



CODAM

The ultimate hitchhiker's guide  
To  
Codam

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# 1. Code of Conduct

We hope you are as excited to be part of the Codam adventure as we are. Aiming to make it as inspiring, unique and pleasant as possible, we will need your help! Together we can make Codam a place where everyone feels welcome and respected, and where great minds can make great things happen.

We set a few norms, rules and responsibilities that we ask you to adhere to, inspired by the Code of Conduct for Open Source Projects; adopted by more than four thousand open source projects. It is not a comprehensive list of things you can or cannot do. Rather, take it in the spirit in which it is intended – a guide to make Codam a place where you can be and become your best self.

We expect students to live by the code of conduct, and also to encourage others to do the same. If you believe someone is violating the code of conduct, point it out to them in a friendly way. If this doesn't work or you don't feel comfortable doing so, you can report it to one of the staff members.

- **Be respectful.** Number one rule is to always treat your fellow students, the staff, basically everyone in your life with respect. Codam must be a harassment-free experience for everyone, regardless of level of experience, gender, gender identity and expression, sexual orientation, disability, personal appearance, body size, ethnicity, age, religion, or nationality.
- **Be friendly and patient.** Not all of us will agree all the time, but disagreement is no excuse for poor behaviour and poor manners. You will experience some frustration now and then, but we cannot allow that frustration to turn into personal attacks. We expect you to stay friendly and work it out in a professional and respectful manner.
- **Be considerate.** You will have to collaborate with a lot of different people, by reviewing other's work and/or working in a team. Decisions you take will affect other students, and you should take those consequences into account when making decisions. Be kind to others; we don't accept insults or putting people down, neither directly, through gossiping, offending facial expressions or gestures.
- **Be open and polite.** You will notice quickly that helping your peers makes you a better programmer. Do not only wait to be asked for help, but be responsive and proactive. Remember that you are in this together; there is no competition. Harassment and other exclusionary behaviour are not acceptable. This includes, but is not limited to:

- Violent threats or language directed against another person;
  - Discriminatory jokes and language;
  - Posting sexually explicit or violent material;
  - Posting and/or sharing other people's personal information;
  - Personal insults, especially those using racist, LGBTQ-phobic, or sexist terms;
  - Unwelcome sexual attention;
  - Advocating for, or encouraging, any of the above behaviour;
  - Repeated harassment of others. In general, if someone asks you to stop, then stop.
- **Be understanding.** Disagreements, both social and technical, happen all the time and Codam is no exception. It is important that we resolve disagreements and differing views constructively. Remember that we are all different and it is human to make mistakes, and blaming each other doesn't get us anywhere. Instead, focus on helping to resolve issues and learning from mistakes.
  - **Be careful and respectful.** Any equipment and facilities in the building must be handled with respect. If you notice any malfunction or wrongful use, you need to report it to the staff. Further, it is forbidden to eat, drink and/or sleep in the clusters. A water bottle is tolerated, but at your feet, not on the desk. It has happened too often that a bottle that was not closed properly fell over the keyboard.
  - **Be calm.** Remember that you are not the only one behind a computer. If you want to ask someone something, go see him or her. Calling or shouting is not accepted. Even though clusters are not silent rooms, do not do anything that you would not do in a public place.



## **2. Facilities and surroundings**

The ground rule of using facilities is: treat everything with respect so we can continue helping students grow for years to come, not just during the time you are there. A lot of you use the building and its facilities on a daily basis. It is therefore important that the building gets treated respectfully, so in this way we can all be:

- Happy and relaxed within and outside these walls
- Be responsible towards the building and each other
- Have an awesome time for you and your peers

These rules outlined below are accepted by everyone. You commit to respect the rules of good citizenship, to show a great morality, respect for places and people and contribute to the smooth running of the institution and all of its missions.

### **2.1. Access to the premises**

- The premises are accessible to students without limitation of time and duration, 7 days a week - 24 hours a day.
- Access to the premises is strictly limited to registered students. That means that as a student, you can not introduce or facilitate the introduction of people from outside Codam.
- In order to gain access to the premises, you will receive a personal card with an identity photo, and featuring your full name and login. This card belongs to you and you only. This means that it is for exclusive use by you and can not be loaned.
- You must have your personal card with you at any time, and you must be able to present it to any staff member upon request.
- Your right to access the building can be suspended by the staff. In such a situation, you must leave the building until further instructions. In case the staff would call you in while suspended, please present yourself to the host desk.

