|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| ***Subject*** | **ESSEC initiatives and projects in support of Respect for Others** |
| ***Version*** | 15 February 2020 |

This memo provides an overview of the various initiatives already undertaken and those in the process of being implemented, as well as projects confirmed within the context of a ZERO TOLERANCE policy pertaining to all acts of a sexist, racist and homophobic nature, based upon the principle of RESPECT FOR OTHERS.

This document includes an endnote detailing all cases already treated to date at ESSEC thanks to the complaints set-up already in operation.

## A clear commitment

For many years, ESSEC has been committed to the issues of diversity and respect for others. Gender equality has featured high among our guiding principles, underpinned by our humanist values, and is one of the School’s top-priority initiatives under the direct edict of our Dean and President Vincenzo Vinzi.

In 2014 and under our then Dean and President Jean-Michel Blanquer, ESSEC signed the Conférence des Grandes Ecoles Gender Equality Charter. In the wake of this, a specially dedicated commission was set up under Mr Blanquer’s management, chaired by Professor Viviane de Beaufort and reporting directly to the Dean and President. This cross-functional commission works closely within the School with the CEDE-delivered *Women Empowerment* program, the Chair of Leadership and Diversity, continuing education programs aimed at female executives, and on CSR-related initiatives. Since October 2019, the commission has been carrying out its work as part of the all-encompassing #TOGETHER ESSEC project in accordance with Objective 5: “Consolidating a highly ambitious gender equality, diversity and social open-mindedness policy at ESSEC and within the School’s ecosystems”.

## Concrete steps

Publication on July 11th, 2019 of a press release titled “Zero Tolerance for all acts and violence of a sexist nature”.

## We restate our commitment: sexist acts will not be tolerated nor go unpunished, nor will any behavior considered racist, homophobic or disrespectful to others.

Piece by piece, our School has carefully built up a long-term strategy designed to combat any such act and is fully committed to training ethical, tolerant and responsible managers and outlining these values within the School and with all stakeholders, including alumni.

Various actions have already been initiated:

# ctions designed to gradually raise awareness, with the aim of avoiding unacceptable behavior and acts.

* Raising awareness of all types of addiction and their ramifications, in line with the “C’est pas 1 option” scheme run by the Conférence des Grandes Ecoles;
* Gender stereotype awareness-raising events
* The attendance of major student events by the Consentis association (nuit de l’ESSEC, gala etc.) in order to inform participants on the issue of consent
* Regular raising of awareness for association presidents and student organizers of large-scale events on the issues of respect for individuals and cultures and the legal repercussions in the event of negligence
* Close collaboration in Cergy with the town security services around the School premises,

In the Parc François Mitterrand and around student halls of residence.

-

# Training and research programs

* Since 2008, several programs in support of the professional development of women, such as the

#GenStartuppeuse club and the Women Board Ready EXEC

* Student-oriented salary negotiation workshops run by the gender equality commission since 2016, in tandem with the Careers Service and from now on as part of the #TOGETHER scheme,
* Work conducted by the Leadership and Diversity Chair, led by Professor Junko Takagi
* Held around March 8th every year since 2018, the “Gender Day Research” event, open to all and designed to enable the sharing of research activity by professors involved in the field regardless of academic discipline; now organized by Professor Junko Takagi.

# External initiatives in support of our commitment

* Commitment of ESSEC as part of the #StOpE initiative to the fight against everyday sexism within companies, including signing of the initiative by Dean and President Vincenzo Vinzi on December 12th2019Dean and President Vincenzo Vinzi’s term of office as chairman of the Conférence des Grandes Ecoles diversity commission
* Active participation in the gender equality commission in an advisory capacity of Viviane de Beaufort and Séverine Jauffret
* Recent appointment of a anti-racism advisor, Elisabeth Forget
* Participation in off-campus events on sexism, enquiries including representatives of ESSEC and students invited to provide input.

