SECURITY VISION
VRIJE UNIVERSITEIT AMSTERDAM
GUIDE TO READING

This brochure sets out the management security vision in concise form.
In essence, this is the final result of the vision development process. The rest of this document provides relevant background information and a more detailed description and substantiation of the vision. The interested reader can derive from this information the context of the vision and its accompanying argumentation.

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by the VU Executive Board
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LIST OF CONTENTS

1. EXPLANATION 5
2. SECURITY VISION 6
3. BACKGROUND & ARGUMENTATION FOR SECURITY VISION 10
4. GUIDING PRINCIPLES FOR SECURITY & SECURITY PROVISION 14
1. EXPLANATION

As university management, we feel it is important to share our vision on safety and security and the principles we apply here. This vision creates the general framework, providing guidelines within which faculties, service departments and other stakeholders can arrive at their own decisions on safety and security. In this manner, we aim to accommodate values such as autonomy, self-reliance and personal responsibility, which we as Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam uphold. Furthermore, we feel that a framework vision is an excellent way of meeting the needs of our self-assured population of students, staff and other stakeholders.

In this vision, we clearly state the goals that our organization applies in the area of security and security provision. In this way, we guide the security provision applied at our university. To support the implementation of this vision we present a number of management principles for security and security provision.

The security vision has the status of a binding guide for the university as a whole and in this sense, it creates an obligation. In discussions about security, the vision forms a benchmark; it provides guidance for our security policy and security measures. When choices are made that diverge from the security vision, these choices must be explained and argued.
2. SECURITY VISION

HOSPITALITY & VIGILANCE

MANAGEMENT SECURITY VISION FOR VRIJE UNIVERSITEIT AMSTERDAM 2019-2024

“We aim to ensure the safety and security of students, employees and guests by strengthening our integrated security provision and thus continuing to safeguard our core activities – education, research and valorization – now and in the future.”

Figure 1. Guiding principles of VU Security Vision
MANAGEMENT SECURITY VISION 2019 – 2024: GUIDING PRINCIPLES

1. SECURITY IS A SHARED RESPONSIBILITY
   Staff, students and everyone else affiliated with or involved in VU Amsterdam
   are in principle responsible for both their own and each other’s safety and
   security. Final responsibility for security provision lies with the Executive
   Board. The individual faculties and service departments share responsibility
   for security provision within their domain.

2. WE FEEL A BROAD DUTY OF CARE
   The basic principle applied by VU Amsterdam is that the university feels a
   broad duty of care for the safety and security of students, staff and all other
   persons affiliated with the university. In short, for all those who are affiliated
   with VU Amsterdam for reasons of study, research or other activities anywhere
   in the world.

3. WE PROMOTE A SAFE CULTURE, A SAFE AND SECURE
   ENVIRONMENT AND SECURITY CONSCIOUSNESS AND WE
   PROVIDE A CLEAR FRAMEWORK FOR ACTION
   VU Amsterdam works actively to promote and maintain a healthy safety culture.
   The Executive Board, deans and directors play an exemplary role here. The
   university works to keep security awareness in the minds of all stakeholders
   and offers them a framework for action regarding unsafe situations. It is clear
   to staff, and also to students, how the university deals with incidents and whom
   they can contact for support.

4. WE WORK IN A PRO-ACTIVE AND RISK-DRIVEN MANNER
   VU Amsterdam takes an active approach to identifying, preventing and
   managing security and safety risks, incidents and crises. The university’s
   security provision is in balance with the human dimension, academic values
   and privacy interests. Our security provision does not place an unnecessary
   burden on the openness and hospitality of our academic institution.

5. OUR SECURITY PROVISION IS INTEGRATED, COHESIVE,
   VERIFIABLE AND CONTROLLABLE
   VU Amsterdam approaches security provision in an integrated manner.
   Integrated means in conjunction with various interests, disciplines, levels and
   persons. Security provision is based on clear principles and a code of conduct.

