU Delft in good mood every day to contribute our ideas, knowledge and skills. That is what we believe in and that is what we want to be. This plan lays the foundations.

# 1 Introduction

*In recent months, we have been intensively discussing social safety. This Plan for change is the result of that. In this introduction, we reflect on the immediate reason for the plan and how it came about. We also describe how the plan is structured.*

In 2023, following signs of social usafelty among (former) employees of TU Delft, the Education Inspectorate launched an investigation. The Inspectorate came to the conclusion that TU Delft had seriously neglected the care of the employees concerned. The Inspectorate therefore ordered TU Delft to restore care for its employees, so that the organisation becomes socially safer and can grow socially. To this end, TU Delft must draw up an action plan by 16 May 2024. This plan will focus on leadership, culture, governance and continuous social dialogue. In February 2025, the inspectorate will carry out a survey on the recovery process.

Besides this report by the Inspectorate of Education, there are several other internal and external studies of relevance to this change plan. These include the TU Delft Employee Monitor, the TU Delft D&I Survey, the TU Delft Integrity System Analysis, the Annual Reports of Confidential Advisors and Ombuds Officers TU Delft, and the KNAW report on social safety in Dutch science. Other reports and handbooks we consulted were 'Advice on tackling sexual transgressive behaviour and sexual violence in higher education and science' and 'Culture change in the workplace' by government commissioner Mariëtte Hamer, and the Rathenau report 'An uncertain start'.

## How this Plan for change came about

In recent months, discussions on social safety have been held within the TU Delft community. In addition, five TU-wide meetings were organised for employees and students, partly in the presence of the Executive Board and the Supervisory Board. Experiences were discussed, as well as the importance of social safety within TU Delft and what needs to be improved in the area of social safety. Ideas for improving social safety were also discussed with other universities and experts. Various methods, both online and offline, were used to give everyone the opportunity to contribute in a safe way.

Within TU Delft, in-depth discussions on social safety were held with the Graduate School, deans and directors, DEWIS (Delft Women in Science), the Works and Student Councils, Delft Young Academy, PhD Council, ZieSO (secretaries' network), HR, faculty secretaries, D&I Board and Faculty D&I officers, Integrity board and Integrity Officer, Integral Safety, the team of confidential advisers, Student Council, Works Council, ESA, Communication and Legal services. To learn from others, we also met with Twente University, Wageningen University, Erasmus University Rotterdam, the University of Groningen and Utrecht University in the person of Naomi Ellemers and Government Commissioner for Sexual Transgressive Behaviour and Sexual Violence Mariëtte Hamer.

Talks or meetings do not provide the safety needed for everyone to share experiences or provide input. Therefore, meetings included the use of the Mentimeter and conversations in sub-groups. In

addition, physical and digital suggestion boxes were opened and people were able to share issues through an online tool. More than 350 responses were received<sup>1</sup>.

### **Guidance, feedback and decision-making**

An advisory committee supported the development process. A broad representation of the organisation was continuously involved in a focus group to make the process as sound, safe and inclusive as possible. The sounding board group also provided feedback on a draft version of the plan on several occasions. The same applies to the management board (deans and directors).

The Works Council (OR) and the Student Council (SR) were also closely involved in the development of the Plan for change. Each week, their chairs received an update from the Executive Board. In addition, they were also involved in the drafting process to ensure appropriate input from their constituencies.

The Plan for change was adopted by the Executive Board on 14 May, incorporating the results of the process. In doing so, the Executive Board explicitly checked whether the drafting process had been carried out carefully, whether all relevant sections within TU Delft had been involved and whether their input had been included and weighed in the drafting process.

## **For both staff and students: the TU Delft community**

The Inspectorate's report concerns the social safety of employees. However, we are concerned with improving social safety for the entire TU Delft community. This plan therefore concerns employees as well as students.

The TU Delft community has a very diverse composition. Of the total workforce, 38.2% are women. Over half of them work as support staff<sup>2</sup>. Of all men employed at TU Delft, 30.6% work in a support position. 41.9% of staff are non-Dutch.<sup>3</sup> Twelve directorates collectively form the university department. Together with employees in the faculties, they are responsible for all support issues. Over 7,200 FTE of staff work across TU Delft.

Apart from the staff, there are over 26,000 students with a fascination for science, design and engineering following one (or more) of the 50 bachelor's and master's degree programmes spread across eight faculties. A quarter of all students are non-Dutch and as many as 70% of PhD candidates come from one of the dozens of other countries represented at TU Delft.

---

<sup>1</sup> See Annex 1 for a summary of these responses.

<sup>2</sup> 'Support staff' means all paid support staff, including student assistants. Other categories include: scientific staff (professor, dean, assistant professor, associate professor and tenure trackers), other academic staff (who are not part of scientific staff or PhD candidates, such as lecturers, postdocs and researchers), and PhD candidates (all paid PhD candidates).

<sup>3</sup> Source: TU Delft, facts and figures ([Feiten en Cijfers \(tudelft.nl\)](https://www.tudelft.nl/feiten-en-cijfers))

## Reading guide

As TU Delft, we want to be a socially safe top university. In **chapter 2**, we describe what this means for us and where we are currently not doing well in terms of social safety. We note that there is a gap between where we want to be and where we are now, and indicate how we want to bridge that gap.

In **chapter 3**, we then work out in more concrete terms how we intend to do that. This requires a change in culture, supported by a change in organisational structure and a system to ensure social safety. In some cases, the measures needed are already clear. These are listed in chapter 3. In other cases, we do not yet know enough. We will discuss this further.

A continuous dialogue is the basis for our culture change. **Chapter 4** is about this continuous dialogue. We conduct this dialogue on past experiences, on social safety within TU Delft and on the further development of our Plan for change.

TU Delft needs to be socially safe for everyone. Within TU Delft, there are groups that are particularly vulnerable to social unsafety. In **chapter 5**, we reflect on this and describe how we ensure that TU Delft becomes socially safe for these groups as well. Again, this requires ongoing dialogue with these groups in order to arrive at concrete additional measures.

Finally, in **chapters 6 and 7** we describe the management and monitoring of social safety. Here, we distinguish between the development phase in which the Plan for change is implemented and elaborated, and the regular phase that starts when social safety has become a natural part of TU Delft.

## 2 A socially safe top university

*Our vision as TU Delft is to contribute to solving complex and urgent societal issues. We do this by educating highly skilled engineers who are creative, innovative and responsible, by pushing the boundaries of the technical sciences, by developing innovative applications, and by stimulating entrepreneurship. A **socially safe TU Delft** is an absolute precondition for fulfilling this vision.*

For us, social safety means that we treat each other as staff and students with respect. That we treat each other as equals and that we belong, regardless of our background, position, gender or identity. Social safety also means that we dare to speak our minds and are not afraid to say what we think. Even if we disagree. This is especially true for people in a position of dependency. Finally, social safety means that we feel protected from undesirable behaviour.

### Social safety within TU Delft<sup>4</sup>

Within TU Delft, improvements are necessary in the area of social safety. Firstly, this has to do with our **organisational structure**. There are significantly more men than women at TU Delft and our community is very international. In addition, hierarchical structures, status and informal positions of power play a role. All this makes PhD candidates, international staff and women especially vulnerable in terms of social safety. For example, the dependent position of PhD candidates can sometimes lead to social unsafety. The same dependency can also play a role between students and their evaluator. The informal hierarchy between support and academic staff can also lead to a feeling of inequality. Furthermore, the size of the organisation makes it complicated to keep track of social safety problems and solutions. It also makes it difficult to address and manage social safety in the same way everywhere. Finally, leadership (which goes beyond managerial tasks) is not yet seen as a fully-fledged role everywhere within TU Delft. This can also have negative consequences for social safety.

Our culture is characterised by a focus on content and reason. Talking about attitudes and behaviour, dealings and cooperation, emotions and relationships doesn't come naturally. Furthermore, processes and agreements, especially when it comes to integrity and social safety, seem to be secondary to doing what you think is right. This is at odds with due diligence. In addition to care, a lack of transparency is also mentioned as a concern. This concerns the transparency of evaluation processes, but also the handling and processing of complaints, reports and signals. Finally, not everyone has equal opportunities within TU Delft; this is a particular problem for minority groups.

