

DUO for a JOB (Rotterdam) inappropriate behaviour policy

Founded in 2012, the DUO for a JOB association has offices in Belgium, France and the Netherlands. Our mentoring programme pairs young people aged 18 to 33 with an immigrant background (mentees) with volunteer over-50s (mentors). They spend half a year (every week +/- 2 hours) together as DUO to take steps towards a job, apprenticeship or training for the young person. This intergenerational and intercultural mentoring programme by DUO for a JOB aims to: 1) reduce inequality in access to the labour market, 2) ensure a better appreciation and deployment of the knowledge and experience of the over-50s, and 3) stimulate intercultural and intergenerational contacts, to help make 'coexistence' become the norm

DUO activities are carried out by staff and (volunteer) mentors. Our inappropriate behaviour policy is designed to ensure that this is achieved in a pleasant, personal and confidential manner in the safest possible environment. This summarises the agreements on how to deal with each other. Our association's policy on undesirable behaviour has to offer protection to both mentees and (voluntary) mentors.

Risk analysis

DUO for a JOB is based, among other things, on a relationship of trust in which the mentee and the mentor feel comfortable and in which they treat each other with respect.

Based on a request for help, a DUO's activities take place almost exclusively during a one-to-one contact between mentee and mentor. Although all mentees have reached the age of majority, there is a considerable age difference between mentee and mentor. A mentee may also experience a difference in social status or mental superiority on the part of the mentor.

Our mentees may also be vulnerable for the following reasons:

- Their high level of economic and social dependency may be a factor when their financial situation is precarious, they are uneducated or poorly educated and/or have an insufficient command of the Dutch language.
- Mentees often have a more limited network and therefore lack the protection such a network can provide.
- Cultural aspects can play a role in, for example, a reluctance to report problems or unfamiliarity with Dutch health and welfare authorities.
- An uncertain right of residence, poor housing conditions or caring for small children as a single parent may make them dependent and vulnerable.

- Mental health problems resulting from (childhood) experiences in the country of origin or during the escape route process may play a role, as well as mental health problems resulting from traumatic (childhood) experiences in the country of current residence.
- A mentee may suffer from a (mild) mental or other development delay.

DUO for a JOB's social mission already guarantees a culture of transparency and safety. It has adopted a fair social impact policy with a balanced sense of participation for its employees and accessible contact points for all those involved. The practical set-up and support of each individual DUO pathway also ensures that supervision and protection are guaranteed at various times during the mentoring period:

- DUO for a JOB coordinators create DUOs on the basis of various criteria (professional sector, language skills, personality, availability,...), **reflecting** the mentee's needs and the mentor's skills known from initial interviews. taking into account the mentee's request for help and the mentor's skills, as discovered during the initial interviews.
- Each DUO enjoys the **proactive support** of a **coordinator**, who is tasked with initiating a first meeting to provides the mentee and mentor with an opportunity to get to know each other. After this **introductory meeting**, the two individuals are required to tell the coordinator whether they wish to work together and whether there is a good enough mutual understanding with regard to both the request for help and their personal lives.
- If the mentee and mentor confirm that they intend to continue working together as a DUO, they will then sign a **mentoring agreement** at a second meeting together with the DUO coordinator, which sets out the framework and mutual (voluntary) commitments. The ethical charter and the rules of conduct form part of that agreement. This stage also marks the 'official' start of the mentorship period. Prior to signing, the mentor should have submitted a certificate of good conduct and signed a code of conduct.
- After the signing, the DUO coordinator sends the mentee and mentor a follow-up e-mail featuring details for contacting the confidential advisor. It also contains a link to the so-called 'DUO toolbox', which contains all kinds of information and training materials. The toolbox also contains a reference to the inappropriate behaviour policy and details for contacting the confidential advisor.
- The **time-limited** mentee-mentor relationship covers a maximum of six months. Both the mentee and mentor may end the DUO relationship prematurely at any time.
- A DUO meets **once a week** for two to three hours during the mentoring period. DUO for a JOB offers the opportunity for these occasions to take place in a **central, open meeting space** in the association's co-working area, provided with comfortable workplaces and a bar for refreshments.