## Our legal basis: the Charter of Respect for Others

In order to drive the initiative forward, in 2018 ESSEC began working on the 1+-year long formalization and implementation of the Charter of Respect for Others, which now provides the legal basis for our initiative. Overseen by Professor Viviane de Beaufort, the official text and the application procedures were drawn up in close collaboration with senior management, legal experts, individual participants and representatives of the CSE, and with ESSEC student associations including HeforSHe and the Student Office, advised by the Student Life Council.

The Charter does not only cover the issue of sexism: it is also designed to tackle all hateful or disrespectful statements, and all types of discrimination based on gender, religion or ethnic background. This charter, which provides a permanent framework for all members of ESSEC Business School, has been in vigor since January 2019 at the student level and has since been formally incorporated into the School’s internal rules and regulations. Student awareness of the charter is raised at welcome days and the necessary reminders are provided on various other occasions.

The charter has concerned our whole community since July 2019 and is included within all official documentation distributed to our various communities (staff, faculty members, external contributors, partners) upon their arrival at ESSEC. The charter has also been implemented in an abridged format at ESSEC Asia-Pacific in Singapore and ESSEC Africa in Rabat.

## In doing so, we are gradually creating genuine awareness with a view to preventing any unacceptable actions.

The formal complaint procedure

We are patently aware that the charter would represent little more than a text displayed on the School premises if a specific procedure were not in place to deal with incidents as smoothly as possible. This procedure is subject to regular review.

* A significant advisory team:

In the event of any behavior being deemed contrary to the Charter, regardless of location or the form it may take (for example, in class, during an evening event, via social networks, etc.), students and staff may seek support from one of our advisors, who have been allocated to the various training programs offered by the School: the Grande Ecole-Master in Management, the Global BBA, Masters and Advanced Masters, the Global MBA and all continuing education programs and on all four School premises. Joining the team of advisors are psychological counsellors and three legal experts, who together form the Respect for Others Commission.. The list of advisors (totaling over 30 to date) is sent to all members of the ESSEC community and is available at various key ESSEC locations as well as via the MyEssec intranet.

All advisors took a specific training course in 2019 and have at their disposal a range of documents stored on a shared platform; they may refer to the president of the Commission,Viviane de Beaufort, should they need to identify and gather sensitive information with a view of preparing an official notification, welcoming plaintiffs (in pairs) and dealing with each case efficiently. New advisors receive extra support from the president. They may also provide mutual support for one another.

* Official notification

When questionable behavior is reported, the procedure is as follows:

1. An “advisor” may be contacted in complete confidentiality, for any official notification of a discriminatory action from which a student has suffered or has witnessed.
2. An “ad hoc Respect for Others advisors” commission analyses the case and recommends and implements the appropriate measures to be taken.
3. When a case subject to penal classification is reported, it is the responsibility of the Commission to explain the complaints procedure to the student and suggest that senior management institute civil proceedings.

# The essential commitment of School associations to a respectful student life

We are seeing increasing confirmation of our belief that students are beginning to grasp the importance of these issues and undertake their own initiatives, especially within the context of student life. Our role is to drive and structure any such initiative. However, none of this would be possible without the firm belief within our students that any behavior considered to be a “thing of the business school past” is no longer to be tolerated.

Training of associations:

Every year, all association presidents must commit to respect of the charter in full knowledge that in so doing they are also committing their legal responsibility in the event of negligence. Training is duly provided.

*The advisory role of the HeforShe (UN Women) association*

In its capacity as a member of the gender equality and Respect for Others commission, the association receives official institutional support. In 2019-20, it extended its activities from the BBA to the Grande Ecole-Master in Management program. Since the beginning of the 2019 academic year, HeforShe has been assigning “angels” to oversee on-campus evening events and provide support to single females in tandem with the associations holding evening events. HeforShe Essec has also developed an initial awareness kit1. They are also working closely with the School’s communications department to devise an official awareness campaign that will include posters and podcasts.