Our **system** is not sufficiently focused on preventing social unsafety. Efforts are being made in various places, but they are inconsistent and uncoordinated. As a result, the focus on prevention varies greatly from one programme, management or faculty to another. There are also big differences in the knowledge and experience of managers in promoting social safety. This emerged from the meetings and interviews. There are also suggestions that this applies to the Executive Board as well.

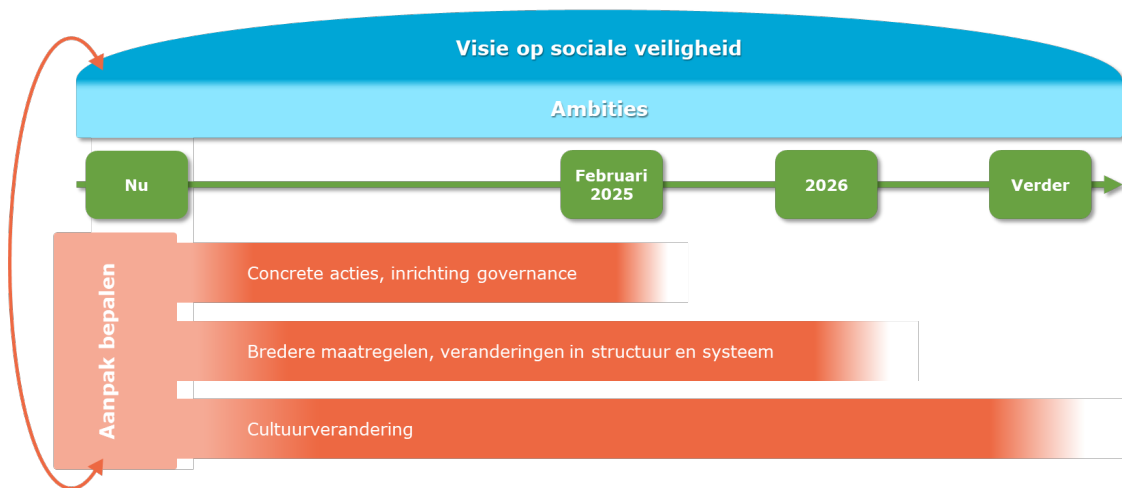
---

<sup>4</sup> This description of social safety within TU Delft is based on various reports and analyses on social safety within and outside TU Delft (see chapter 1 for an overview of these). This description is built up along the classification: structure, culture, system. This classification is used in the report *Sociale veiligheid in de Nederlandse wetenschap* (KNAW, 2022) to analyse social safety problems and identify solutions.

Furthermore, the repressive side of the system, i.e. the follow-up, is not functioning properly. Maintenance is overdue and too much of the community does not trust the system.

## Our vision of change

If we look at where we want to be in terms of social safety and where we are now, it is clear that there is a gap between the two. Discussions in recent months have made it clear that we do not yet know exactly how to close this gap. The inspection report is clear and we need to work on it. But we do not yet know enough about what solutions will really contribute to making TU Delft socially safe. But we have no time to lose, because change is necessary. That is why we are adopting an approach that combines concrete actions with the further elaboration of our ambitions and corresponding steps. After all, in some cases it is already clear what measures are needed to improve social safety.



### Concrete actions

In the coming period, we will immediately start working on concrete actions from this plan for change (see chapter 3 for a description of these actions). We will also ensure that we have the governance in place to support change in the area of social safety (see chapter 6 for a description of this governance).

### Elaboration of vision and broader measures

In the coming period, we will continue to work out which measures and organisational changes are necessary to improve social safety. We will do this together as a TU Delft community, using the following principles for change:

- **Leading by example:** The tone at the top sets the tone when it comes to culture (change). This includes leading by example, taking action and creating space for open dialogue.
- **Bottom-up:** But culture change comes not only from the top, but also from the bottom up. Change must be supported by the community, embedded in the structure and system from the top down, and validated by exemplary conduct.
- **Participatory:** Everyone has the opportunity to participate in this process of culture change. This can be done by *thinking about solutions together*, implementing them together, sometimes even *making decisions together* and *learning together* from what works and what does not.



- **Nothing about us without us<sup>5</sup>** : As an extension of the previous principle, we will not do anything without giving the people concerned an active role and a voice in the process. This applies in particular to (minority) groups within TU Delft such as women, international staff/students and PhD candidates.
- **Reflection and learning central**: Together, we need to get better at finding out what works. We do this by focusing on reflection and learning, sharing and evaluating. In this way, we can better understand what it takes to make TU Delft socially safe and adapt our approach accordingly.
- **Leveraging knowledge**: There is an incredible amount of knowledge and brainpower at TU Delft. About change processes, about what works and what does not work in the field of social safety. Let's use this power of the community. But let's also make use of external knowledge and continue to gather feedback from experts.

### **Social safety working conferences: a first meaningful step**

As a first concrete step, we are organising working conferences on social safety to further flesh out our change process. To do this, we need to refine the vision of social safety and discuss and develop measures that will contribute to it.

Many ideas about what is needed have been put forward in recent months (see the annexes to this plan for these suggestions). During the working conferences we will discuss these with each other as staff and students. Our principles for change will of course apply.

These working conferences will start during 2024.

---

<sup>5</sup> [Nothing About Us Without Us: Disability Oppression and Empowerment on JSTOR](#)

## 3 Culture change first

*A culture change is necessary to achieve a socially safe TU Delft. Such a cultural change takes time. We need to work together and determine what works and what is needed.*

We know that elements in our current structure, culture and system form a breeding ground for social unsafety within TU Delft. We want to work on removing this breeding ground. This requires a cultural change. This cultural change will be supported by changes in our organisational structure and the system used to manage it.

In some cases it is clear what measures are needed to improve social safety. In many other cases, we do not yet know enough and need to work together to determine this: 'It will also be a period of experimentation and adjustment,' someone said. How far we have progressed varies from subject to subject and from organisational unit to organisational unit. It is clear, for example, that we need to invest in leadership so that managers in all parts of TU Delft see it as a full role. But we need to work out in more detail which measures are appropriate for this.

### Culture change

To improve social safety, we need to change our culture. This is what we want to focus on. Our vision of social safety is the compass that guides the direction of change. Together, we will discover what it takes to get there, knowing that it will take time and that culture is not completely malleable, but can be changed.

Changing culture is about understanding, opening up and adapting existing (unwritten) norms and values that determine how we treat each other within TU Delft. It starts with a conversation about what kind of behaviour we should expect from each other. It is about desired rather than undesired behaviour. How do we want to work together? What do we expect from one another? What exactly do we mean by being respectful? When do we get it right?

This conversation will not come naturally, but needs to be organised together, especially at the beginning. We want to move towards a situation where it is normal to talk about behaviour. We will need to help each other. Changes in our structure can support this. Think about feedback training or conflict management. But also better embedding mutual discussion in the R&D cycle, offering (external) support for teams to talk to each other, or ensuring more mutual understanding between academic and support staff.

When talking to people in a dependent or vulnerable position, special attention is needed. We know it can be particularly difficult for them to speak out. We want to do more together to ensure that everyone feels free to do so. For example, PhD candidates themselves have come up with many ideas on how to reduce this vulnerability. One example is to make it easier for them to change supervisors. We will discuss these and other suggestions at the working conferences. An overview of the proposals can be found in the appendices.

### Concrete actions

Culture change theory tells us that it is a long-term process. It takes time to change ingrained patterns of behaviour. The way to do this is to talk about it, combined with changes in our organisational structure and system. Long-term does not mean sitting on our hands. The first step is to continue the dialogue among ourselves. About culture, about social safety and about what it takes to make TU Delft socially safe. Chapter 4 describes in detail how this ongoing dialogue will take place. This includes:

- Organisation of working conferences on social safety open to all. These working conferences will focus on:
  - Reviewing and developing our vision of the kind of organisation we want to be
  - Working out our ambitions and the changes we need to make to get there
  - Discussing actions taken in the meantime
- Establish and/or maintain dialogue on behaviour within and across departments, faculties and programmes.
- The Executive Board engages with faculties and departments on social safety.

## A structure that supports change

Dialogue alone is not enough to bring about cultural change. Behaviour is driven and maintained by the way TU Delft is organised. Adjustments are therefore needed here as well. First, this concerns **HRM and the recognition** of performance, partly through the Recognition and Rewards Programme. At present, the focus is often on excellence in content or organisation rather than on cooperation or behaviour. We want to move to a situation where we value each other for who we are and for the contribution we make. This could be helping a colleague, organising a meeting, making an academic breakthrough or working for minorities within TU Delft. So appreciation is about much more than excellent performance. It is also about the things that contribute to a socially safe working and study climate in which we can learn and work.

