

**Resolution of the Ethics Committee of the University of Hradec Králové  
of the meeting held on 15 February 2023 on complaint No. 2/2022:**

The submitter of the complaint No. 2/2022 (hereinafter the Submitter), a female student of the University of Hradec Králové (hereinafter the UHK), contacted the UHK Ethics Committee with a request for an assessment of the conduct of the teacher of her course, a male student of a doctoral programme at the UHK (hereinafter the Subject Concerned). The Submitter stated that the teacher had invited her to a consultation, the content of which was to be "an important discussion". She assumed that it would focus on academic matters. She went to the place designated by the teacher but on arrival she found that the meeting place was the teacher's private premises. During this meeting, the teacher expressed his personal sympathies to her but, according to the student's statement, did not develop any other important discussion. The student left the meeting and described the situation which was uncomfortable for her in a complaint addressed to the UHK Ethics Committee.

**Opinion**

The UHK Ethics Committee concluded that the actions of the Subject Concerned violated Article 3(4) of the UHK Code of Ethics and considers his approach as an abuse of his position as a teacher.

**Hearing and justification**

The UHK Ethics Committee received the complaint in late 2022 and dealt with it in January and February 2023. The Ethics Committee contacted the student to request additional information about the meeting and her communication with the teacher. The Ethics Committee also asked for a statement from the Subject Concerned, whom they did not contact in writing until the end of the examination period in order to accommodate the student's wish to do so after she had completed the course in which the Subject Concerned was teaching her. The teacher confirmed that the meeting with the student had taken place. He stated that he had wanted to discuss with her absence from some of the course exercises and her coursework. In the said letter, he then expressed regret for his conduct.

The meeting of the UHK Ethics Committee on the complaint took place on 15 February 2023 and was attended by all members, including student members as the matter concerned students. The discussion focused on a possible violation of Article 3(4) and Article 2(6) of the UHK Code of Ethics. The Subject Concerned is a doctoral student at the UHK but in the complaint, he acts as a teacher in a course that the Submitter attended as a student. It appears from her description of the encounter, from the statements of the Subject Concerned and from the mutual communication documented by the student that both were aware of their roles in the situation. For this reason, the UHK Ethics Committee considers the conduct of the Subject Concerned to constitute an abuse of his teaching position as referred to in Article 3(4) of the UHK Code of Ethics. In particular, the UHK Ethics Committee considers the fact that the teacher invited the student to his private premises for a consultation to be completely inappropriate.

Article 2(6) of the UHK Code of Ethics states that "students and employees do not commit any conduct that could be considered as sexual and gender-based harassment". The Ethics Committee is aware that the attitude of the teacher described in the complaint could be perceived as a violation of this article. However, on the basis of the information available, the Ethics Committee cannot decide fairly the conduct of the Subject Concerned beyond a reasonable doubt.

The UHK Ethics Committee recommends that the principles laid down in the UHK Code of Ethics be discussed with doctoral students who are both students and teachers and who come to the UHK both from our environment and from foreign countries with different cultural practices. The UHK Ethics Committee considers, for example, the Ph.D. Summit – a course for incoming doctoral students that is organized by the UHK usually at the beginning of the winter semester – to be a good platform for information.

Voting of the Committee on the opinion: members present: 7; in favour – 7; against – 0; abstentions – 0.

In Hradec Králové on 15 February 2023

Mgr. Lukáš Vízek, Ph.D.

Chairman of the UHK Ethics Committee