



# EQUALITY GUIDE OF ATHENE

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Equality is one of the most important values of our guild and one of the cornerstones of our operations. We want to ensure that a safe atmosphere is maintained within the guild and that everyone has equal opportunities to participate in guild activities. That is why we have compiled an Equality Guide for Athene, which contains instructions for equal practices in different reference groups within the guild. The instructions in the Equality Guide are based on Athene's common principles and Athene's Equality Plan.

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## ACTIVITY WITHIN ATHENE

Within the guild, we strive to maintain a safe atmosphere. Since most guild members are ordinary students, this requires participation from everyone. Below are ways in which you, as a member of the guild, can contribute to fair conduct and help keep Athene a pleasant community for all.

### **Respect others**

Treat all guild members with equal friendliness. Everyone has the right to participate in guild activities, whether they are a second-year board member or a guild member who has never visited the Guild Room or attended events.

### **Avoid unnecessary assumptions**

Avoid making assumptions about people's gender, age, sexual orientation or major. Allow everyone to share only the things about themselves that they want to.

### **Intervene in harassment and inappropriate behaviour**

If you notice harassment, discrimination, or any other inappropriate behaviour, intervene. Intervention may be direct and verbal or more subtle, the most important thing is to interrupt the situation. Report the situation to the guild's harassment contact persons, even if you are unsure about what exactly happened or feel nervous about making contact. For a safe atmosphere, it is important that the harassment contact persons are aware whenever something unpleasant occurs. You can find the contact information of HPC's for example from the guild's website and the kitchen wall in OLOhuone.

### **Everyone is responsible for ensuring equality**

While the board and guild officials bear the main responsibility for upholding the guild's principles, everyone can influence equality. Most guild members are ordinary students whose behaviour significantly shapes the atmosphere in guild spaces and events. Each member is committed to following Athene's principles, and violating them may lead to removal from an event etc.



## FOR GUILD OFFICIALS

Guild officials are responsible for ensuring equality within their own committee, both internally and in its external activities.

### COMMITTEES' INTERNAL ACTIVITIES:

#### **Maintain equal opportunities for becoming an official**

All guild members must have equal opportunities to apply for guild official positions. You can support this by ensuring that information about applying is communicated in both Finnish and English, and that sufficient information about each role is provided beforehand. Those selecting officials must do so transparently, based on applications, giving everyone an equal chance.

#### **Create an atmosphere that respects ideas and opinions**

Within the committee, everyone's ideas and contributions should be respected. Each person can help build an atmosphere where members can express their opinions without fear of others' reactions.

#### **Normalize addressing issues in activities**

If you notice problems within the committee or guild activities, bring them up. Committee leaders should ensure that members have the opportunity to give feedback.

### COMMITTEES' EXTERNAL ACTIVITIES:

#### **Maintain equality in guild activities**

Committees must consider how equality themes are reflected in their activities. When organizing events, all officials must follow Athene's shared principles. Use the event organizer's checklist in this guide to ensure that equality considerations are met!

#### **Committees use clear communication**

Communicate about your committee's activities in a way that is understandable to everyone, in both Finnish and English. All officials (not only the Head of Communications) are responsible for making their communication accessible. Translate your messages into English before sending them to be shared. Take the context into



consideration and avoid for example overly cryptic university jargon when communicating with phuksis.

### **Ensure accessibility**

The Guild Room Committee must ensure the accessibility of the Guild Room. Events should be held in accessible spaces whenever necessary. Survey special needs when relevant and keep accessibility in mind!

### **Event organizer's checklist**

When organizing events, remember the following equality considerations:

- The event has been communicated clearly and accessibly to everyone, and information is provided in English as well. If the event is open to all Athenans, ensure that messages are sent not only to Athene's main communication channel but also to the international student channel.
- Harassment contact persons should be appointed for guild events. It is the organizer's responsibility to find them and share their contact information.
- Participants are not pressured to drink alcohol. Non-alcoholic drinks must always be available, and organizers should not normalize drinking.
- Songs with racist, ableist, or otherwise discriminatory lyrics are not sung.
- Costume themes should be chosen with care. Select themes that do not include offensive meanings or constitute cultural appropriation. Individuals wearing offensive costumes will not be allowed to attend.
- Events should be held in accessible spaces when possible.
- Participants' special needs can be surveyed during planning—for example, with a field for special requirements on the registration form.



## **FOR THE BOARD**

Athene's board is ultimately responsible for the equality and transparency of guild activities. The board also represents the guild's values and sets an example both inside and outside the guild.

### **Responsible decision-making**

The board must make decisions that benefit all guild members equally. It is important to consider what impact decisions have on members' equality and opportunities. Equal treatment of different study programmes must be ensured.

**The board does not tolerate inappropriate or discriminatory behaviour from its members. The board represents the guild and sets an example of fair decision-making.**

The board must monitor equality within the guild and among officials. It is also responsible for communicating with officials in an equal manner and ensuring they have equal opportunities.

### **Equality in applying to the board**

During board elections, every guild member must have the opportunity to apply. All applicants must be treated equally and kindly, regardless of background or personal connections.

### **Board members familiarize themselves with the equality plan**

The board is committed to following the equality plan. The plan is reviewed at the beginning of each board term and is visible on the guild's website.

### **Board activities are accessible and transparent**

The board communicates about its activities and decisions in both Finnish and English and ensures that information reaches all members equally. The board maintains an open feedback channel for all members that can be used to evaluate and improve guild activities.



## FOR ISOs

Athene's ISOs play a major role in how the guild and its activities appear to new members. ISOs are also responsible for the appropriate treatment of phuksis and for creating a safe atmosphere for them.

### Use gender-neutral terms

Do not divide phuksis, or anyone else, by gender, and do not assume anyone's gender. Use neutral language, especially when speaking English or Swedish, and avoid gendered expressions altogether.

For example, instead of "those girls over there," say "those people over there."

### Strive to include everyone equally

Some phuksis may be highly proactive in joining activities. However, do not let this create the impression that only the proactive phuksis want to participate, encourage everyone equally. Of course, if someone expresses that they do not want to participate or are tired, that is different.

### Acknowledge language differences

Phuksis' native languages and language skills vary. Native Swedish speakers may feel hesitant about participating in activities in Finnish, some may feel nervous speaking English, and some (such as EIT Digital students) may not understand Finnish at all. As an ISO, ensure that you speak a language everyone understands. Finding the ideal language for all can be challenging, but acknowledging the issue and emphasizing that no one will be excluded due to language helps. When forming groups, consider grouping people in a way that everyone can use a language most comfortable for them.

### Acknowledge differences in local familiarity

Many new students move to Otaniemi from different parts of Finland as well as abroad, and may not know the surroundings well. Pay attention to this when announcing meeting locations, include the full official name and a clear address instead of only a nickname (for example, "defa" → "Aalto Design Factory, Puumiehenkuja 5"). It can also be helpful to include brief public transport or arrival instructions.

### Do not separate students by major

At Athene, everyone is simply "Atheneans" in general conversation. There is no need to emphasize distinctions by major.



## **Ensure that freshers treat each other equally**

Introduce phuksis to the guild's equality principles, and encourage them to pay attention to language and how they talk about places or people. This helps new members learn good community practices from the start.