- In case you lose your card, you will have to replace it. Present yourself to the Staff to be issued a new card. Important: personal card renewals are charged €5.

## **2.2. Behaviour inside and outside of the premises**

- Show up to Codam clean (showered, with brushed teeth and clean hair) and in decent attire.
- The introduction into the establishment of any weapon whatsoever and regardless of its category, including weapons by destination, is sanctioned by a definitive exclusion and without appeal.
- Use, possession, or transfer of any drug whatsoever, inside Codam or in the immediate vicinity is forbidden.
- Use, possession, or transfer of alcohol, inside Codam or in the immediate vicinity is forbidden.
- It is forbidden to enter the building or its immediate vicinity under the influence of alcohol or drugs.
- It is strictly forbidden to smoke in the building or outside the designated area outside, which is located on the short side of the building with the bicycle shed.
- You have to pay the utmost attention to the surveillance of your personal property and the property of Codam.
- There is a fridge available in the ground-floor pantry.  
You have to sticker your food and drinks with your name and the date when the food entered the fridge. The food has to be properly wrapped. All items that are not wrapped and stickered will be thrown away without notice.  
Obviously, placing food that should be in the fridge in the cupboards to avoid these limitations is not an option...  
Every Monday at 08:00 am the fridge will be cleaned and everything that is still in the fridge will be thrown away.
- Eating is only allowed in the pantries and at the tables in the open spaces. You are expected to clean the tables after eating with the cleaning gear the cleaning staff provides. Eating is NOT allowed in the gaming room, in the library and at the lego table.
- The restrooms are provided with deodorant and sanitary products.  
For the ladies there are sanitary bags and bins in every toilet.

## **2.3. Theft or damage**

- Any theft to the detriment of the establishment will be the subject of legal and civil proceedings.
- Any voluntary material damage will be subject to disciplinary sanctions and the amount of damage will be borne by those responsible.
- The establishment declines any and all responsibility in the event of loss, theft or deterioration of the personal objects of any nature deposited by the students in its enclosure. Don't bring such personal objects to Codam in the first place.

## **2.4. Information and display**

We communicate via postings on the panels provided for this purpose, and mainly by electronic means (Slack, email, intranet, etc.). When you use any channels of communications, it is forbidden to do:

- Commercial advertising;
- Political, trade union, or religious propaganda.

Display and publication is free subject to:

- Its origin is clearly indicated,
- It is neither defamatory nor slanderous to anyone,
- It does not in any way affect the respect of private life,
- It is not misleading,
- It benefits to Codam's community.

The above provisions apply in the same way to all publications written by you, other students or associations to which they belong, in addition to the obligation to respect the provisions of the law on freedom of the press. They apply both on written as electronic information media.

In case of infringement of the rights of others, the Director of Codam may require that posters and/or e-mails be removed and publications suspended without prejudice to legal proceedings where appropriate.

## **2.5. Messaging**

- When you communicate with other students via Codam's means of communication (mail, forum, and slack), you must always use your personal identifier (login). It is not allowed to hide your identity behind a pseudonym.
- Codam will communicate with you using your Codam mail, Slack and the intranet forum. You are expected to check these channels at least once a day to stay up to date.

Be reminded that the norms, rules and responsibilities that we uphold also apply to online messaging (mail, forum and slack). You have to be respectful, friendly and considerate in all your communication, regardless if it is a fun one-on-one chat or a more serious group discussion. You can discuss anything, any opinion you may have as long as it is compliant with Dutch law, and as long as you do it with courtesy and respect. We encourage you to debate, but always with consideration for your peers. Moreover, be aware that communicating with texting, emailing and online is not the same as face-to-face chat, you need to be careful as sarcasm or irony is easily misunderstood. Violating our norms and rules will imply an administrative sanction such as a community service, or an exclusion.



## **2.6. Intellectual property and confidentiality**

- Codam reserves the right to communicate about and promote any production from its students created within their studies at Codam in order to give a positive exposure to its community.
- Any source code, or related products, made by you as part of your studies and through the knowledge or use of techniques, means or data provided by Codam, remain the exclusive property of the student, yours.
- Codam cannot claim any ownership or intellectual property over your work at Codam, or over any company you founded in relation with your studies at Codam. In a similar way, Codam cannot be held accountable over any company you founded in relation with your studies at Codam.
- It is forbidden to disseminate confidential or sensitive information from Codam or all its structures or related activities without prior consultation with the Codam administration, such as the Codam logo, all and any documents and/or educational contents drawn up by Codam. This prohibition includes all the files and data related to the school, its students and employees, and Codam's partners.

