

Codex for a healthy working environment, Aarhus Symphony Orchestra

- Compiled by the Working Environment Group at Aarhus Symphony Orchestra.
- Presented to the Workplace Committee (MED) at their Q3 meeting on 24 August 2023
- To be revised during the Working Environment Group meeting in Q4 2023, then consecutively by the Working Environment Group.

Fundamental principles:

A healthy working environment is based on mutual respect between colleagues, groups, and management, on the experience of being listened to and having the courage to express your opinions, on constructive criticism and, not least, on a proper tone.

Having the same starting point is the best way to ensure a common understanding of a good working life and a healthy working environment. At Aarhus Symphony Orchestra (ASO), we therefore aim for a common understanding, based on three fundamental principles:

1) We want the best for each other – and this is the fundamental attitude behind how we view the behaviour of our colleagues and own intentions.

2) We are different – culturally and personally. In addition to expecting extra tolerance and broad-mindedness, additional efforts are therefore required in adopting an inquisitive and non-judgemental approach in situations where you are not immediately able to understand a colleague or the actions of an individual.

3) We are a professional organisation, here to serve the interests of our audiences. This places major requirements on the ways in which we safeguard our very traditional handicrafts and mutual relationships – while at the same time requiring us to maintain an open and curious approach to the wishes of our audiences. Without healthy relationships and professional in-house working conditions, no great art – without an audience, no social relevance.

Common guidelines

A healthy working environment naturally requires us all to support our working community and the ground rules we have jointly adopted. Our three fundamental principles provide us with a few reference points, which provide more detailed descriptions of our common foundations. The list is not exhaustive but provides a starting point and a common reference for each of us.

We all make an effort at ASO to promote a healthy working environment.

We do so by:

- Assuming personal responsibility for developing and preserving a healthy working environment.
- Talking to – and about – each other decently and with respect and maintaining a positive dialogue across all departments and groups at ASO.
- Showing respect for each other's efforts at work, irrespective of affiliations.
- Showing respect for each other's differences, needs and life histories.
- Supporting the work contribution provided by the voluntary employee representatives.
- Making the same demands on our partners as on ourselves.
- Addressing any challenges that we might face and following up on them.

We are respectful and constructive in all communications, dialogue, and criticism.

This is expressed by:

- Consideration for the recipient when providing criticism, following up on criticism with suggestions for constructive solutions, and always helping to make improvements to the aspects we criticise.
- Basing all criticism and dialogue on the assumption that every person in the organisation continuously strives to do their best.
- Basing all our actions at the workplace on the assumption that every person in the organisation has the same common goal; to provide the most powerful musical performances possible for all our audiences.
- Consecutively updating and adapting the common guidelines within the relevant committees.
- Ensuring that relevant information and guidelines are always available on the appropriate platforms, and that we make active use of the existing guidelines in our work to secure a healthy working environment for all colleagues and partners.

We display a high level of professionalism and loyalty to our colleagues.

This is expressed by:

- Maintaining a high work morale, always being well-prepared, placing high requirements on ourselves and expecting the same of our colleagues.
- Treating all types of audiences and partners with respect.
- Being determined to continue developing the organisation, both musically, organisationally and in terms of human relations.
- Seeking help and guidance from colleagues, managers and employee representatives when facing a problem that we are not able to solve ourselves.
- Continuing to seek inspiration and new knowledge outside of ASO.

We are aware of our own role in the Orchestra and are responsible for respecting processes and common rules.

This is expressed by:

- Accepting and respecting the decisions made by the respective committees.
- Accepting and respecting confidentiality and personal boundaries.
- Accepting and respecting the fact that good processes often take time.
- Supporting the in-built hierarchies and chain of command in the orchestra.

- Acknowledging managerial rights, agreements, and the Working Environment Act.

Aarhus Symphony Orchestra is a part of Aarhus Municipality.

Aarhus Municipality does not accept offensive actions, including violence, threats, bullying, sexual harassment and other types of offensive behaviour. If an external partner experiences examples of the above, we request that the incident is immediately reported to the management or relevant working environment representatives for Aarhus Symphony Orchestra.

Partners will also be immediately notified of any offensive actions experienced or observed by our employees, and we reserve the right to immediately take the relevant corrective action, including terminating cooperation if necessary.

Options available to a person who has been subject to offensive actions (and witnesses to offensive actions):

4. Speak out during the incident, allowing the opposite party to explain their actions and clear up any misunderstanding.
5. Talk to a colleague you trust if you are not able to speak out yourself. If the conflict escalates or appears impossible to resolve, you must first contact your working environment representative or, in their absence, an employee representative.
6. If neither of the above is able to resolve the situation, contact your immediate manager. These are The Music Director for musicians, and the Administrative Director for employees in the Technical/administrative staff.
 - a. If the Music Director is not present, you can approach the Administrative Director, and vice versa.
 - b. If the offensive action involves your immediate manager, please contact that person's manager (the Administrative Director's manager is the Music Director, and the Music Director's manager is the Director of the Municipal Unit for Culture and Citizens' Services at Aarhus Municipality).
 - c. The managers have a duty to act and can therefore not guarantee anonymity for persons who report such incidents.
7. If necessary, you can make use of Aarhus Municipality's whistleblowing system in situations where you do not feel that either the working environment representative, employee representative, manager or manager's manager can deal with the issue. This system is used for severe errors and negligence and allows you to report anonymously. Click here for the whistleblowing system (in Danish only):
<https://aarhus.whistleblownetwork.net/>