Second, we want to ensure that hierarchy, status and informal positions of power play a smaller role within TU Delft. There is always a certain degree of **hierarchy**, but our vulnerable groups need to be much better protected from power inequalities. This also applies to the relationship between scientific and support staff. All sorts of suggestions were mentioned, such as an (external) second pair of eyes during an evaluation process or a maximum number of PhD candidates per supervisor.

Investing in **leadership** is also part of such a structural change. Leadership should be seen as a full role everywhere at TU Delft, but this is not yet the case. It is not only about hierarchical or functional leadership, but also about leadership by, for example, supervisors or employees who have worked at TU Delft for a long time. Indeed, leaders can make an important contribution to a socially safe TU Delft by setting an example. Leaders set the standard within a group for how people treat each other. We also expect leaders to act appropriately when there is social unsafety. This is often not easy. Therefore, we develop training and support for dealing with situations of social unsafety and for promoting a socially safe environment.

If we have learned anything, it is that our managers cannot do it alone. It is therefore necessary to reflect together on our own behaviour and that of each other and our managers. We can build moments for this into the R&D cycle, but informal conversations about it are also valuable. What's

more, when appointing people to management or leadership roles, we should pay more attention to collaboration, culture and behavioural skills, rather than just looking at someone's substantive qualities.

Together, we want to get a **better grip** on the state of social safety and what needs to be done to improve it. There are many social safety initiatives in departments, faculties and among students. We can get a lot more out of them if we support and coordinate them better. We also want to monitor how social safety develops within TU Delft. Where are the risks? What is the trend in the number of reports? Do the people in leadership positions reflect our community? We have various tools for this, but we want to use them better to identify and adjust where necessary.

### Concrete actions

- Taking HRM, valuation, hierarchy/power and leadership measures that can support the intended culture change.
  - During the working conferences, we discuss this with each other based on the input and ideas gathered in the past months. At these talks, we invite in particular the (vulnerable) groups concerned.
- Introduction of a 'licence to lead' (working title) in faculties and directorates (this by analogy with the university teaching qualification). This means that a manager develops knowledge and competences appropriate to the profession of manager, including in the field of social safety.
- Attention to promoting a socially safe working environment in the recruitment, training and education of managers.
- Establish and implement a social safety monitor (linked to integrity), starting with a baseline measurement.
- Periodic analysis of vulnerabilities within TU Delft in the area of social safety (and integrity).

## A system that ensures social safety

A system in which staff, students, managers, confidential advisors, ombuds officers, student advisors and mentors, Integrity Office, D&I Office and relevant organisational units (especially HR, ESA, and Safety & Security) work together on social safety. This requires training and support for the people who have a role to play in this system.

This system is based on a shared vision of behaviour and social safety. We will therefore work together to revise and refine our Code of Conduct. This renewed Code of Conduct will guide our actions and the conversations we will have regularly about behaviour within our programmes, teams and divisions. This is how we keep the conversation alive.

We will continue to ensure that our safety net is in place. After all, we all need to be able to rely on the facilities and procedures that are in place. The safety net needs to be accessible and known. Where can you go with a question, problem or dilemma? What can we expect from each other and from our managers? But it is also important what role confidants, mentors, student advisors and ombuds officers can play. This should be clear to everyone and communicated clearly.

Confidence in the safety net also depends on our facilities being in order. So we will update outdated rules. We will also be as transparent as possible about what the consequences (if any) are when someone crosses the line. This also helps to build confidence in the safety net.

Finally, clear communication about the outcome of a problem or investigation is important for this trust. Not to appoint blame, but to learn. It should become more normal to talk about painful situations and mistakes. We are a learning organisation. Everyone makes mistakes. And as painful as it may be, this also happens when dealing with situations of social unsafety. But let's be honest about it.

#### **Concrete actions**

- Review of the TU Delft Code of Conduct in consultation with the TU Delft community. This code of conduct (or a further elaboration of it) includes:
  - An elaboration of rules of conduct (what is desirable and undesirable behaviour?)
  - A demand-oriented overview of social safety facilities and procedures
  - An elaboration of possible sanctions for acting in breach of the TU Delft Code of Conduct
- Updating a social safety roadmap containing options/routes for staff and students who experience social unsafety or undesirable behaviour.
- Investigate whether there should be a central hotline where employees can go with a complaint, report or signal.
- Increasing the visibility and awareness of officials in the safety net (such as confidential advisors and ombuds officers).
- Updating or drawing up various regulations and procedures, including a Research Protocol, the TU Delft Complaints Procedure for Undesirable Behaviour, the Student Ombuds Officer Regulations and the Regulations on Reporting Irregularities at TU Delft (whistle-blower regulations). In all these regulations, attention will be paid to safeguarding the privacy of the person making the report.

## 4 Continuous dialogue

*Our ongoing dialogue on social safety is the foundation of the culture change we seek. Without dialogue there is no recognition, without dialogue there is no plan for change, and without dialogue there will never be a socially safe TU Delft.*

As TU Delft, we are facing a major change, and it will not happen by itself. Because social unsafety has been allowed to exist for a long time and still exists, trust has been eroded. It is necessary to rebuild this trust in order to look to the future. To do this, we need to talk to each other about the **past**.

It should also become normal to talk about behaviour and social safety. Not just now, but always. We call this **continuous dialogue**, and it should become as normal as talking about work achievements.

Finally, mutual dialogue determines our **route towards a socially safe TU Delft**. After all, we do not yet know exactly what contributes to this. This requires reflection, experimentation and adjustment. Together, we need to find out what really works to improve social safety.

1. A dialogue on our past experiences
2. An ongoing dialogue on social safety within the TU Delft community
3. A dialogue on the further development of this Plan for change

### Safety

Everyone needs to feel safe and have the space to speak up. Especially at the beginning, this will not be straightforward. That is why we conduct dialogue in different ways. For example, through one-on-one

### 1. A dialogue on past experiences

Talking about the future makes no sense without talking about the past. About experiences of social (un)safety, culture and behaviour. This dialogue about the past has now begun and will continue.

#### Meeting and caring

In recent months it has become clear that people within the TU Delft community are affected by recent developments in social safety. For example, when people relive traumas, or when past experiences retrospectively lead to confrontational insights. That is why we create space for mutual encounter, exchange and care. This can be organised centrally for the whole community, but also decentrally (per faculty, programme or department). Management teams play a role in this.

#### Dialogue between Executive Board and staff and students from faculties and services

Staff and students need to engage with the Executive Board and pass on issues. And vice versa. Therefore, in the coming period, discussions will take place between the Executive Board, staff and students of the faculties and services. This has started and will continue. Sometimes representatives of the Supervisory Board are also present at these meetings.

### **Attention to social safety within the team/department**

Everyone will be made aware of the opportunity to interact. It is the responsibility of faculty and directorate MTs to ensure that everyone is aware of this. Within a team, department or programme, attention can also be paid to sharing experiences. This can be done by inviting staff or students to share their experiences (one-to-one or otherwise) or by highlighting the opportunities available to discuss them with others.

## **2. An ongoing dialogue on social safety**

The inspection report rightly points out that it is impossible to get a picture of social safety at TU Delft on the basis of annual reports and records alone. This requires an ongoing dialogue between staff and students in order to gather experience and learn. Moreover, social safety is not static. Therefore, we need to keep thinking together in an ongoing conversation about what social safety is and what it requires. During the TU-wide meetings, participants also called for much more discussion with experience experts and internal experts within TU Delft. These could be people who have experienced social unsafety or have filed complaints, but also platforms and networks representing specific (sometimes vulnerable) groups. They know better than anyone what is needed in the area of social safety.

This continuous dialogue allows us to keep an eye on the state of affairs. A dialogue on behaviour is also needed within the team, department or programme. Its purpose is to keep social safety under the spotlight periodically.

### **Attention to social safety within own team, department and training**

Social safety is largely determined by behaviour within one's own team, department or programme. It is therefore important to regularly reflect together on mutual behaviour and social safety. This could be done by holding annual discussions on mutual interaction, behaviour and cooperation, and (possibly) making them compulsory. As such a discussion is not always easy, (external) counsellors could be called in for this purpose. MTs of faculties and boards have an important role to play in organising this discussion.

