

## 1. Why does TU Delft have a Ombuds Officer for Students?

The mission of the Ombuds Officer for Students is to contribute to a safe, healthy and stimulating learning environment for everyone associated with TU Delft. She does so in three ways: (1) **supporting students** who get stuck with a question or problem; (2) **advising the university** on general areas of concern and possible improvements (e.g. with her annual report); (3) **sharing knowledge** and fostering dialogue on topics such as social safety and integrity. The role of the Ombuds Officer complements the work done by academic counsellors, confidential advisers and the Central Complaints Desk.

## 2. What kinds of questions and issues are the remit of the Ombuds Officer?

You can contact the Ombuds Officer if the conduct of another student, an employee or department is causing problems that you cannot solve with the help of your academic counsellor or the Central Complaints Desk. Examples include:

- you feel that you are being treated unfairly and do not think you will be able to resolve the matter together;
- you are being sent from pillar to post;
- you have a conflict with a fellow student or lecturer and cannot resolve the matter together
- you feel a policy rule is impacting you disproportionately;
- you are being harassed - including bullying, exclusion, sexual harassment, discrimination, nasty treatment, and more;
- you have been notified of a decision and would like more information about the formal procedures involved, but other people - like your academic counsellor - are unable to help;
- you are running into accessibility and communication problems within the organisation or are struggling to communicate properly with an employee.

## 3. Who is the Ombuds Officer for Students?

The Ombuds Officer for students is called Carin Wensveen. You can reach her by sending an email to [C.G.M.Wensveen@tudelft.nl](mailto:C.G.M.Wensveen@tudelft.nl) or calling (015 278 2389 and 06 432 135 34). Her office is in the EEMCS building on the 12th floor in room 12.040.

## 4. How does the Ombuds Officer work?

You can make an appointment by phone or email. The Ombuds Officer will listen to your story and help you analyse the problem. If necessary, she will check which rules, standards, or codes apply.

Next, there are several things she can do:

- give you advice to help you get started yourself;
- refer you to someone else or another helpdesk if they are in a better position to help you;
- conduct exploratory talks with other stakeholders;
- act as a mediator;
- make a recommendation to, for example, a dean or the Executive Board;
- initiate an investigation into broader patterns and structural factors that may negatively affect the learning environment at TU Delft.

In practice, many students find that the listening ear and input of the Ombuds Officer help them take the next step. If the Ombuds Officer refers you to an academic counsellor or confidential adviser, she will explain why and give you their contact details.

## 5. What can I expect from the Ombuds Officer?

All conversations with the Ombuds Officer are **confidential**, so she will not speak to others about your issue or question without your knowledge. The Ombuds Officer is **independent** and **impartial**. She will not act as an advocate for any party and can only mediate if both parties agree. The Ombuds Officer is **not a referee either**. She can give advice but has no power to make decisions.

## 6. What is the difference between the Ombuds Officer and a confidential adviser?

Like the Ombuds Officer, TU Delft's confidential advisers have an independent role. They too can listen to your story and help you find a solution. There are also differences between the two roles: a confidential adviser is biased (they are on the reporter's side) and cannot mediate or investigate. (For more info: <https://www.tudelft.nl/over-tu-delft/strategie/integriteitsbeleid/vertrouwenspersonen>)

## 7. Where can I find information about the Ombuds Officer for Students online?

- Student portal: <https://www.tudelft.nl/en/student/legal-position/central-complaints-desk-for-students/the-ombudsman-for-students>
- TU Delft website: <https://www.tudelft.nl/en/about-tu-delft/strategy/integrity-policy/social-integrity>

*Unsure about where to turn with a problem? The important thing is to seek help and avoid getting bogged down by your question for too long. You're most welcome to drop by!*