

**Policy for the prevention of sexual harassment and sexual violence**  
**at BaySpo - Bayreuth Center of Sport Science**  
**at the University of Bayreuth**  
**dated 5 June 2025**

**Preamble**

Sport and sporting success are characterised by body perception and representation as well as physical proximity. Body-centred content is regularly taught for this purpose. This exchange is not only characterised by physical proximity, but also, in some cases, by relationships of dependency. Power relations and the body-centred nature of sport create an increased risk of sexual harassment and sexual violence. This has also been recognised by sports organisations, and the German Olympic Sports Confederation (DOSB), as the umbrella organisation for organised sport in Germany, has adopted a comprehensive tiered model with minimum standards for the prevention of and protection against sexual harassment and sexual violence in sport.

Actions in sport are often associated with familiarity, emotionality, physical closeness, as well as touching, observing and commenting on physical actions (see § 4). This brings with it the social closeness in sport that is an essential part of sport. However, this social closeness also requires particular sensitivity to possible transgressions. The boundaries of what is considered disrespectful, hurtful or even violent are also defined individually. Forms of address or certain rituals in sport can also be considered transgressive. For example, in the field of sports studies, areas of study in which students interact closely with each other, such as during the first semester/introductory week or during practical sports courses and excursions, may be considered risky (dvs, 2023). This requires special attention and respectful interaction with one another.

At the Bayreuth Center of Sport Science (BaySpo), the study of sport in theory and practice is firmly established. The University of Bayreuth encourages members of the university to offer help to those affected by cases of discrimination or harassment that come to their attention and to support them in resolving conflicts. As part of the University of Bayreuth, BaySpo sees it as its duty to promote a culture of awareness and, as a member of the German Association for Sports Science (dvs), to implement the recommended measures from the "Protection Concept for Sexual harassment and sexual violence – Prevention and Intervention" (2023). That is why BaySpo is using its "Policy for the prevention of sexual harassment and sexual violence" to sharpen the "Guidelines on Protection Against Discrimination and Harassment in Consideration of the General Equal Treatment Act (AGG) at the University of Bayreuth " in the context of sport.

*[Translator's note: The German term "sexualisierte Gewalt" refers broadly to the exercise of power through sexual means. It encompasses behaviours ranging from harassment and boundary violations to coercion and assault. In this translation, the term is rendered as "sexual harassment and sexual violence."]*

## § 1

### Objectives

- (1) The specific objectives of the policy are:
  1. **Removing taboos:**  
To promote active and open communication about personal boundaries and potential risk situations.
  2. **Awareness raising:**  
To promote respectful, tolerant and open coexistence characterised by attentiveness, awareness and active support for one another.
  3. **Prevention and intervention:**  
Implementing preventive measures and low-threshold counselling and complaint options.
- (2) <sup>1</sup>The policy is primarily aimed at the actions and values and content conveyed at BaySpo and is therefore directed at all persons working at and for BaySpo. <sup>2</sup>In addition to full-time employees, this also includes research assistants, tutors, lecturers, visiting scholars, university sports course instructors and students.
- (3) Students of sports studies in particular should be made aware of the issue so that they can act as multipliers in their later (professional) lives and take measures against sexual harassment and sexual violence themselves.

## § 2

### Sexual harassment and sexual violence

- (1) <sup>1</sup>Sexual harassment and sexual violence is understood to mean various forms of exercising power through sexuality. <sup>2</sup>This does not primarily refer to the performance of sexual acts against one's will, but rather to the exercise of power with the help of sexual acts, as defined, for example, by the German Sports Youth (dsj) in its guidelines for protection against boundary violations, sexual harassment and sexual violence in sport (Deutsche Sportjugend, 2020; Rulofs & Palzkill, 2018).
- (2) <sup>1</sup>Sexual harassment and sexual violence includes sexual harassment without physical contact, sexual acts with physical contact and sexual boundary violations:
  1. **Sexual acts without physical contact** (so-called "hands-off" acts): These include, for example, verbal and gestural sexual harassment (e.g. catcalling, threats and blackmail) as well as sending messages with sexual content against a person's will.
  2. **Sexual acts involving physical contact** (so-called "hands-on" acts): These include, for example, unwanted physical contact that is understood to be sexually assaultive, coercion and rape.
  3. **Sexual boundary violations:** These occur when individual boundaries are crossed. They have a sexual component and can be intentional or unintentional (e.g. violations of modesty, obscene gestures, pulling at someone's clothing, etc.; definitions based on Rulofs & Ohlert, 2021).