### **Embedding social safety more firmly in the R&D cycle**

One way of initiating a dialogue on social safety is to organise fixed moments for giving and receiving feedback. This can be done by structurally collecting feedback from colleagues you work with (e.g. through 360-degree feedback). This feedback can then be discussed during the R&D interview or by colleagues among themselves.

### **Addressing social safety in the exit or offboarding process**

Exit interviews or surveys are a valuable source of information on social safety within TU Delft. After all, when you leave, you don't have to fear any negative consequences and can therefore speak more freely. By collecting this information in a structured way we gain a better insight into the experiences in the field of social safety.

### **Continuous conversation with staff and students. Both in groups and one-to-one**

In order to get an independent picture of social safety at TU Delft, of what is happening, but also of what is needed, the Executive Board maintains a dialogue with employees and students about social safety. This can be done in several ways:

- The culture and social safety portfolio holder may periodically join the social safety sounding board group
- The Executive Board visits a faculty or department to engage with staff and students about what is going on
- Periodic interviews with key social safety officials (confidential advisors, ombuds officers, student advisers, mentors)
- Periodic discussions on social safety with (representatives of) minority groups and specific target groups within TU Delft such as DEWIS, DiversAbility, True U, D&I-board, PhD Council, Delft Young Academy, Young Delft and ZieSO

MTs within faculties and directorates should also be in contact with staff and students to independently form a picture of social safety. This can also be done, for example, by inviting integrity officers to MT meetings.

### 3. A dialogue on the implementation and further elaboration of the Plan for change

Making this Plan for change is a first step towards a socially safe TU Delft. At the same time, it is only a first step and the plan requires elaboration and further development. We will do this together. For this, it is important to talk *to* the groups concerned (e.g. international students or PhD candidates) rather than *about* them. It should be possible for everyone to participate in this conversation.

#### **TU Delft community consultation Plan for change 1.0**

The Plan for change presented to the Education Inspectorate is not an end product. We will discuss this first version together as a TU Delft community, including during working conferences. In doing so, everyone will be given the opportunity to respond to the content of the plan. This input will be used to update the plan in the short term, the starting point being that the plan is supported by the TU Delft community.

#### **Dialogue on elaboration of specific parts**

Several parts of the plan still need further elaboration. To this end, we will invite specific groups, experience experts and specialists to participate in working conferences. During these working conferences, we also discuss prioritisation: what are we going to work on first?

#### **Internet page with information on the Plan for change**

There will be a central place where all information about the process of implementing and developing the Plan for change can be found. It will also be a place to provide input. This central site will include

- The Plan for change and its possible further elaboration
- A timeline showing where implementation and further development are at
- Updates on progress of implementation of the Plan for change
- Information on who is working on social safety within TU Delft and how to reach them
- Ability to respond to proposals or plans
- Interviews with people involved in the Plan for change

#### **Dialogue with the Education Inspectorate**

As the Plan for change submitted to the Inspectorate of Education is still being adjusted and further elaborated, we continue to engage with the Inspectorate. We will also keep them informed about the implementation and the steps we jointly take to achieve a socially safe TU Delft.



### **Room for customisation?**

TU Delft is a collection of directorates, faculties and the research institute QuTech. Each of these parts, with the departments within them, has its own history, customs and conventions. So different interventions will be needed per directorate, faculty or department to change the culture and ensure social safety. There must be room for this. At the same time, it is important that we, as the TU Delft, act together in this process of change. Together we need to find a balance between local colour and a uniform basis: what applies to everyone and where do we need to adapt?

A network of social safety ambassadors could help to strengthen this collectivity. Such a network already exists for D&I within faculties. This could be strengthened and extended to directorates. Agreements would then need to be reached on the time allocation, required expertise, mandate and position of these ambassadors within management or the faculty. There are many initiatives to improve social safety within TU Delft. A network of ambassadors can help to spread these initiatives throughout the organisation and thus learn from each other.

## 5 Socially safe for all

*A number of groups within TU Delft experience socially unsafe situations more frequently. This plays out in particular among women, international staff and students, and PhD candidates.*

A socially safe TU Delft should apply to everyone. But what is needed to achieve this can vary from person to person or group to group. For example, what is considered good leadership may differ from culture to culture. The same applies to how to lower the threshold for using social safety facilities. And what one person sees as fair and straightforward may be perceived as hurtful by another. We are aware of these differences within our community and take them into account. We do this by determining not *for* but *with* these groups what is needed to improve social safety for them. Specifically, we will do this during working conferences during 2024 and 2025. We are also committed to representing these groups in decision-making bodies.

### Women

In addition to the general actions and measures, there are several ways to make TU Delft socially safer for women. We want to strengthen the position of DEWIS (Delft Women in Science), but also that of female support staff and female students. We want to further strengthen current activities to increase the proportion of female assistant, associate and full professors, department chairs and MT members. We also want to pay more attention to career development and, in particular, support women in taking the next step in their careers. All kinds of concrete suggestions have been made on how we can do this. During working conferences, we will use these as a basis to determine what is needed to improve the social safety of women.

### PhD candidates

The PhD community consists of over 3,300 people with different backgrounds and characteristics: education-related, socio-economic, cultural, religious, age, etc. Currently, this group disproportionately experiences social unsafety.

Making PhD candidates less dependent on their supervisor can improve social safety. We also want to invest in the supervision of PhD candidates. Suggestions for this include evaluating and further developing the mentoring programme and the buddy programme. Commitment to leadership and feedback will also contribute to this. Better information for PhD candidates is also part of this: all PhD candidates should know where they can go with a question, dilemma or problem and they should not experience any barrier to make use of it. One suggestion is to make it clear where you can go with which question or problem, using detailed examples. This could also have a place in the *onboarding*, the introduction period of new employees. Developing personal leadership, being aware of one's own role and daring and being allowed to stand up are also important for PhD candidates.

PhD candidates and others have made numerous other suggestions for improving social safety. During working conferences, we will use these concrete suggestions to determine together what is needed.

## International students and staff

For international staff and students, we want to focus more on community building. Just feeling at home. There is a need for more togetherness and a place to go with a question or a dilemma, whatever it may be. It's about feeling that you're not alone and that you can find support somewhere. It is difficult to know exactly where to go with a question. A community can help. What exactly this community consists of and how we can best build it together is still under discussion.

We also want to lower the threshold for international staff and students to use social safety facilities. This can be done, for example, by raising awareness and appointing international confidential advisors. We also need to be more consistent in making all communications and documents available in English.

Finally, it is about developing the knowledge and skills to interact appropriately. Becoming aware of cultural differences and what they mean for how we work together. Training in intercultural sensitivity can help.

## Students

We have a duty of care to design our teaching and learning environment to support student wellbeing. We are responsible for creating an open, safe and inclusive environment that enables students to flourish in their academic and personal development. We must also provide students with the guidance they need to successfully start, follow and complete their studies at TU Delft.

Students should expect TU Delft to adequately fulfil this duty of care. During the working conferences we will discuss with them the further interpretation of this duty of care. This may include leadership and dependency. The Plan for change expresses ambitions in the area of leadership and management. This includes the study environment in terms of supervision by lecturers, postgraduate students, student assistants, student supervisors, laboratory staff, mentors and supervisors. All forms of teaching and supervision of students must ensure inclusivity and social safety. Conversely, this also applies to students in their dealings with supervisors.

We expect our students to be aware of and abide by the Code of Conduct. We want to help students make this a reality, for example by offering every student training in their first year that focuses on social safety, behaviour (desirable, undesirable, transgressive), bystander action and intercultural sensitivity.

Many good things are also happening. The student community is working hard to improve social safety, both in student life on campus and beyond. TU Delft can and will learn from this.

### **More specific groups exist**

Several surveys show that in addition to the groups mentioned above, other groups also experience differences in how socially safe TU Delft is. These include people with chronic illnesses, mental or physical vulnerabilities, the LGBTQ+ community or religious and cultural minorities. This also includes people who have a different opinion and (constantly) question things.

Sometimes we are not sure how to deal with this. This may be due to a lack of knowledge, understanding or awareness. When developing policies, it is important to recognise that a one-size-fits-all approach is not always possible. Also, to these groups applies: *nothing about us, without us*.

