

To the PARTS teachers,

In September 2022, at the start of a new generation of students, we introduced the process of making explicit the work culture that prevails in the school. We want to continue this and do this in a more systematic way, at the start of each teaching period, whether it's with a new teacher or someone they have been working with before.

What we would like to do in this document is to invite you to make PARTS' and your values explicit and to invest in implementing and upholding them in your teaching work. Not everything may be applicable to the individual teacher, and different elements may already be practiced by you.

This document lists the values and commitments and then focuses on a few aspects of the implementation of the implementation of it, and a few general guidelines about feedback, potentially sensitive methods/topic, pronouns and different types of learning processes.

The document is almost identical to the one of last year, apart from this and an extra paragraph on sharing one's pronouns (scroll down for the section in italic if you know the rest of the text).

The values of PARTS

What follows is a general list of values and commitments, which will be communicated to the students as guidelines to be followed.

PARTS is an educational institution. It is important to acknowledge the leadership dynamic in the relationship between a teacher and a student and their different roles. The teacher is in the position of providing a frame for the student to develop their skills and knowledge. This frame allows the teacher to evaluate the student's work and offers space for questions, dialogue and feedback.

Values

- we focus on and invest in the work at hand
- we take responsibility for our own learning process
- we respect the other people in the room (peers, teachers, observers...)
- we invest in communication and collaboration with the others
- we support the others and accept support from the others
- we take care of our own and each other's bodies
- we care for the things and beings around us

Commitments

- we arrive on time in class
- we communicate with the teacher when not coming on time
- we accept if we cannot join anymore once a class has taken off
- we do not eat in the studio

- we do not use our phone during a class, unless otherwise agreed with the teacher for work purposes
- we put the studio back into its original set-up after the class
- we communicate with the teacher, tutor or other students if there is a problem during the class
- we are aware that our individual actions/behaviour have an effect on the capacity to learn of the others

The school invites its teachers to adopt, adapt, complement, modify these values and expectations following their own convictions and their specific methodologies.

Making the values and commitments of the class explicit

The school has come to believe that it would be beneficial if each teacher, at the start of their teaching period, makes these values and expectations very explicit towards the students, and seek active confirmation by the students that they understand what the values and expectations of this class are.

Related to this, we actively encourage the teacher to create enough time to explain their broader frame of values, the goals for the series of classes, and the sources, materials and ideas they are inspired by. By explaining and naming the context of the class, it is rendered less self-evident and 'universal'.

Support

The teacher has an active role in communicating in case the class etiquette is not being followed. If this etiquette or work culture is not being understood or respected by one or several students, we encourage the teacher to communicate this directly to the student either during or right after the class. The tutors are also there in case the teacher needs support to clarify an approach or to communicate with the students. The teacher can always ask the help or advice from tutors or coordinator when they feel that a problematic approach of the class etiquette by individuals or groups of students is beyond their individual agency or control.

Starting and ending on time

Starting and ending the sessions on time plays an important role in the keeping up of values and etiquette. This is a collective responsibility, in which the teacher has a specific role, which is to make sure the class ends on time. Starting the class on time can be a challenge, especially if the previous class runs over time. When this happens we encourage the teacher to end on the provided time, and to bring up the difficulty of starting on time with the tutors or coordinator.

Latecomers

The teacher has the right to refuse a student to participate in the class when they arrive late, if they feel that having to re-start the class by introducing/explaining the material slows down the class. It is good to explain to the students by the start of the series of classes if and how you will apply this rule.

Feedback

The school strongly invites the teacher **to include time for feedback** (whether or not the last day is suitable for that, depends on the circumstances), which allows the teacher to come back to the goals of the course as stated at the start of the series, to give an indication of the evaluation that will follow, and to allow the students to collectively express their feedback of the course.

Introducing potentially sensitive methods and topics

The school wants to encourage the teachers to pay attention when they introduce methods, questions and topics that are potentially sensitive among (some) students because of their personal, social or cultural background and life experience. If you work with methods and themes that are potentially sensitive, we encourage you to clearly announce this, to be as precise as possible about what you want to happen and expect students to do, check whether people are comfortable, during and after the session. Giving attention to potential discomfort and actively searching together with the students for ways to deal with it, is a good way to avoid ending up in a situation where a student feels obliged or eventually refuses to participate in the session.

The school will support the teachers by informing them about ways these issues have been tackled in other contexts.

Pronouns

The school invites all the members of its community to explicitly share the pronouns they would like to use. The students' preferences are marked in the document with the pictures that each teacher receives by the start of their teaching period, but the teacher is welcome to do a short round upon your first meeting (if only to share their own pronouns).

It's important that nobody is obliged to share their pronoun (in public, or in general) - for some people this can be uncomfortable and this should be respected. We ask all the members of the community to respect each person's choice of pronouns, but also to be understanding of the mistakes people may make when facing a large group of new faces.

Addressing neurodiversity and learning processes

From some experience with students dealing with different learning abilities stemming from the autism spectrum, dyslexia, ADHD etc.. (which are not always identified or fully diagnosed), it has become clear that individuals can process material/skills/knowledge in different ways. This can be misread as a lack of interest and engagement. Therefore it is recommended to check in a non-judgmental way if a student's behaviour is their way of processing information, or indeed a lack of interest and engagement. The teacher can always ask the tutors or the coordinator for support and advice in such matters. If there are clear things that have been identified and are useful to know for pedagogical reasons, the students or tutors (if the student agrees or prefers) will communicate this information to the teachers. We're in process to figure out how to adapt to these challenges in a more structural way, but this will take time, and there may also be limits as to what we can offer with our specific practices in a small institution.

This document is a working document. We are open to comments, suggestions and experiences and to hear your perspective on it!

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