

What is needed for a safe campus

The world is in turmoil. We have been dealing with various international wars and conflicts for some time now. Additionally, political and social developments are creating feelings of unrest, uncertainty and insecurity. Naturally, this is also happening within our university community. We have witnessed several protests, demonstrations and other incidents. With this article, we would like to share how the Executive Board wants to safeguard the safety of all of us

Both in front of and behind the scenes, the university is continuously working on a safe study and working environment for all students and employees. We understand that this is not always clearly visible. In this article, we list the measures we have taken so far.

Tightened security since 7 October 7 and Wijnhaven closure 13-15 October , 2023

Security in our buildings has been tightened since 7 October. The Wijnhaven Building was temporarily closed due to an increased safety risk. This concerned an external threat, the closure had nothing to do with our own students or employees. We have no indications that this specific threat is still present. The general security measures remain in force in Wijnhaven (LU card checks).

Investigation into 9 November

On November 9, an unannounced protest in Wijnhaven led to much unrest.

Subsequently, commotion arose about the actions of some extra security guards who were present. The Executive Board has previously indicated that this behavior was unacceptable and has apologized for it. Bureau Berenschot is currently investigating these events on behalf of the Executive Board.

Do you have any questions about this matter? Send an email to

secretaris@bb.leidenuniv.nl

LU-Card controls

In some university buildings in Leiden and The Hague, students and employees are subject to a LU-Card check at the entrance. This varies per moment and per location. There may be various reasons for (temporarily) introducing this particular measure; the situation at our buildings is being evaluated regularly.

Form time to time, we receive questions about the inspections in Wijnhaven and Schouwburgstraat. Our The Hague Campus is situated in an area where various ministries and security organizations are also located. That is why it is currently necessary for an employee or student to show your LU Card and register external visitors for access to these buildings. This way, it allows us to limit external risks on our campus.

The LU-Card checks are being carried out by our receptionists. Because this is an extensive task, they are supported by a flexible pool of temporary workers we hire from a specialized company. Their assignment is to check the LU Card of everyone

who enters, there are no exceptions. People who do not have a LU Card, but who are registered, also have access to the buildings. Our receptionists have been instructed not to take photos of people or their IDs. It is also not allowed to check bags. There may be exceptions, though, for example when dignitaries pay us a visit.

We are aware that some students and employees feel that they are being scrutinized. The receptionists and LU-Card inspectors have clear instructions to check everyone indiscriminately.

Extra security measures

As a university, we were used to a study and work in an open, accessible environment. This has always been part of our DNA, so to speak. However, each location has its own dynamics. That is why different security measures apply to different locations.

Nowadays, we are sometimes faced with an 'increased safety risk'. This can arise, for example, when the National Threat Assessment of the NCTV indicates that there is a certain threat level at or around one or more of our university buildings, or, in case of individual incidents, aimed at specific persons.

Combined with the assessment of our university's own safety officers, a risk assessment is then made. Based on this, the Executive Board then decides what measures are to be taken. The employees involved in safety and security do this on behalf of the Board.

Organizing events and meetings

Since November 2023, the policy for organizing events has been relaxed. The organizers are responsible for the smooth running of an event, and ensure that people treat each other with respect. We hope that this combination of flexibility and clarity will make students and employees feel safer to come together and talk openly about their opinions and feelings.

For these events, external visitors must be registered. It may also be necessary to register in advance the number of people who will be present at an event. This is due to the capacity of the halls and regulations of the fire brigade. Personal data is always handled with care.

Regulations regarding protests

The Universities of the Netherlands (UNL) published a guideline for protests at universities and colleges on 14 May. This way, we can work with clear and recognizable rules when a protest or demonstration takes place at our campus.

Academic freedom is a core value of Leiden University, and we believe that offering space for different perspectives and opinions is a great asset. At the same time, we realize that there may be questions about organizing protests on our campus. In short, there is a need for clarity.

Our overview of rules and regulations [[link to onepager](#)] concerning protests is in accordance with the UNL guideline, and with our own house rules. This way, we want to provide clarity to members of our university community about what is possible (and not possible) during a protest on our campus.

In closing: treat each other with respect

The university strives to be a free, open community, where students and employees can study and work in freely and safely.

Unfortunately, the current situation at home and abroad means that this is not always possible. We sometimes have to deal with certain threats and unsafe situations. For the safety of everyone, we must act accordingly.

We can also play a role ourselves when it comes to creating a safe campus. By continuing to treat each other with respect, and by continuing to pay attention to the opinions and beliefs of others. Our diversity is our strength, let us not forget this.