- The coordinator maintains proactive contact with both the mentee and the mentor on a regular basis throughout the DUO process. The coordinator is always available during office hours (via a personal telephone or e-mail) to answer questions or help with problems.
- During the DUO programme the mentor is obliged to participate in **peer supervision** twice, after two months and after four months of the process has been completed. He/she discusses - confidentially and anonymously - with other mentors the progress of his/her DUO and is offered the opportunity to share experiences. Both a DUO coordinator and a (voluntary, external) peer supervisor are present during these peer supervision sessions.
- At the end of the six-month mentoring period, the DUO is invited, together with the coordinator, to discuss whether the programme has lived up to expectations and whether the agreed goals have been achieved. Prior to this **review**, both mentee and mentor are asked to give feedback separately.
- Separate and restricted **Facebook groups** are available for mentees and mentors.

Recruitment policy & information for mentees and mentors

The recruitment policy for both mentees and mentors involves several stages:

First of all, everyone takes part in an **information session** (in a group setting or otherwise), to provide an opportunity to introduce the DUO for a JOB programme, clarify everyone's roles (mentee - mentor - coordinator) and answer any questions about the process.

After the information session, mentees and mentors can confirm whether or not they are interested in participating in the programme. In case of interest, a coordinator from the foundation receives each participant individually for an introductory meeting to hear more about his or her experience and expectations. During this **assessment interview**, DUO for a JOB also examines whether a prospective mentor is suitable for working with vulnerable target groups.

The prospective mentor is also informed that - within the framework of DUO for a JOB's policy on inappropriate behaviour, in accordance with the Social Safety Policy of the Association of Dutch Voluntary Organisations ([Sociaal Veiligheidsbeleid van de Vereniging Nederlandse Organisaties Vrijwilligerswerk \(NOV\)](#)) - he/she must submit a certificate of good conduct and sign a code of conduct before starting a first DUO relationship

New mentors attend a **four-day basic training course** in which the main mentoring tools and skills are explained. This covers both hard skills (e.g. knowledge about the labour market, how to apply, the social background of the (mentee) target group, administrative aspects of migration, facts and figures about refugees) and soft skills (e.g. dealing with cultural differences, active listening, reinforcing a relationship of trust). The DUO for a JOB policy on inappropriate behaviour is also discussed during this training, including an interactive quiz that asks questions about possible situations involving harassment.

After completion of the basic training, new mentors will receive a **link** to apply for a (free) certificate of good conduct and a request to upload the obtained certificate of good conduct and to sign the code of conduct.

During the peer supervision mentors are reminded of DUO for a JOB's inappropriate behaviour policy and what they can do to prevent and detect transgressive behaviour. They will also be asked to name the situations they find transgressive in order to identify potential risks.

The DUO for a JOB policy on inappropriate behaviour has been published on its website. The section entitled "*Become a Mentor*" also states that "*As part of our policy on inappropriate behaviour, we ask all our volunteers who work (in)directly with mentees to provide a certificate of good conduct and sign a code of conduct.*"

Both the inappropriate behaviour policy and the confidential supervisor are featured in the DUO for a JOB's **annual report**.

The DUO for JOB core values and GDPR policy are discussed **at the start of each DUO relationship**, when the mentoring agreement is signed. The rules of conduct and the availability of a confidential supervisor are also specifically mentioned.:

In keeping with our core values, DUO for a JOB is committed to always treating each other and others with respect. This means that we take into account each other's feelings, way of life, orientation, living conditions, culture and behaviour. Everyone should be able to be themselves and develop without detriment to others. Hence our concern about preventing undesirable behaviour includes, but is not limited to: intrusive activities, alcohol abuse, abusive behaviour, sexually transgressive behaviour, abuse of power, bullying and exclusion.