<sup>2</sup>See also the Guidelines on Protection Against Discrimination and Harassment in Consideration of the General Equal Treatment Act (AGG) at the University of Bayreuth.

### **§ 3**

#### **Initial situation**

<sup>1</sup>Sexual harassment and sexual violence is not a new phenomenon. <sup>2</sup>The consequences for those affected are far-reaching, not only in terms of their physical, mental and social health, but also in terms of their quality of life, performance and social participation. <sup>3</sup>BaySpo is therefore strongly committed to preventing such cases as far as possible and, if they do occur, to dealing with them in the best possible way in terms of victim protection. <sup>4</sup>The members of BaySpo use their multiplier function in the education of students to enable them to act responsibly and competently in their future professional fields and in their volunteer work.

### **§ 4**

#### **Risk factors for transgressions in sport**

##### **(1) The special relationship between closeness and distance**

<sup>1</sup>In sport in particular, flat relationship structures are practised, which contribute to the creation of a desired social closeness. <sup>2</sup> Considerate behaviour should ensure that informal address, friendly interaction or the practice of sporting rituals do not lead to a shift in the closeness-distance relationship causing the perception of crossing boundaries.

##### **(2) Body-centred sporting activities**

<sup>1</sup>Physical contact and exposure of the body are fundamental components of many sporting activities and have many desirable positive aspects, e.g. assistance, observation and commentary on the body, partner exercises, duels in sports games or in wrestling and fighting, and physical expression in dance. <sup>2</sup>These different forms of physical contact and body representation are necessary as part of sporting activities, but can also encourage sexual harassment and sexual violence. <sup>3</sup>The boundary between legitimate, sport-related physical contact and inappropriate bodily displays or conduct is defined individually.

##### **(3) Emotional content and closeness**

<sup>1</sup>Interaction in team sports or in a team is accompanied by sometimes impulsive emotions when celebrating a victory or goal together, but also when consoling each other in the event of a defeat. <sup>2</sup>Emotions in sport are desirable and indispensable, but they can also increase the risk of inappropriate behaviour.

##### **(4) Specific sportswear**

<sup>1</sup>Sportswear should be functional. <sup>2</sup>In some sports, specific clothing or nudity (e.g. skimpy and tight-fitting suits in swimming, gymnastics, etc.) can cause the sexualisation of young people's appearance

(cf. Deutsche Sportjugend, 2020). <sup>3</sup>During training, appropriate competition rules (e.g. in gymnastics or beach volleyball) should therefore be critically discussed in order to raise awareness of the issue.

(5) **Language and comments (language role models in the media)**

<sup>1</sup>In games and competitions, but also in training, language is often abbreviated, coded and, under stress, sometimes less carefully considered than usual. <sup>2</sup>In addition, gender stereotypes and power relations can sometimes be reinforced through language (e.g. "girls' goals count double", "women's push-ups") for supposedly educational or methodological reasons. <sup>3</sup>Discrimination and boundary violations should be prevented through reflective and sensitive use of language.

(6) **Spatial and temporal circumstances (e.g. excursions)**

<sup>1</sup>Reflecting on and respecting personal boundaries should help to reduce the risk of boundary violations during (individual) training sessions, but also when changing clothes and showering, as well as during excursions, and create a safe and pleasant atmosphere.  
training, but also in changing and showering situations and on excursions, and to create a safe and pleasant atmosphere.

## **§ 5**

### **Measures against sexual harassment and sexual violence: Removing taboos, raising awareness and prevention at BaySpo**

(1) **Clear positioning for responsible conduct and against sexual harassment and sexual violence**

<sup>1</sup>The members of the BaySpo management committee and the representatives of all status groups at BaySpo signal with their signatures that they take a clear stand against sexual harassment and sexual violence and cultivate an attitude of attentiveness, awareness and active support for one another. <sup>2</sup> This includes:

1. committing to respectful and appreciative coexistence,
2. reflect on and respect individual boundaries and individual perceptions of closeness and distance,
3. take a stand against all forms of sexual harassment and sexual violence,
4. To remove the taboo surrounding the topic of sexual harassment and sexual violence through regular and open communication.