## 6 Social safety governance

*Policies, plans, facilities and procedures are not enough. Social safety governance is needed to ensure that TU Delft really becomes socially safe. This includes both the existing social safety systems and the necessary improvements in the area of social safety.*

This chapter on governance is more technical than the rest of the Plan for change. This is because we are not talking about visions or ambitions here, but about how we want to shape the governance of social safety. We distinguish between the development phase and the regular phase. In the **development phase**, we are working on the necessary changes in social safety. The focus is on implementing and developing the Plan for change. The **regular phase** will begin when the desired results have been achieved and social safety has become a natural part of TU Delft. It is not yet possible to say when this phase will be reached.

1. Executive Board directs the progress and realisation of the necessary changes in the field of social safety (**development phase**).
2. Executive Board manages social safety within TU Delft (**regular phase**).

In this chapter, we focus in particular on governance by the Executive Board. But while the board is overall responsible, in practice deans, directors and department heads play a crucial role in promoting social safety. This involves setting an example, instigating a dialogue on behaviour, implementing measures and monitoring them. The responsibility for this therefore lies with line managers, who should be supported in this where necessary.

### PDCA cycle governance

In both the development phase and the regular phase, social safety is managed using a PDCA cycle (PDCA stands for Plan, Do, Check, Act). The reason for this is that the PDCA cycle aims to manage continuous improvement. This PDCA cycle ensures that the work to make TU Delft socially safer is ongoing.

The PDCA cycle consists of drawing up a plan to improve social safety. The present change plan is the first version of this plan, but this plan still needs to be adapted and further elaborated. The plan is then implemented (do). Most of the plan does not need to wait for further elaboration. Implementation can begin immediately. During this implementation phase, progress is monitored (check) and adjusted if necessary (act).

In the regular phase, the PDCA cycle remains in force. The plan for change is constantly adapted to new insights and developments, then implemented, and its results and effects are periodically mapped, after which adjustments can be made again.

## 1. Governance in the development phase

In the development phase, the Plan for change is implemented and refined. This requires establishing governance and managing progress. The Executive Board plays a central role in this. The Executive Board consults with the Works and Student Councils on establishing their role in governance.

### **Setting up governance and implementation**

The Executive Board will establish a temporary programme to promote the development of social safety. The Executive Board will manage this programme directly. This does not affect the responsibility of line management and faculties in the area of social safety. The programme supports the line in this. This support always consists of coordinating and developing the Plan for change, including in relation to other developments and initiatives in the area of integrity and D&I. To this end, the programme develops proposals for concrete actions, organises working conferences, produces interim reports, communicates on progress and provides the secretariat for the Social Safety Advisory Group.

The programme team is a dedicated team consisting of policy officers and project managers from TU Delft. The programme team makes maximum use of the internal expertise available within TU Delft, but is supplemented by external expertise where necessary. The Executive Board is responsible for providing sufficient resources and capacity to implement the programme. This includes the quantity, but also the quality and therefore the competences of the members of the programme team.

In addition, the implementation of the Plan for change will require the necessary time and capacity on the part of faculties and directorates. Resources will need to be made available. Either through additional investment or through a shift in priorities. Discussions on this still need to take place.

### **Establishment of social safety advisory group**

The Executive Board, in consultation with the employee participation body, establishes a social safety advisory group. The advisory group will consider whether and in what role the Executive Board participates in the meetings of this advisory group (e.g. as a permanent member or on call). This advisory group advises the programme and the Executive Board, on a solicited and unsolicited basis, on the implementation and development of the Plan for change. This advisory group is composed of representatives of the various sections of TU Delft, with special attention to minority groups, people in a dependent position and officials who are part of the social safety net. This group meets every two weeks.

### **Periodic progress reporting**

A quarterly public progress report is published detailing the status of the Plan for change. This will include the activities carried out in the previous period and the follow-up process. Anyone within the TU Delft community can respond to it and/or make suggestions. In addition, a monthly (more concise) progress report communicates the status and developments in the area of social safety.

### **Integral report on culture and social safety**

An integrated report on culture and social safety is produced annually (e.g. a culture barometer). This report provides an overview of the state of culture and social safety within TU Delft. For this integral report, various sub-reports can be used (e.g. confidential advisors, ombuds officers, employee

monitor, complaints committee for undesirable behaviour) and an additional annual monitor can be set up.

### **Social safety as a fixed agenda item in Executive Board meetings and also on the agendas of MTs and departmental meetings**

Social safety is a regular item on the agenda at the Executive Board meeting. Each week, the Executive Board discusses the status of the implementation and development of the Plan for change. The Executive Board makes adjustments where necessary.

The Executive Board also takes final decisions on measures and new regulations. Agreements are made with the Works and Student Councils on their role in this decision-making process.

Social safety is also on the agenda of the MTs of the faculties and directorates. This does not mean that social safety has to be reported on or discussed in detail on a weekly basis. But it does ensure that social safety remains on the agenda during this development phase.

### **Executive Board self-reflection**

Under external supervision, the Executive Board reflects on the way in which social safety has been managed in recent years and on its own actions in connection with the Education Inspectorate investigation. The aim of this reflection is to learn how to steer towards a socially safe TU Delft in the future. The Executive Board shares the results of this reflection, in particular the lessons learned, with the TU Delft community.

Self-reflection is also an ongoing process. Therefore, the Executive Board will be supported by an external coach/supervisor with experience in the field of social safety for a longer period of time.

## **2. Governance in the regular phase**

The regular phase begins when social safety has become a natural part of TU Delft. Part of the governance set up for the development phase will remain in place in the regular phase. It may just be organised differently or the frequency of meetings may be adjusted. During the transition from the development phase to the regular phase, the employee participation body will be consulted on the design of the new governance.

Also in this phase, an integral report on culture and social safety will be prepared periodically in order to have and maintain an overview of the state of culture and social safety at TU Delft.

### **Transitioning social safety programme to social safety team**

Once the regular phase arrives, there will be a transition from the social safety programme to a social safety team. This team is responsible for the continuous development, monitoring and coordination of social safety within TU Delft. In this capacity, the team coordinates the subject of social safety within

TU Delft and monitors the regular PDCA cycle. The Social Safety Team reports directly to the Executive Board.

**Transition social safety advisory group into sounding board group**

The advisory group continues as a sounding board group that meets periodically to discuss developments in the field of social safety. This sounding board group can additionally advise the Executive Board on social safety, both solicited and unsolicited.

**Social safety as a standing agenda item in Executive Board meeting**

In every Executive Board meeting, social safety is a fixed agenda item. There is no longer a weekly report on the state of affairs in Executive Board meetings, unless there is reason to do so. But just having it on the agenda ensures that it cannot escape attention.

In addition, the PDCA cycle ensures that social safety is regularly and explicitly on the Executive Board's agenda. In any case, when the integral report on culture and social safety is published, follow-up actions will be defined as necessary in response to this report and as part of the monitoring of these actions.



## 7 Monitoring social safety

*The Supervisory Board monitors the work of the Executive Board in the area of social safety and thus the development of social safety within TU Delft. In addition, the Supervisory Board acts as a sounding board/advisor and employer of the Executive Board: in this way, the healthy distance associated with the role is combined with the necessary proximity and exemplary behaviour.*

The Supervisory Board is a supervisor, sounding board/advisor and employer of the Executive Board in one. These three different roles and corresponding varying powers, shape the task of the Executive Board in relation to the Executive Board and social safety. A distinction is made between supervision in the development phase and supervision in the regular phase.

### Supervision in the development phase

#### **Social safety as a standing agenda item in Supervisory Board meeting**

The Executive Board is accountable to the Supervisory Board for the implementation of the Plan for change. During each meeting of the Supervisory Board, the Executive Board gives an update on the status of the Plan for change by means of a progress report. In addition, the Supervisory Board undertakes to keep itself informed about social safety developments and current affairs through other formal and informal channels as well.

#### **Supervisory Board in dialogue with social safety advisory group and TU Delft community**

The Supervisory Board has a visibly presence in TU Delft to inform itself about social safety in general and the status of the Plan for change in particular. To this end:

- Quarterly, the Supervisory Board will meet with a representation of the advisory group responsible for guiding the implementation and further development of the Plan for change.
- The Supervisory Board schedules working visits to various faculties and departments and obtains information from all sections, including students.
- The Supervisory Board appoints two members from among its members as contact person for social safety, one of whom has the special trust of the Works and Student Councils. Twice a year, the member with this special trust attends the consultation meeting between the Executive Board and Works and Student Councils at which the subject of social safety is on the agenda. In addition, there is regular informal and low-threshold contact between this member of the Supervisory Board and the chairs of the Works and Student Councils on developments in the field of social safety.
- Will (a member of) the Supervisory Board participate as an observer in some of the sessions the Executive Board holds with faculties and directorates in the context of social safety.
- Is the full Supervisory Board visibly present at special events (e.g.: Opening Academic Year, Dies Natalis) and actively engages with the TU Delft community there.