Rules of conduct help to create an atmosphere in which everyone feels comfortable and safe. They can be found on our website in the 'Policy on inappropriate behaviour' section. Transgressive behaviour cannot be entirely prevented by rules of conduct and agreements. If you suspect that misconduct is taking place or has taken place within a DUO for a JOB-relative situation, you should contact the confidential supervisor referred to below, in consultation with a DUO coordinator, if necessary. The confidential supervisor is not a DUO for a JOB employee. (Marlous Van Deelen - info@marlousvandeelen.nl ; +316 40 32 41 63)

Safe space policy & Code of conduct

DUO for a JOB bears a responsibility for the young people participating in the programme. It is important that we agree on rules of conduct with each other and observe them. We are aware that every DUO mentor/mentee relationship is unique and shaped to some extent by individual personalities and requests for help, which makes it difficult to define fixed boundaries.

The following rules of conduct reflect how we interact with each other. They are intended to offer protection to both mentees and (voluntary) mentors. However, as we do not want to and cannot possibly cover everything, we expect that what is not covered to be undertaken in accordance with these rules of conduct and, if necessary, contact should be made with the relevant DUO coordinator or confidential supervisor (to be determined).

DUO for a JOB rules of conduct

- 1. In accordance with our international safe space policy (published on our website), DUO for a JOB seeks to create a safe meeting environment for intergenerational and intercultural encounters, to help foster each person's development while being of benefit to the mentees' professional projects. Unacceptable behaviour is therefore not tolerated within the DUO for a JOB environment.*
- 2. Undesirable behaviour is understood to mean: violence, aggression, threats, discrimination, bullying, sexually transgressive behaviour and any abuse of power. All these forms of undesirable behaviour may take a physical, psychological or verbal form. Unwanted attention, discriminatory, sexist or other insulting or demeaning comments or jokes - whether verbal or written - are also considered undesirable behaviour.*
- 3. The ban on undesirable behaviour applies to everyone: employees, mentors, mentees and other volunteers. All those involved are expected to approach and treat each other with respect.*
- 4. The mentor will not accept any undesirable behaviour by mentees or fellow mentors. In the event of any undesirable behaviour, the mentee or mentor - as victim or witness - can report this to the DUO coordinator, the management or the confidential supervisor. In serious cases, subject to consultation with the victim, the police will be informed.*
- 5. While proceeding in consultation with the victim and the DUO coordinator, the management will take the appropriate measures required. This may take the form of a conversation, warning, reprimand or the termination of the mentorship. The victim and the person notifying the incident will be informed of the way in which the notification or complaint has been dealt with by the management.*
- 6. The DUO coordinator and the management will ensure that mentors are aware of the subject matter of these rules of conduct. They will also ensure that mentees may take note of these rules.*
- 7. These rules will be assessed by the management as often as necessary, but at least once every three years, and adjusted if so required.*

DUO for a JOB code of conduct for working with mentees

During the six-month DUO for a JOB relationship, boundaries in the contact between mentees and (volunteer) mentors can sometimes be unclear. One mentee may appreciate a comforting arm around the shoulders, another may not like to be touched. What the mentor may see as comforting, the mentee may see as harassment. It is impossible to agree on precise boundaries applicable to all involved and in all situations. Nevertheless, we as an association - in accordance with the Association of Dutch Voluntary Organisations ([Sociaal Veiligheidsbeleid van de Vereniging Nederlandse Organisaties Vrijwilligerswerk \(NOV\)](#)) - have established rules of conduct and a code of conduct for all our (volunteer) mentors:

When you start DUO for a JOB mentoring relationship with a mentee, we ask you to sign this code of conduct. By so doing, you confirm that you are aware of the rules of conduct (see annex) and this code of conduct and that you will not violate them. (This is in addition to the mentoring agreement, which you sign at the start of each DUO relationship.) In addition to the signed code of conduct, you are also required to submit a certificate of good conduct.