6. WE ARE PREPARED FOR INCIDENTS AND WE DEAL WITH
   THESE APPROPRIATELY
   We realize that not all elements of insecurity can be prevented. This is why
   we invest in the resilience of the organization and our staff, in order to limit
   the impact of incidents, emergencies and crises and also to enable a speedy
   recovery. We practice with and train our staff and we make sure they know
   what is expected of them.

WHAT TO DO IF VU PROPERTY IS STOLEN

1. If you see a stranger in your department, ask
   him who he has come to see. Escort him to that
   person’s office. Be alert and hospitable!

2. Avoid bringing valuable items onto the university
   premises.

3. Keep valuable items out of sight. If you cannot
   keep them on you, place them in a locker or a
   locked room.

4. Do not leave valuables unattended. This includes
   confidential information. If you have to leave
   your desk temporarily, ask a colleague or fellow
   student to watch your property.

5. Secure your mobile telephone, laptop and PC with
   a PIN code or strong password.

6. Ensure that only you know your log-in codes and
   passwords.

7. Log off from your PC and close all doors and
   windows when leaving your office or study room,
   even if you expect to return shortly.

8. If you see anything suspicious, alert Security
   immediately on 020 59 85854.

In case of an unsafe situation you can immediately
call our emergency number. Mobile 020 598 2222
or 22222, via the fixed line.

If items belonging to VU Amsterdam are stolen
you must inform Security as soon as possible.
Go to the Security Desk in the Main Building
(room KC-04) or call 020 59 85454. Do not contact
the police yourself: this is the responsibility of the
Security Department.

LOSS OR THEFT OF A VU KEY OR
PERSONNEL PASS
If a key belonging to VU Amsterdam or your
personnel pass is lost or stolen, you must contact
Security as soon as possible. Go to the
Security Desk in the Main Building (room KC-04)
or call 020 59 85454.

Once you have reported the incident, Access
Management will block the stolen pass to prevent
unauthorized use. You can obtain a replacement
pass by going in person to the Access Manage-
ment office in the Main Building (room KC-06).

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As a socially committed institution, Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam stays abreast of developments in the world and in the university's own surroundings. This is not only with respect to our core activities – research, education and valorization – but also in the light of what these developments mean for our organization and our core values. Societal and technological developments directly affect the situations of our institution. We are keenly aware that new developments offer the chance to explore opportunities, but also create risks. Thanks to the open nature of our institution, we are to an important extent a 'mirror of society'. Hence, we as organization are certainly not immune to changes in risks and risk perception.

Familiar challenges to modern society such as globalization, technological progress and individualization, as well as evolving attitudes to security, can have a negative effect on our core values such as 'open' and 'personal'. The same goes for concrete organizational goals such as offering a 'lively and safe campus'. Generally speaking, society is increasingly less willing to tolerate risks, and this applies particularly to safety and security. As government withdraws from some areas, organizations have to rely on their own resources more strongly than before. They will need to take their own measures to prevent risks and to manage crises, and indeed they are actively being required to do this. We strive to maintain the current level of security and perceived security. We do not expose staff, students and other persons present to unacceptable risks. Although this may seem an easy task, it is not something that can be taken for granted. Societal developments are presenting our university with new challenges. To give just a few examples, there are challenges related to ongoing digitization, internationalization, feelings of alienation and polarization and threats to the freedom of expression. In addition, we need to comply with current legislation and regulations in the area of safety and security. But where necessary we intend to make our own choices that are in line with our goals.
We aim to reduce risks to an acceptable level within their context and to keep them there, taking into account the goals of the organization. In terms of ‘must do’ this relates to legislation and regulations, in terms of ‘want to do’ this relates to norms and guidelines and choices that we ourselves advocate as organization, or which are initiated through developments in the education sector. Moreover, VU Amsterdam has a good starting position: it experiences a limited number of security incidents with limited impact and the sense of security is generally positive. We aim to maintain and strengthen this positive starting position through the further integration of our security provision. This involves on the one hand the various service departments and faculties and on the other the integration of security provision in our primary processes. VU Amsterdam has long been familiar with the internally cohesive approach to health and safety/security. Nonetheless we also see potential for the further strengthening and promotion of the integrated nature of our security provision.