## Commitments being put into practice to strengthen the Charter set-up

Communications/Teaching

* A dedicated page on the gender blog2
* Publication of useful documents on the MyESSEC intranet and also the ESSEC institutional website for public consultation
* Co-development of a communications and awareness campaign with HeforShe Essec and student offices, with a launch scheduled for the first term of 2020
* Continuation and further development of dedicated programs and initiativesStaging of an annual event on the issue - in 2020 we will be welcoming the national HeforShe federation founded under the auspices of UN Women France for their annual symposium
* Video broadcasting to staff of the Charter of Respect for Others conference on September 3rd,2019
* Production of a short instructional film explaining the Charter and how senior management,advisors, and also student members of HeforShe and CSE employees can intervene
* Incorporation of specific sessions on the themes of sexist and raciststereotypes, discrimination and harassment into the Organizational Behavior core course, which concerns all programs under the responsibility of Laurent Bourgeon, professor and CSE advisor

1 <http://gender.vivianedebeaufort.fr/egalite-femme-homme-a-lessec/>

2 *Ibid.*

* Incorporation of awareness-raising/sociology conferences into ESSEC student tracks in order to improve understanding of socialization rituals and herd mentality with experts and alumni.

# Assessment, gauging, reporting and processing of complaints

* An assessment gauge (Mood Manager) for use with students
* Participation in the Higher Education Sexual and Sexist Violence Observatory
* Introduction of a mobile application designed to notify incidents and share information, including an anonymous use option
* Conflict management training for advisors and staff in contact with our various target groups.

# Pre-planning

* Systematic delivery of training sessions for association offices and application of mandatory internal sessions upon a change of management team in tandem with the student offices, HeforShe and using already available teaching material
* Advance preparation with Foys of scheduled events and application of a formal commitment to avoid re-organizing events of a sexist nature
* Promotion of increased diversity within association offices.

1. **An alumni-specific undertaking**

* Communication on actions in support of Respect for Others in the Reflets alumni magazine,
* Establishment of an alumni task force in coordination with and overseen by the Maison des ESSEC office, with the following aims:

1. Implementation of a coherent dialogue with alumni on these crucial area
2. Gathering ideas
3. Involvement of alumni with students, especially during the now regular awareness-raising sessions at ESSEC
4. Regular reporting of actions.

The overall ambition is to establish a permanent link on the major issue of the struggle against any form of disrespectful behavior towards others.

## 6. Overview of all complaints filed under the Charter of Respect for Others

**15 complaints have been registered since September 2018**:

* 1 case of a professor making a “humorous” remark of a sexist nature
* 1 case of an external contributor making sexist and racist comments and displaying discriminatory behavior
* 1 case of potential racist behavior by a professor
* 1 case of inappropriate behavior by an external contributor towards an assistant
* 2 cases of racist comments on Facebook - the students then deleted their comments and apologized
* 3 cases of psychological harassment among students
* 1 case of a racist remark made by a student regarding an external contributor
* 1 case of a student association making racist comments in a supposedly humorous manner
* 1 case of a student association employing sexist recruitment techniques
* 2 cases of complaints for sexual assault being filed: one was referred to the public prosecutor upon formal request by ESSEC to speed up the procedure, while the other is in progress
* 1 case of an accusation of a discriminatory attitude toward a student by the School

All cases have been duly dealt with or are in the process of being handled. Providing a speedy response is vital, however complicated this may be.

All parties concerned and proven to have made remarks or behaved in such a way that is contrary to the Charter have been reminded of the School’s values and the content of the official text and have subsequently committed to not repeating any such behavior. In proven cases, the guilty party or parties have deleted any remarks, disposed of any material concerned, accepted temporary voluntary exclusion measures etc.

In the most serious case, ESSEC contacted the police directly and will institute civil proceedings if the inquiry leads to a trial. In the meantime, the School has taken the necessary safety precautions to ensure that the students in question may continue their studies.

We aim to apply the principle of proportional sanctions and always respect the presumption of innocence until proven guilty.

While our principal objective is to raise awareness and understanding, we will not hesitate to apply strict measures should the need arise.