

Code of Ethics of the **École Normale de Musique de Paris**

The scourge of sexual or sexist violence (VSS) or discrimination has not spared the artistic world, as several cases revealed in recent years have shown, following the #metoo movement.

The **École Normale de Musique de Paris** aims to be exemplary in this regard by ensuring that all—teachers, permanent staff, and students—fully respect the rules set out in this Code of Ethics.

Adopted by the Board of Directors after consultation with the Academic Committee, the new version of the Code is presented below. It will enter into force on September 1, 2025.

The document is composed of two parts:

- The first part recalls the facts or situations that constitute VSS, as defined by regulatory texts and case law.
- The second part contains the Code of Ethics itself, which sets the rules applicable within the School.

1. Reminder of the definitions of sexual and sexist violence, as specified by current laws and court rulings

There are four main forms of sexual and sexist violence according to legal definitions and case law:

A. Sexist Conduct

This is “any conduct related to a person’s sex, with the purpose or effect of undermining their dignity, or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating, or offensive environment” (French Labour Code, Article L. 1142-2).

B. Sexual Harassment

This is “the act of repeatedly imposing on a person remarks or behaviour with a sexual or sexist connotation that either undermine their dignity because of their degrading or humiliating nature, or create an intimidating, hostile, or offensive situation” (French Penal Code, Article 222-33).

Also considered sexual harassment is:

- “The act, even if not repeated, of using any form of serious pressure with the real or apparent aim of obtaining a sexual act, whether the act is sought for the benefit of the perpetrator or for a third party.”

The offense is also constituted:

1. When such remarks or behaviours are imposed on the same victim by several people, acting in concert or at the instigation of one of them, even if each person did not act repeatedly.
2. When such remarks or behaviours are imposed on the same victim successively by several people who, even without coordination, are aware that their acts constitute repetition.

An aggravating circumstance applies if the offense is committed “by an ascendant or any person having de jure or de facto authority over the victim,” or “by a person abusing the authority conferred by their functions.”

C. Sexual Assault

This is “any sexual contact committed with violence, coercion, threat, or surprise” (French Penal Code, Article 222-22).

The case law defines “sexual contact” as:

1. Any touching of the chest, buttocks, thighs, or genitals;
2. A forced kiss;
3. Contact made by the perpetrator’s genitals with any part of the victim’s body.

An aggravating circumstance applies if the offense is committed “by an ascendant or any person having de jure or de facto authority over the victim,” or “by a person abusing the authority conferred by their functions.”

D. Rape

This is “any act of sexual penetration, of any nature whatsoever, committed on another person or on the perpetrator, through violence, coercion, threat, or surprise” (French Penal Code, Article 222-23).

An aggravating circumstance applies if the offense is committed “by an ascendant or any person having de jure or de facto authority over the victim,” or “by a person abusing the authority conferred by their functions.”

2. Code of Ethics of the École Normale de Musique de Paris

A. Prevention of Sexism

The teaching space must be a place of trust, whether or not it is a private lesson. Doors must never be locked. Both students and teachers must always be free to leave the room without difficulty.

In this environment of trust, referring to someone's sex with the aim of humiliating, degrading, or undermining their dignity is prohibited. All students are entitled to fair treatment regardless of their sex.

Students must be allowed to work on any repertoire, and their sex must never justify a refusal. Some works—particularly in the operatic repertoire—may not be suited to everyone's capabilities, and teachers and students may freely discuss such choices. Sex must never be a reason for favourable or unfavourable treatment, nor for refusal.

B. Prevention of Undue Influence

Undue influence is an intellectual or moral domination over another person. In teaching settings, it often involves a teacher's intellectual authority over students. Under such influence, students may be led to make constrained choices, without fully free consent.

This may arise from domination or from deep respect felt toward the dominant person.

A degree of distance must therefore be maintained between teachers and students to avoid excessive intimidation or, conversely, excessive familiarity, which can foster undue influence.

C. The Body

1. Physical Contact Between Teachers and Students

In artistic training, the body occupies a special place: it embodies the artist's intimacy, protects their integrity, and serves as their instrument. Physical contact may therefore be perceived as ambiguous.