#### **SB provides insight into how social safety is supervised**

In the context of transparency, visibility and approachability, in addition to what is included on this subject in the annual report, the Supervisory Board reports digitally to the TU Delft community on the manner and content of its supervision of social safety.

### **Supervisory Board self-reflection**

Under external supervision, the Supervisory Board reflects on the way in which it fulfils its supervisory role, particularly with regard to social safety. The aim of this reflection is to look back at the Supervisory Board's role in the situation that has arisen and to learn how this task can be done even better in the future and how the intended measures can be further refined.

For the purpose of this self-reflection, the Supervisory Board has already met and is still meeting with other supervisory boards of institutions of higher education and specialists or experience experts on social safety. One of the aims is to learn from how other institutions monitor social safety.

## **Supervision in the regular phase**

### **Social safety as a standing agenda item**

Social safety is a fixed item on the agenda of every Advisory Board meeting. There is no longer a standard status report unless there is a need for it. Social safety is a topic that is not limited to a report. It is implicit in all discussion points and interactions between the Supervisory and Executive Boards, and manifests itself alongside reports in for example (leadership) behaviour and inclusive language. But the very fact that it is on the agenda ensures that it cannot escape attention. The PDCA cycle also ensures that social safety is regularly and explicitly on the board's agenda.

### **Supervisory Board in discussion with social safety sounding board group and TU Delft community**

In addition to the management information the Supervisory Board receives periodically from the Executive Board, the Supervisory Board engages directly with the TU Delft community to form its own view and keep in touch with the development of social safety. To this end:

- twice a year, there is a dialogue between a representation of the Social Safety Sounding Board Group and the Supervisory Board.
- the Advisory Board schedules working visits to various faculties and directorates to obtain information from all organisational units, including students.
- Two members of the Supervisory Board remain the contact person for social safety, one of whom has the special trust of the Works and Student Councils. The member with the special trust attends consultation meetings between the Executive Board and the Works and Student Councils twice a year and has frequent contact with the chairs of these Councils. In addition, the Works and Student Councils and these two members may actively approach each other if there is reason to do so.
- the Supervisory Board has a visible presence at various special meetings during the academic year and actively engages with the TU Delft community there.

# Annex 1: Suggestions

The suggestions below for improving social safety within TU Delft were made by internal and external stakeholders and experts during the process of creating the Plan for change. In addition, these suggestions are partly derived from reports and/or analyses as mentioned in chapter 1 of the Plan for change. This is a rough list of suggestions and therefore not an overview of suggestions that are by definition widely supported within TU Delft.

These suggestions have served as input for the Plan for change and serve as input for the further elaboration of the Plan for change, the working conferences and in other developments related to improving social safety within TU Delft.

<b>Culture</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Periodically conduct a TU-wide culture barometer. First as a baseline measurement, then annually to monitor and adjust development.</li> <li>• Draw up vision in the field of social safety and a new code of conduct together with the TU Delft community.</li> <li>• Make this vision guiding all policies within TU Delft.</li> <li>• Actively naming and promoting these norms and values by managers.</li> <li>• Position D&amp;I officers more firmly within (the management of) faculties.</li> <li>• Leadership positions should be more reflective of the population.</li> <li>• All communication and meetings also in English.</li> <li>• Implement Recognition &amp; Rewards as a guiding principle for assessments.</li> <li>• Changing the standards/criteria for hiring, promotion and dismissal (see further under HRM/Evaluation).</li> <li>• Critically reviewing the composition of assessment committees.</li> <li>• TU-wide programme aimed at giving and receiving feedback, also focusing on the theme of active bystander.</li> <li>• Give the development of professional skills, including giving feedback, a more prominent non-negotiable place in the training programme for staff and students.</li> <li>• Consistently conducting evaluations after completion of subjects and/or projects. Both by staff and students.</li> <li>• Use 360-degree feedback to make a broad assessment (multiple people and various criteria) of someone's performance.</li> </ul>

<b>Structure (HRM/Leadership)</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Introduce a 'licence to lead' for all managers. This means that someone has knowledge and competences, including in the context of social safety, to be a leader. Without a licence to lead, you cannot become a manager within TU Delft.</li> <li>• Promoting a socially safe working and study environment will become part of the profiles/job requirements of all managers including section leaders and department chairs.</li> <li>• Training programme for (new) managers with particular focus on social safety.</li> <li>• Deployment of selection and development assessments for executives.</li> <li>• The Executive Board, deans and directors ensure that explicit agreements are made with managers in the annual R&amp;D talks about the time and quality for leadership. These agreements are closely monitored.</li> <li>• There will be a guideline for managers on how to act in situations, signals or complaints related to social unsafety. This will include: Possible options, helplines, procedures to follow, possible interventions, do's and don't's and communication.</li> <li>• Intervision groups are set up for managers where dilemmas in the field of behaviour and social safety can be discussed.</li> </ul>

- All managers within TU Delft are responsible for setting a good example in the area of social safety and are judged accordingly by their own supervisor.
- (mandatory) training for everyone in a managerial position in implementing HR policy and being able to apply the R&O cycle.
- Under external guidance, the Executive Board will reflect on how social safety has been managed in recent years and on its own actions around the Education Inspectorate's investigation.
- Develop and apply objective criteria that enable a broader assessment of performance and development. This applies to both scientific and support staff. Not only looking at substantive performance and/or scientific excellence, but also at personal development, cooperation, attitude and behaviour.
- Making room for external experts in the assessment and promotion process and introducing the right to ask for a second opinion on an assessment.
- Establish policy on career paths, process and the criteria to be met for advancement and its steering. Match the various target groups in terms of assessment of these criteria (e.g. support functions versus PhD candidates). In the application of promotion and advancement, broad view is needed from different perspectives (manager, peers, teachers)
- Establishing career paths for support functions.
- Establish a roadmap detailing the infrastructure for in-flow. Ensure the central policy is translated to the faculties and make the management team 'own' supported by the faculty HR advisor.
- HR fixed in the MT; Ensure that a fixed qualitative HRM report is part of the agenda of the faculty management team. This reporting is related to the HR objectives per faculty (relating to diversity, throughput, performance, etc.).
- Setting up a career lab for each faculty to support careers.
- introduction of the term professional services instead of OBP, by analogy with Utrecht University
- Onboarding of academic staff in the University Service and vice versa.

### **System**

- Increase visibility and thus awareness of confidential advisors and ombuds officers.
- A central, clear and unambiguous roadmap of social safety for staff and students that includes the options available and the routes to take in the event of perceived social unsafety and/or undesirable behaviour.
- Structural funding for training of confidential contacts within study associations and student unions.
- One central hotline across TU Delft for filing complaints, reports and signals relating to conduct and integrity.
- Updating of various regulations on social safety (Regulation on complaints of undesirable behaviour, Regulation on reporting irregularities).
- As transparent as possible communication about the outcome of procedures and any mistakes made in them.
- Explain the procedure in case of signals and/or complaints about undesirable behaviour and/or social unsafety including the role of the supervisor and HR (this refers to signals or complaints that are not submitted to the Complaints Committee on Undesirable Behaviour).
- Offering the option of going to an external sexual harassment complaints committee.

### **Women**

- Actively promote growth in the number of full-time professors and increase the proportion of female department chairs and MT members in faculties:
  - Using the criteria of recognition and rewards;
  - Engage with all internal associate and assistant professors on their short-, medium- and long-term growth aspirations and potential.
  - Be aware of gender balance in intake of PhD candidates, post-docs and ACTs.
- Have a special focus on women's career development by:
  - Revisiting it in R&D talks

- Enabling additional support where needed.
- Making it an assigned responsibility (e.g. at faculty level).
- Launch a new programme to help women with insight, advice and support on their next step in the scientific career, along the lines of the EUR 'Beyond 25/25' programme. This should focus on: mentoring, feedback and (financial) support in forming an adequate and complete portfolio.

