

Dilemma:

“I’m nervous about going on study trips.”

Each group has a host.

This dilemma card is for the host and contains:

- A host guide
- A dilemma
- Fact boxes
- A question guide for dialogue one and dialogue two

Host guide As a host, your role is to facilitate a good, constructive dialogue where everyone gets to speak. Your role is not to participate by sharing your own perspective, but you are welcome to put your perspective into play by phrasing it as a question (“What if they ...?”).

Try to be curious (“Why do you think that?”) and investigative (“What if they react differently than you assume?”).

Aim to make it safe for participants to say or share something vulnerable by making it clear that different perspectives are welcome and that everyone should be respectful.

The dialogue is divided into two parts.

The first part is about giving advice to the person who posed the dilemma, and the second part is about the theme of the dilemma from the perspective of the panellists and their experiences at DTU.

On pages 3 and 4, you will find questions and data, which you can use to qualify the dialogue.

After reading this guide and skimming the question guide, please read out the dilemma to the panel. Give them a moment to reflect on the dilemma. Then initiate dialogue one.

Dilemma:

Nadia recently started as a student at DTU—in her dream study programme. But part of being a student means sometimes going on a trip with your fellow students. This is causing Nadia to lose sleep at night long before they leave for the trip.

She is worried about several things. She is someone who prefers knowing what is going to happen (including where she is going and what it looks like) before she leaves. Furthermore, Nadia is biologically male, but looks like and identifies as a woman, dresses like a woman, and uses the name Nadia. She hasn't shared this with any of her fellow students, as she feels vulnerable and would prefer just to be seen as Nadia.

Her entire life she has either had to defend or hide her transgender identity. There are many misconceptions, partly due to a lack of information and research in the field. For example, she has experienced people being confused about whether or not she is nonbinary and people thinking that having gender-affirming surgery is a given. But neither of these apply to her. Many also believe that being transgender means that you are also gay, but gender identity has nothing to do with sexual orientation. In 2017, Denmark removed transgender identities from the national lists of mental illnesses.

Her mental well-being is affected by her worrying so much before a trip with her fellow students. But she doesn't know what to do.

Ideally, she would receive some more information about the place and the programme before going on a trip. She would also prefer to sleep alone to avoid awkwardness. If that is not possible, she would prefer to sleep with female students rather than male. But who should she approach about her special needs, and can she do it without having to tell them about her transgender identity?

She has considered several options. She has considered talking to her lecturer. But that solution only works if it gets her a private bedroom. Nadia has heard of other universities having a confidant that you can talk to and is considering suggesting this solution. She has also considered not going on the trip, but then she would miss out on the social and academic aspects. She would like the panel to discuss her options.

1

What advice does the panel give?

Dialogue one:

- [Start by hearing each panellist's thoughts on the dilemma so everyone gets the chance to speak from the start]
- "What could the underlying cause(s) for the dilemma be?"
- "What do you think of the options stated by the person who posed the dilemma?"
- "How do you think her fellow students would react if Nadia was open about her transgender identity?"
- "What can you do to promote an environment where all students feel safe?"
- [Feel free to use the data from the boxes to boost the discussion]
- [Other investigative questions]
- "We have to come up with an answer, but you don't all have to agree. What does each of you think the person who posed the dilemma should do?"

Transgender people are eight times more likely to attempt suicide than cisgender people. (Danish research published in the health science journal Jama, 2023)

Nonbinary gender identity: There is a large number of gender identities and gender expressions that do not fit into a binary definition of gender. Gender is considered to be more complex than just male or female. A person can identify as both, neither, somewhere in between the two, etc. (LGBT+ Denmark)

2 Dialogue two:

What do you do, and what could you do?

This part of the dialogue focuses on the panellists' own experiences at DTU.

Start dialogue two by telling the panel that the focal point is still the theme of the dilemma, but now they should look at the conditions in their own unit as well as considering other solutions.

Please note that dialogue two may be a bit more sensitive. Aim to create a safe and respectful space for everyone. The goal is still not to agree on everything, but to learn more about each other's perspectives.

- "Do you recognize the dilemma or parts of it, either on a personal level or through observation?"
- "Is there a part of the advice you gave that you practise in your unit? If yes, what? If no, would that be possible?"
- "What else could you do? At individual, group, and organizational level?"
- [Other investigative questions]
- "What will each of you take with you, either as a point of attention or as possible solutions related to the theme of the dilemma?"