(2) **Measures in teaching**

In theoretical and practical-methodological courses

1. attention is drawn to the topic of sexual harassment and sexual violence as well as the risk factors and consequences, and awareness is raised in preparation for the profession. This is done by implementing the topic in suitable modules of the sports degree programmes,
2. according to the type of course, we actively raise awareness of sexual harassment and sexual violence at the beginning of the course,
3. In all courses (e.g. in the first course unit and/or permanently via e-learning courses), reference is made to the contact persons for sexual harassment and sexual violence.

(3) **Measures in research**

1. Research projects involving human subjects are submitted for approval in accordance with the rules of procedure of the Research Ethics Committee of the University of Bayreuth. If the project requires particular physical exposure and/or physical contact, the ethics request should contain information on this and, if necessary, protective measures.
2. Before consenting to the study, participants must be informed in detail and in an understandable manner about the purpose and nature of the physical contact. This is done both verbally and in writing as part of the participant information process.
3. Studies involving physical contact and physical exposure may only be conducted with written consent (confirmed by signature on the consent form).
4. In situations involving physical exposure, particular sensitivity must be shown with regard to respecting boundaries of intimacy.
5. All participants shall be informed about the prevention principles and behavioural guidelines and made aware of them accordingly.
6. The behavioural guidelines for examination situations that pose a risk of sexual harassment and sexual violence should be set out in writing and made public in appropriate places (laboratories, website, etc.) and should be included in the information provided to test subjects, including complaints offices.
7. The regulations do not apply to student projects within the framework of seminars. However, if such student projects require particular physical exposure and physical contact, the students being examined must be informed in advance about the specific course of the project and must then confirm in writing that an appropriate explanation has actually taken place and that they agree to participate in the project.

(4) **Measures for student events**

<sup>1</sup> Preventive measures in the context of student life should be coordinated and implemented by a working group as part of the student council (Sports Department). <sup>2</sup> These include:

1. Removing taboos and raising awareness through regular educational work, e.g. via social media.
2. Student members of the working group are available to students as a first point of contact,
3. Communication of the policy and initial contacts at student events, e.g. during the first semester/introductory week,
4. Creating policies for student events, e.g. the presence of awareness teams.

(5) **Further measures at BaySpo\***

In addition, it is particularly important for successful prevention work that BaySpo:

1. regularly encourage people and students working at and for BaySpo not to tolerate incidents of sexual harassment and sexual violence and to make their rejection of such incidents unmistakably clear,
2. communicate this position widely, thereby drawing attention to the issue,
3. initiate and support regular training opportunities to build knowledge and skills for dealing with sexual harassment and sexual violence,
4. analyse and optimise spatial and institutional conditions,
5. make contact persons and courses of action transparent on the homepage and other suitable locations,
6. take a stand against institutional discrimination and align its rules, habits and procedures accordingly to prevent discrimination and sexual harassment and sexual violence,
7. also oblige research assistants, tutors and lecturers to comply with this policy,
8. apply the policy to events at BaySpo and work to ensure that corresponding requirements are included in usage agreements.
9. implements monitoring of the measures and an evaluation of the policy.

(6) **Measures within the framework of university sports**

The following additional measures are taken in university sports:

1. Course instructors are required to sign a letter of intent committing them to the policy.
2. Prevention courses (e.g. self-defence) are offered as a contribution to the prevention of sexual harassment and sexual violence.

## **§ 6**

### **Counselling, complaint options, dealing with cases of sexual harassment and sexual violence**

<sup>1</sup>At BaySpo, confidential advisors from among the staff and students are available for counselling – these are currently listed on the homepage. <sup>2</sup>In addition, affected persons can contact the relevant contact points, in particular the [contact persons in cases of sexual harassment and sexual violence](#), as well as the [complaints office for discrimination and harassment](#). <sup>3</sup>If confidential advisors at BaySpo are contacted, they are bound to confidentiality in accordance with the Guidelines on Protection Against Discrimination and Harassment in Consideration of the General Equal Treatment Act (AGG) at the University of Bayreuth.

## **§ 7**

### **Entry into force**

This policy shall enter into force on 6 June 2025.

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\* Care and dependency relationships among employees are not explicitly covered by this policy. However, the basic principle formulated here naturally also applies in this area, and the current version of the Guidelines on Protection Against Discrimination and Harassment in Consideration of the General Equal Treatment Act (AGG) at the University of Bayreuth applies in full. Of course, the persons responsible at BaySpo nevertheless endeavour to be available for all matters relating to this complex of issues and, if necessary, to refer those affected to the competent/qualified authorities.