### **PhD candidates**

- Improve onboarding so that every PhD candidate receives the information needed, e.g. the information on the social safety safety net: both centrally, and decentrally (e.g. faculty support networks)
- Give social safety a place in the PhD statement.
- Evaluate and Optimise the mentoring and buddy programme.
- Guarantee timely proper feedback from supervisors to PhD candidates and vice versa.
- Ensure sufficient implementation and support capacity of each Faculty Graduate School.
- Expand the formal role (and hence resources) of the Faculty Graduate School in the area of social safety. This could include:
  - Conflict mediation Further strengthen the position and professionalise the directors and staff of UGS and FGS to secure the promotion process in the areas of monitoring of supervisors, among others
  - Early identification of problems and good referral to existing points of contact. After all, we still need to adjust reporting etc; this is anticipating this.

## Annex 2: Meetings

At the TU-wide meetings, attendees reflected in smaller groups (5-10 people) on possible measures to improve social safety. Each group received an A3 sheet with a fill-in table divided into the topics of inclusion, leadership, feedback, (integrity) infrastructure, appreciation, culture and other. The groups were asked: what are your concrete ideas and plans to improve social safety at TU Delft? The table below shows the ideas filled in on the sheets.

This has served as input for the Plan for change and serves as input for the further elaboration of the Plan for change, the working conferences and in other developments related to improving social safety within TU Delft.

<b>Culture</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ‘training’ help you weigh up for yourself; what is/isn’t okay, for me, but also for the other person.</li> <li>• Actively invite feedback + train receptivity to it</li> <li>• Active bias training (bystander)</li> <li>• Active bystander training</li> <li>• As a PhD/Postdoc, you are not actually seen as a full employee. Surely that makes your voice count for a lot less. Also, communication to PhDs doesn’t feel like a priority.</li> <li>• Be clear on values &amp; non-negotiables and enforce</li> <li>• Awareness of hierarchy, cultural diversities and their influence (vice versa)</li> <li>• Bila’s are important! Don’t let them lapse into work meetings.</li> <li>• Wide learning what giving and receiving feedback is and how to use it constructively. Feedback is prompting to perpetuate or change your behaviour. So listen!</li> <li>• Communication on experiences/successes</li> <li>• Departments/work groups responsible to develop (and share) their own code of conduct</li> <li>• Education above hierarchy</li> <li>• Equity: shortage from close to zero / Visualize advocacy - year noted</li> <li>• Experience can be different for each person. Giving each other feedback, with someone guiding that, but then not finding it ‘too big’ right away</li> <li>• External checking /accountability</li> <li>• Give a tool to express feelings</li> <li>• Provide training on giving and receiving feedback and make it mandatory</li> <li>• Conversations on integrity/culture</li> <li>• Giving concrete examples, sharing experiences, to make each other aware.</li> <li>• TU Delft Culture Handbook: registering rules of conduct. How do we treat each other?</li> <li>• Herein also space for other cultures: people interpret/react/communicate differently</li> <li>• How do you receive feedback? Training to learn that</li> <li>• Improve culture of feedback, in two directions (student→ supervisor, and vice versa)</li> <li>• To what extent is there a sense of community? Lots of remoteness and closed doors. There is a great lack of appreciation and short-term cycle -&gt; lack of pay it forward -&gt; turn on positive cycle. More vulnerability needs to be promoted and sharing of difficult moments or lessons learned.</li> <li>• Getting to know your blind spots</li> <li>• Learning to put other people’s interests above your own, or less competition.</li> <li>• Trying to change mail culture, to human-to-human contact</li> <li>• Mandatory intercultural communication courses</li> <li>• Learning to be more open to collaboration. Not everything that can be digital has to be digital. Learn to REALLY induct new staff.</li> <li>• More team building activities and section meetings</li> </ul>

- More transparency and open communication policy (it doesn't necessarily have to be digital)
- People who are not researchers feel undervalued and do not feel accepted
- Engaging with each other. Asking for each other / open door policy
- Using gentleness, 'kindness'; caring
- Not always negative, much more frequent/more opportunities to give smaller feedback
- Examine especially where we as TU are NOT inclusive
- Receiving vs. Giving -> learning HOW to give feedback -> is it safe to, give/receive feedback. Agree on this (time/money/effort)
- Developing feedback skills (train the trainer)
- Also good to generate a sense of belonging and pride.
- Peer findability should also be improved. Are also many messages and emails ignored
- Open journalism platform.
- Setting positive goals separate from our core tasks
- Positive feedback
- Professional support / leadership in EDI
- Reflecting on what executives do themselves / giving feedback
- Reverse mentorship programme
- Social equality
- Today present: 27 people of which 6 males, 0 PIs, no management/leaders
- Training in 'transactional analysis'
- Resilience training
- TU has scaled up so much in a short time that people no longer know each other. As a result, the culture becomes businesslike.
- More frequent smaller feedback moments so you can name small positive and critical things
- A mass must be created from the bottom up
- Deepening in other cultures, not just Dutch direct culture. Understanding of other backgrounds.
- When it comes to equality and inclusivity there should be equal opportunity when it comes to selection criteria as increasingly common practice is to increase diversity quotas at the expense of reducing genuine candidates who satisfy the merit criterion but may not satisfy the inclusivity one. Aim to take the best of both worlds.

### **Structure (HRM/Leadership)**

- 360 degree executives should not be accountable to the top, but (especially) to the bottom
- Academic leadership / HR rules or conversational skills feedback giving & receiving
- accountability on every level
- If you don't have a standard problem, you're out of luck
- Discussing as a team how individuals are: agreeing ways to respond
- Also the upper management people who make rules and suggest changes are not present in dialogues on social safety -> not the employees don't feel like their input within the sessions are actually heard and they are going to do anything with this.
- Working conditions (pay equity)
- Awareness of social safety in the employee (PIs, PhD candidates etc) hiring and onboarding process.
- Behavior should be part of R&D / promotions
- Involve the people you care about in the decisions you make and include their input, and above all, explain if you cannot (or will not) take something on board
- In surveys, no traceability to who you are (which faculty, unique positions, age etc)
- Buddy system / courses / structure change
- Buddy system with staff from the same position (e.g. PhD --> PhD) to help someone find their way around campus and TU)
- Collaboration skills, conflict resolution skills, listening skills
- Consequences attach to socially unsafe behaviour
- The R&D cycle for professors with the dean --> do signals get through?
- Diversity (from all layers) in MTs. Also someone who is well-spoken
- Diversity in leadership

- Career opportunities transparent, open, honest: max 5 years in the same job to make room for new generation + prevents someone from creating their own way of working
- EDI module mandatory on onboarding for all roles
- A different profile of leadership, with knowledge of today
- Recognise that leadership is a profession and also support academics who do not lead with training with leadership theory and skills
- Exit interviews must have structure
- Exit talks also on internal move
- Exit interviews
- Facilitating self-reflection on leadership/behaviour
- Feedback skills for leadership
- No externals in leadership positions!
- Tools for inclusive communication / recruitment etc available & findable
- Leading by example from above
- Top management + professors need to be activated and want a change
- It is often non-committal or leadership participating in courses, it should be compulsory.
- Hold people accountable HR Serves leadership --> NOT good
- HR doesn't feel human. It's all digital. At least 5 days reflection time, people don't think flexibly (probably don't have the space for it).
- Improving interpersonal skills should be part of the R&D
- Content leader is not automatically 'people/leader manager' --> training
- Intervention at job group level
- Intervention for executives
- Invest and monitor in mentoring employees as managers (set up coaches, training required should be).
- Onboarding, especially for manager
- le for abuse of power
- Leadership means that one person doesn't depend where they belong in hierarchy, but can act as leader
- 'Leading by example' is nonsense. It is passive. It also implies the example is now correct (while the leaders are now incorrect)
- Hiring or training leaders on their emotional intelligence
- Helping leaders remember their responsibility to act with integrity
- Executives often determine culture
- Train managers (from 1st LG position) in soft skills. NOT optional, but mandatory.
- Career policy development --> very focused on WP, OBP is underexposed
- Listening ear from manager
- Making social safety part of individual performance criteria
- Mandatory inclusive leadership training
- Mandatory social safety training on an annual basis during work hours should exist. Social safety training should become mandatory (bystander training)
- More female professors
- More women (students) in senior leadership posts
- One misses: flexibility, humanity and the feeling 'they are going to do the best for you'.
- People who are good at content are not necessarily good leaders.
- Mentor/coach system for PhDs/ assistant pros
- Less arrogant look; to from the top
- Less pressure due to (financial) deadline/work pressure
- More recognition of soft skills (i.e. mentoring, skills for difficult conversations) at if important moments (vacancy, lecture,)
- MT rotating, no full professor (only requirement)
- now leadership is not held accountable and there are no repercussions/interventions. Also leaders should and must involve themselves in the social safety discussions and new rules.
- Independent exit interviews
- Onboarding new employees at all levels is very important
- Onboarding: what do we expect from each other
- HR is too bureaucratic