Our approach to security

Security, here also understood to include safety issues, is a wide-ranging term that is experienced differently in terms of both meaning and application. On this basis of this vision, we approach security as follows:

Security means being safeguarded, and feeling safeguarded, against danger. Danger that threatens the situation, health or life of stakeholders, systems and the environment, as well as the continuity and reputation of Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam. Danger that can arise through natural phenomena, human actions or failures of engineering and technology; this may or may not be as a result of conscious human action.

We intentionally apply this broad definition of security, because we approach security in an integrated manner and not from specific sub-areas. This definition includes related areas such as continuity, incident and crisis management, combating various types of misconduct and information security.

Factors that influence our security situation

The following factors influence the security situation of Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam:

• The open nature of the university;
• The size and diversity (in terms of nationality, worldview and social attitudes) of the staff and student populations;
• Rapid changes in the population due to short-term involvement;
• The urban environment in which the campus is situated;
• The international nature and fields of work of our academic community;
• The digitization of working methods and information;
• The importance of academic freedom and autonomy;
• The wide variety of academic disciplines and activities;
• The diversity of disciplines and functions of – and within – university buildings;
• The innovative nature of the academic research being carried out;
• The deliberate work with a wide range of hazardous substances and under risky conditions;
• The increasing integration on the campus with other (public) activities such as residential units and shops, theatre/cinema and the presence of external persons on the campus.

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4. GUIDING PRINCIPLES FOR SECURITY & SECURITY PROVISION

Below we present the framework principles for security and security provision at Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam.

1. SECURITY IS A SHARED RESPONSIBILITY

Students, staff and other stakeholders at our university are in principle responsible for their own and each other’s safety and security. Hence, they have an individual responsibility for the safe and healthy use of the work and study environments. As soon as they incur specific risks due to their affiliation with VU Amsterdam, the university will together with them seek suitable solutions.

At the level of faculty and service department the responsibility in this field lies with the dean/director. The faculties and service departments share responsibility for security provision within their domain. Facilitated by the university management and within the defined framework, they themselves realize the requisite security provision. This means that security provision is not only the responsibility of executive departments; in practice, these departments mostly have an advisory role. Drawing on their experience and expertise, executive departments play an expert role in helping to ensure safety and security.

Ultimate responsibility for the safety and security of students, staff and guests of VU Amsterdam and for the integrated security provision lies with the Executive Board. The Executive Board defines the framework and determines the required basic level of security provision. The Executive Board guides security provision in general terms, oversees the integration and cohesion of this work and monitors the results. The Board also acts in the event of risks or incidents that involve more than one faculty.

2. WE FEEL A BROAD DUTY OF CARE

VU Amsterdam feels a broad duty of care for the safety and security of students, staff and other VU stakeholders. In short, for those who for reasons of study, research or other activities anywhere in the world are affiliated with VU Amsterdam. This duty of care can extend outside the campus, since study and work also take place outside the campus.

3. WE PROMOTE A ‘SAFE CULTURE’, A SAFE AND SECURE ENVIRONMENT, SECURITY AWARENESS AND PROVIDE A CLEAR FRAMEWORK FOR ACTION

VU Amsterdam works actively to promote and maintain a healthy security culture. The Executive Board, deans and directors play an exemplary role here. Desirable modes of behaviour with regard to safety and security are positively encouraged by the university. Staff and managers receive a positive response from the university when they raise and discuss risks and security issues. Staff, students, and guests feel confident about discussing incidents and risks and about addressing each other about unsafe actions, unsafe situations or inappropriate (transgressive) conduct. A safe environment in both social and physical terms – including buildings, campus, transport, sense of security – is part of the healthy security structure. VU Amsterdam strives to promote the security and security awareness of staff, students and guests and to inform them of risks. Our institution offers stakeholders a framework for action in line with their role and place in the organization.