## **2.7. Video surveillance**

The building and the premises of Codam are placed under video surveillance. According to the law, the recordings will be deleted after 4 weeks. However, if a security camera has recorded a particular incident, we may retain the recording long enough for the incident to be investigated.

## **2.8. Fire status**

The fire instructions and in particular a map of fire extinguishers and emergency exits are posted on the premises of Codam so that they are known to you and all other participants. Fire drills will happen from time to time to train the students to evacuate in proper order.

## **2.9. Accidents**

Any accident or incident occurring in the building must be immediately declared by any person witnessing the accident to the security guard and to the Director of Codam (or to the Facilities Manager otherwise). A first aid kit is available at the guard's desk and in the Bocal.

## **2.10. The Marineterrein Amsterdam**

You are part of the Marineterrein in Amsterdam. *"At Marineterrein Amsterdam, solutions to global issues are devised, tested and put into practice. Here, a community of innovators, scientists, and*

*businesses work together to boost and build upon the strong international position held by both Amsterdam and the Netherlands.”* (Marineterrein.nl). You are part of this community of innovators.

Being part of this community and moving around the terrain, comes with a few basic ground rules. The following rules apply on the whole Marineterrein Amsterdam:

- Respect the quietness of the area
- Clean up after yourself
- Park your bike in a bike rack
- Parking spaces are only available for parking permit holders
- Keep your dog on a leash
- No boats
- No mopeds
- No BBQ's



## 3. IT resources

This section aims to state the user's rights and responsibilities regarding IT resources at Codam. By "user", we mean any and all persons allowed to access and use the IT resources of Codam. This text does not substitute to the Law in any way.

### 3.1. Application domain

This text applies to any and all persons allowed to access and use the IT resources of Codam, whichever their status.

### 3.2. IT Resources

Are defined as IT resources:

- Computers
- Servers
- Wired networks
- Wireless networks
- IT appliances

This text applies to any and all interactions using Codam's IT resources on site or through a channel external to Codam's network. It also applies to the possible use of private IT equipment through Codam's wifi network.

### **3.3. Users**

#### **3.3.1. Identification**

- Identification is done by means of an identifier, your “login”, linked to at least one password.
- You are the only one responsible of your password security.
- Codam does not store your password and cannot communicate it to you in case of loss. A new password would have to be issued.

#### **3.3.2. Obligations**

- Users must comply with this text, as well as the laws and regulations in place.
- Users must comply with decisions from the Staff.
- It is forbidden to abuse the IT resources available to the users.
- Users must respect the IT equipment available to them.
- Users must report to the staff any faulty equipment and any unauthorised attempt to access restricted equipment or networks.
- In case a vulnerability is discovered and reported by a user to the Staff, Codam will show good will and might not engage administrative sanctions.
- Users must provide Codam's administration valid and up to date identification information, as well as any possible update.
- Users are responsible for their use of the IT resources, as well as the information they chose to disclaim to others.
- Users are responsible for the use of their “login” identifier, and must report any fraudulent use of it by a third party to the Staff.
- Any replacement of a user's personal card will be charged 5 euros.

### **3.3.3. Restrictions**

- It is forbidden to connect any private hardware or device to Codam's networks, with the notable exception of the public wifi.
- It is forbidden to unplug, move, disassemble, or damage any and all IT resources available at Codam.
- It is forbidden to access unauthorised equipment both physically and remotely.
- It is forbidden to use identifiers and passwords from another user, with or without their approval.
- It is forbidden to hide your identity or impersonate another user when accessing Codam's IT resources.
- It is forbidden to use any and all IT resources in a way that can harm other users' studies or peacefulness.
- It is forbidden to eat and drink in Codam's clusters. A bottle of water is tolerated on the floor or in your bag.

### **3.3.4. Sanctions**

#### **3.3.4.1. Internal sanctions**

Any action not in agreement with this text, and more specifically, any intrusion attempt, successful or not, physical or remote, to any and all of Codam's IT resources will lead to a ban of the involved users. The Staff will refer to these bans as "closed accounts". Any ban will imply an administrative sanction such as a community service, or an exclusion.