- Prevention: asking everyone to take a D&I course, especially managers also to be more 'sensitive' in dealing with diversity, inclusion and equality
- Promoters should do a recurring course on mentoring. Be clear consequences for when mentoring does not go well.
- Quality of training should be reconsidered
- Set R&D targets and appreciate when targets are met
- Guide R&D conversations when they have not gone smoothly in the first instance
- Relativising competitive situation science/research
- Representative for team/department
- Separate process from content responsibility - dual leadership positions
- Team values
- This is a generational change: now, the leadership is predominantly old, white, male and they don't recognise the problem. They don't show. Leaders are not supervised, There is no independent board.
- Tools from mediation (how to ask the right questions) and having someone sit in on supervision calls who can also give tips.
- Train in social equality.
- Intercultural communication training
- Training courses for 'old guard' executives that also appeal
- Skills are essential, everyone on courses, not optional! And keep learning! + the manager or head of department who has no feelers for social safety, put someone next to it --> integral management often does not work well.
- Mandatory course on leadership & discussion
- Mandatory training for (new) managers, limit maximum job duration? + repetition / updating
- Mandatory training for managers/teachers. Leadership/management --> 'no one has come forward, so here (this organisational unit) the problem of social unsafety does not exist'
- Celebration of goals achieved, successes. Reflecting on teamwork. More sharing of what is going on with teammates, both professionally and personally
- For executives: not only training, but also coaching/reflection
- Exemplary behaviour / acting with integrity
- Value the other, get to know the other, dare to be vulnerable yourself
- Appreciation is being seen and knowing that it is being listened to
- Expressing appreciation for 'good leadership',
- Making appreciation for soft 'skills' measurable
- Put a DEI officer in every MT of faculty. Train these people. MTs are too one-sidedly composed.

### System

- 1 form for reports from small to large to lower the reporting threshold. Then ask the reporter themselves what they themselves would like to do with this
- If someone does not function (brings social unsafety) always deal with them, even if they retire, e.g.
- Central reporting point: there are several places where undesirable or transgressive behaviour can be reported, perceived as a barrier. A central hotline takes responsibility away from the 'reporter' + allows for analysis of patterns.
- Culture 'general' breaking through (Zero tolerance)
- There should be more capacity for mentors
- There should be clear consequences for 'transgressions'
- Give appreciation to reporters
- Faith a signal by default
- Important to have automatic procedures when undesirable behaviour is reported.
- Complaint procedure sometimes seems the only way to raise some issues for PhD candidates
- Low-threshold. Is now hard to find
- Mediation is important and should be provided by someone outside the conflict (e.g. someone from a different faculty)

- Reporting needs to become FAR easier. Everything is far too fragmented; far too many counters.
- Reports come in scattered -> ensure 1 desk from which triage can be performed.
- With onboarding already showing the way/decision tree for reporting points
- Should be introduced both at the start and when applicable.
- not ticket but a real person -> otherwise your extraordinary problem is not acknowledged
- Privacy is no reason not to return a report
- Problem should be solved in a timely matter.
- Signals should be taken seriously, after reporting them
- Social safety map: where to go for what? And then what happens to your complaint?
- Feedback from notification
- Improve findability & recognisability of 'hotline' locally. Run campaign with decision tree on who to contact for what
- Make visible difficulties for staff and students to seek help or advice (regarding safety and trust). Advertise confidential advisors. coaches and processes.
- Provide organising conversation near-misses

## Governance

- Making agreements and plans SMART
- All suggestions lack accountability
- Collaboration - communication between D&I + integrity office
- Communication up to now from the board has been extremely vague and non-specific
- Community management - engagement
- BoM more visible in the organisation --> 'real' interest and conversations
- Workload is a major problem at TU
- Workload should not be a reason not to take up certain issues
- A damage control team from the organisation around the Executive Board given the mistakes/blunders since 1 March?
- Explicitly state the difference between the supervisory and executive board
- Larger social safety department with the professionalism and capacity to train people
- Lack of representation of upper and lower management
- Learning from other organisations / cultures
- Make 1 person responsible for this
- More democracy. Rebalance of power.
- Making organisational structure 'broader', less dependent
- people don't know who executive and supervisory board is: more visibility and transparency
- Prioritising: Invest! (It takes people's time and money and that space has to be there)
- Resources need to scale up according to number of students, PhDs etc.
- Signals from OR, among others, not question but accept
- Social safety committee with junior staff too!
- Steering/control is where first changes need to start (lead be example) -> important to note that there is no member of the executive board here at this meeting
- Set up system of process control
- Timeline? Not available
- Training in acting with integrity
- Translation of words into a. actions & b. into an understanding of how the points of this document affect individuals of the TU Community.
- Who is the executive board and supervisory board? They need to be visible and not hidden behind an email address.
- Visibility! Contact with staff. Bar service!
- Both physically and mentally, we feel the (negative) consequences of the university's strong growth. Facilities needed for a safe working environment fall short. Think unsafe lab equipment or lack of mentors

## Dialogue

- As a PhD candidate, because my scientific work is so involved, the PhD supervisor has a lot of power
- Concerns about the composition, the ability to listen and the transparency of the project group/teams
- A common goal connects and can break down hierarchy
- Ownership (who does what?)
- Every faculty/service is different --> differentiation
- There is so much moodiness. Really to make you sad, that negative stands in the way of progress in our culture and achievements, culture we all make together
- Example of company where people are evaluated on giving & receiving feedback
- Feelings and opinions should not be subordinated to hard numbers or do not count if they are not supported numerically.
- reorganising governance structure (PhDs, Postdocs also have a say), External agency guidance, focus on 'old guard'
- Tools and time to discuss together what a socially safe environment is and what we want --> this is the basis of what we see as 'normal', so that you also know when to address someone.
- Clarity (short-term) objectives
- Need clarity on what steps to take to make a career.
- Get input from other organisations (Rijkswaterstaat, other universities)
- Looking at where things are going well within TU Delft and see if ideas can be picked up from there
- Force fields/themes (think information safety) should be discussed in such a way that the stings and difficulties within them are taken seriously and addressed. Alertness to 'systemic problems'.
- Use behavioural scientists, it's about changing culture and adapting behaviour
- Inviting employees to do project/assignment based on qualities (instead of focusing on what you can't do)
- More focus on input moments for introverts
- Measure the effects of the concrete interventions
- On the website we show a lot of groups and commissions and organisations that are pro-diversity. But that is not the reality within TU Delft
- The current appraisal system would also have to be overhauled.
- Getting PhDs from one faculty to talk to executives from other facilities. Aim: to get the problem through to executives
- Provide space to give input. Invite people to give input - let introverts have their say
- Underrepresentation of the effect group. Feels like a lack of trust (in capability of your own employees).
- Connecting with the heart (not just the head)
- We are not confident that the current Executive Board can create the culture if they do not recognise the problem
- Make sure you have the right participants participating in the talks -> make it mandatory







## Annex 4: Suggestion box

From April, a digital and physical suggestion box was opened for TU Delft employees and students: [ideas@tudelft.nl](mailto:ideas@tudelft.nl). Ideas could be sent there directly. In addition, ideas could be submitted via an online tool. These also ended up in the mailbox. A total of over 350 responses were received.

These responses have been used in the development of this Plan for change. In addition, these reactions are taken into account in the further elaboration of this Plan for change. The reactions serve as input for the working conferences to be started during 2024 and in other developments in the context of improving social safety within TU Delft.

The suggestion boxes were and are private. Therefore, the ideas have not been included in full in the appendix of this Plan for change. In future, suggestions will be handled carefully so that they cannot be traced back to individuals.

To still give an idea of the content of the ideas, we have classified them into the categories: Dialogue, Steering, Structure, System, Culture and Other. Some of the ideas fall into more than one category. Therefore, the sum of the numbers below is larger than the total number of responses received.

Categorisation of responses idea box