4. WE WORK IN A PRO-ACTIVE AND RISK-DRIVEN MANNER

VU Amsterdam takes an active approach to identifying, preventing and managing security risks, incidents and crises. Security risks can never be fully ruled out. Moreover, ruling out all risks is at odds with other, valued interests. So we are realistic about risks and transparent about which risks we do and do not accept. The university does however strive to prevent or manage those security risks which have a real chance of occurring and causing harm. The university’s security provision is in balance with the human dimension, academic values and privacy interests.

Although VU Amsterdam approaches safety and security from a broad perspective, in practice certain risks have to be weighed up and prioritized. This weighing up is based on sound risk estimates which are regularly updated. This means that the instituted measures are also proportional: they match the risks at hand. Measures may differ per faculty and activity, depending on the specific risks. We aim to achieve balance across the university where possible and using tailored solutions where necessary. Our security provision does not place an unnecessary burden on the openness and hospitality of our academic institution. Security risks are managed by means of various VU risk management systems, whereby the Executive Board takes a supervisory role.

If VU Amsterdam is not able to manage risks and incidents by itself, it actively enters into partnerships with organizations such as the City of Amsterdam, security and support services and colleague universities in the Netherlands or abroad, or it acquires the advice of external experts.

5. OUR SECURITY PROVISION IS INTEGRATED, COHESIVE, VERIFIABLE AND CONTROLLABLE

VU Amsterdam approaches security provision in an integrated manner. Integrated security provision means:

1. comprehensive security provision aimed at work and study (work safety and security), people (social safety), systems, installations and infrastructure (physical safety and security, information security, continuity);
2. the effect and implications of security provision being assessed in terms of various organizational interests (also financial), disciplines and levels;
3. security provision which comprises all phases of the security chain (pre-action, prevention, repression, follow-up).

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2. the effect and implications of security provision being assessed in terms of various organizational interests (also financial), disciplines and levels;
3. security provision which comprises all phases of the security chain (pre-action, prevention, repression, follow-up).
Risk and measures for preventing or managing these risks are assessed in an integrated manner. This approach enables VU Amsterdam to make careful and considered choices on safety and security. Hence, in our view, ‘integrated’ also means that safety and security is a shared responsibility.

Security provision at VU Amsterdam is verifiable and controllable. Security provision is based on clear principles, a code of conduct and goals. We actively supervise the maintenance of the norms and the achievement of the goals.

6. WE ARE PREPARED FOR INCIDENTS AND WE DEAL WITH THESE APPROPRIATELY

We realize that not all elements of insecurity can be prevented. This is why we invest in the resilience of the organization: in the possibility and capacity for identifying risks and challenges to safety and security in good time and dealing with these pro-actively, quickly and appropriately. This means that we are prepared for and able to realize effective emergency and crisis management, thus limiting the negative consequences of incidents for the university. During critical moments we aim to be in control. We recognize that improvisation and commitment by staff and visitors is necessary in emergencies and this is why we give our staff the confidence and mandate to take suitable decisions (in line with knowledge available at that moment).

We work to achieve a resilient organization by investing in exercises and training for our staff, by learning from incidents and also from things that go well. VU Amsterdam applies an Integrated Internal Emergency Response (IBNO) VU Campus document which sets out points of departure, upscaling principles and working methods. Together with the emergency plans of the units, this basic document forms the VU Internal Emergency Plan. If accidents occur, we work to identify the underlying causes and thus to learn lessons and to further improve our organization. We encourage and promote security-aware behaviour so that people are themselves able to take appropriate action and measures to ensure their safety and security.