Two types of contact must be distinguished:

- **Pedagogical contact**, such as correcting posture or hand position, to improve artistic performance (theatre, singing, instrumental practice...).
- **Artistic contact**, which is inherent to artistic expression (e.g., dance, theatre).

Whatever form it takes—including embraces or greetings—physical contact must always respect each person's physical integrity. It must be discussed between teachers and students or among students, with kindness, pedagogical clarity, and attentive listening, to ensure that all parties perceive the gesture in the same way.

2. Principles of Modesty

The institution and teachers must ensure that students' modesty is respected.

When costume changes are required (for performances or classes), students must have a dedicated space to preserve their privacy. Any activity requiring costume changes must provide a space shielded from others' view.

D. Dress Code

Clothing must not be the object of public comments, whether positive or negative. However, teachers, administrative staff, and students must adopt attire that is appropriate and compatible with activities at the School.

Teachers may indicate what attire is suitable for their class (e.g., sportswear for physical activities, short nails for certain instruments, tied-back hair for dance).

In general, freedom of dress must respect certain boundaries so as not to create an intimidating or humiliating atmosphere. If attire creates difficulties, the matter must be addressed discreetly and directly with the person concerned, in a spirit of kindness and pedagogy.

E. Emotions (Emotional Expression, Close Relationships with Teachers or Peers)

Students often work on emotional expression, particularly when interpreting certain pieces or roles. Discussions on such topics must respect the limits set by the curriculum and must never push students into overly sensitive or personal territory.

Students learn to differentiate between personal emotions and those required for artistic activity. This process can be challenging and emotionally demanding. The teacher's role is to guide students in this self-development.

For repertoires involving implicit or explicit sexual themes, teachers must maintain a reassuring professional stance and sufficient distance, ensuring that students feel comfortable. Students must always be free to stop, pause, or express concerns or reservations regarding such works.

F. Principles of Equality and Non-Discrimination

Since its founding in 1919, the École Normale de Musique de Paris has welcomed students from around the world. Welcoming international students and embracing diversity are fundamental to its mission and culture.

French law prohibits discrimination based on ethnicity, nationality, race, or religion.

Discrimination is a criminal offense consisting of treating someone unfavourably based on legally prohibited grounds, including: origin, sex, family situation, pregnancy, physical appearance, economic vulnerability, name, place of residence, health status, loss of autonomy, disability, genetic characteristics, sexual orientation, age, political opinions, union activities, whistleblower status, spoken language, ability to speak a language other than French, or religion.

Any discriminatory act or racist or xenophobic remark is strictly prohibited and subject to sanctions.

G. Reporting Incidents

If a student, teacher, or staff member is the target of conduct violating this Code—whether on or off campus during School-related activities—they may submit a complaint to:
deontologie@enmp.fr

An online form is available for victims or witnesses on the School’s website:
<https://www.ecolenormalecortot.com/formulaire-de-signalement-pour-les-etudiants/>

H. Processing Procedure

Reports of VSS or discrimination from assumed victims or potential witnesses are handled in three stages:

- Collection of the report
- Review by the Ethics Commission
- Referral to the competent disciplinary authorities

1. Collection of the Report

Complaints sent to **deontologie@enmp.fr** are received by a designated representative of the School’s Directorate and a designated representative of the Board of Directors.

They will be handled with the utmost confidentiality and diligence by the School’s Ethics Committee, composed of the two designated representatives, the School’s Directorate, and two members of the Board of Directors. The Committee will respect the presumption of innocence.

An acknowledgment of receipt will always be sent to the complainant unless the report is anonymous.

2. Review by the Ethics Commission

Once a report is received, the School’s Ethics Commission is convened. Its mission is to:

- Establish the facts
- Interview potential witnesses and people close to the person accused
- Hear the person accused without delay

The Commission will decide, as quickly as possible, on measures to protect the victim and, if necessary, sanction the person accused.

3. Referral to Competent Disciplinary Authorities

In compliance with legal and regulatory obligations, the School commits to processing reports in cooperation with the appropriate authorities:

- Possibility of initiating internal disciplinary procedures, up to expulsion
- Transmission to judicial authorities if the seriousness of the facts warrants it, with the presumed victim's agreement (except when mandatory reporting applies)

Murielle Hurel

Director of the École Normale de Musique de Paris & Salle Cortot



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