The code of conduct for (voluntary) mentors:

- 1. The mentor will provide an environment and an atmosphere in which the mentee feels safe and respected.*
- 2. The mentor will refrain from treating the mentee in a way that impairs his/her dignity.*
- 3. The mentor will not intrude upon the mentee's private life beyond what is functionally necessary.*
- 4. The mentor will refrain from any form of sexual approach or abuse towards the mentee. The mentor will not touch the mentee in such a way that this touch can reasonably be regarded as sexual or erotic in nature.*
- 5. If the mentor notices behaviour that does not comply with this code of conduct or if he/she suspects sexually abusive behaviour, he/she is obliged to report this to the confidential supervisor, after consulting the DUO coordinator if necessary.*
- 6. The mentor will not receive or provide any unreasonable intangible or tangible incentives.*
- 7. In cases not (directly) provided for in the code of conduct or in case of doubt about the permissibility of certain behaviour, it is the mentor's responsibility to act according to the spirit of the code of conduct and, if necessary, to contact the DUO coordinator or the confidential supervisor.*

This code of conduct was established by the DUO for a JOB management on 1 July 2022.

Signature of the mentor

Signature of the DUO coordinator

xxx

xxx

Confidential supervisor & Notification protocol

If you suspect that intimidating behaviour is taking place, or has taken place, within the context of DUO for a JOB, please contact the confidential supervisor specified below. The confidential supervisor is not a DUO for a JOB employee. (Marlous Van Deelen - info@marlousvandeelen.nl ; +316 40 32 41 63)

Notification protocol for DUO for a JOB staff

When a DUO coordinator is notified about intimidating behaviour, the case will be considered calmly and impartially, according to the following step-by-step plan:

1. Listen carefully and ask clear questions so that you can gain a clear picture of the notification. Think of questions like: What happened? When did it happen? Who were involved? Who is aware of this?
2. It is also important that the victim is kept safe. Find out whether the victim needs help or a confidential supervisor.
3. Draw up a report and have it signed by the notifying party.
4. Let the notifying party know what steps you are going to take, including informing the confidential supervisor and the management.
5. Agree how you will keep each other informed and stress that the notifying party and others involved must not talk to anyone else about the incident (until further notice).

6. The management and the confidential supervisor should be contacted after this discussion. They are then responsible for seeking further information so as to be able to deal with the notification in the appropriate manner.

If there appears to be any sexually transgressive behaviour or other criminal offences, the management will report this to the **police** so the case may be registered and the police may advise on what steps should be taken vis à vis the accused, the victim and others involved, as well as to prevent further concern within the DUO for a JOB framework. Notifications can be made anonymously and without mentioning any names.

If it is not possible **to report** the matter to the police, the management will investigate the matter itself after obtaining information from the confidential supervisor and any other (external) experts on the steps to be taken. Both the victim and the accused are offered the opportunity to tell their story and are treated equally. During the interview with the accused, attention is paid to the following points:

- The nature of the notification will be specified. We will not mention the victim unless he/she has given permission to do so.
- We will ask for his/her side of the story on the basis of open questions.
- We will ask whether the accused needs support (for example a confidential advisor).
- Consideration will be given to how to keep each other informed and what steps to take.
- A report of the conversation will be drawn up and signed by the accused.

After separate discussions with the notifying party, the victim and the accused, the management will meet and discuss the case and any follow-up steps/measures. Both the victim and the accused will be **informed of this**.

In its capacity as **case coordinator**, the management is also responsible for the following tasks:

- Coordinating the entire process after the notification and keeping all those involved informed. Registering the notification, keeping a logbook and drawing up a dossier containing an action plan and a time schedule.
- Reviewing the entire process after the case is closed.
- Destroying the dossier if someone turns out to be innocent.
- Choosing a spokesperson responsible for making the matter public (if necessary).

For further information, please refer to the Association of Dutch Voluntary Organisations ([Sociaal Veiligheidsbeleid van de Vereniging Nederlandse Organisaties Vrijwilligerswerk \(NOV\)](#)).