Codam's administration will define the conditions necessary to open back closed accounts according to the offense and its context.

#### **3.3.4.2. Legal sanctions**

Codam is required to report any violation of the law that would be noticed, and reserves the right to prosecute the users, regardless of internal sanctions already applied or not.

### **3.4. Privacy**

Your privacy is important to us. We aim for a careful treatment of personal data of everyone who is or attempts to enrol to Codam. The Privacy Statement on Codam's website describes why and how we collect and use personal data and provides information about individuals' rights. It applies to personal data provided to us, both by the individuals themselves and by other means.

If you have any questions, comments or complaints about our Privacy Statement, you can contact Codam at [legal@codam.nl](mailto:legal@codam.nl).



## 4. Sanctions

To make Codam a safe, fun, and respectful environment, the Staff has the right to intervene and decide on the consequences when a student violates the norms, rules and responsibilities written in this document. In case you misbehave or violate the rules, Codam may impose a few hours of Community Service or - in severe cases - temporary suspension or exclusion. The Staff has the exclusive right to assign the sanction.

- **Closed account:** In consequence of violating any rule, your account can be closed. A closed account prevents you from login into any device or service provided by Codam, and your access to the building is suspended. In most situations a closed account will imply a Community Service. An email is automatically sent to you to notify you of your closed account, and will feature a link to plan your community service. After your community service is planned, your account will be automatically opened back. In such a situation, it is tolerated to stay in the building until your Community Service is completed.
- **Community Service:** In consequence of violating any rule, you must do something in return for Codam. We call this 'Community Service': it includes but is not limited to cleaning the school and/or its surroundings, and helping the Staff out or doing something benefitting other students. All tasks must at least contribute to Codam. During the Curriculum, one Community Service is 4 hours long. In severe cases, longer Community Service time is expected. Regardless of the duration, a community service is mandatory and cannot be evaded. If you do not show up to or are late for your community service (even 1 minute late), the community service will be doubled.
- **Suspension or/and exclusion:** In severe cases Codam has the right to suspend or exclude a student from the program, meaning he or she is no longer welcome in the building and his or her account will be closed. Severe cases include but are not limited to discrimination and violence towards students, Staff and surroundings, or confirmed cheating. Only the disciplinary board, comprising the Director of Codam, Administrative Manager, Head of Studies and if necessary a fourth member (chosen according to the offense) can decide to suspend a student. Before a decision is made, the board will invite the student to hear their side of the story, possibly

accompanied by one other student if desired.

- **Situational sanctions:** In certain situations, a student could be ordered to perform specific actions, such as but not limited to apologizing to the offended party, or fix/replace anything damaged on purpose. Not performing these actions will lead to suspension or exclusion.





## 5. The Selection Piscine

The Piscine may be a bit out of the ordinary at first. The peer-to-peer learning method means the Staff cannot answer any questions about the content of the curriculum and for some people that means being lost for a while. Our best advice: DON'T PANIC! This is normal, you are learning already. You are, in fact, making progress on your journey! Just a suggestion: is it possible some of the other students are experiencing a similar problem?

### 5.1. Starter questions

*Q: So the staff can't answer questions about content. Does this mean I'm not supposed to talk to them at all?*

A: We may not answer your technical questions, but we are at Codam to help you with any other issues you might have. We love talking to you - otherwise our job would be very lonely. You will find us in the Bocal. Feel free to push the door and take a seat on the couch in front of the door. A staff member will take care of you soon.

*Q: If I miss a couple of days because of illness or other private circumstances, does this mean my chances for passing the piscine are gone?*

A: No, of course not! We want to offer a fair chance to every student and therefore we look into each case individually. If an external factor negatively influences your performance, please let us know. Then we can either find a solution or take the situation into account.

*Q: Does helping people put me in a disadvantageous position to get accepted?*

A: On the contrary! You'll notice very quickly that helping your peers makes you a better programmer. Also, there is no fixed amount of students that we accept from any piscine, so there is no competition. Just help your friends improve so all of you get accepted! But don't forget to do your own assignments!

*Q: Is it me, or is everyone much better than me?!*

A: This is a common misconception. Almost everyone will believe that everyone else is better or way ahead of them. This should not demoralize you! First of all, it clearly does not make any sense if you think about it. How can everyone be better than almost everyone? It still may feel like everyone you talk to is ahead of you, though. Why is that then? Well, perhaps the people that are a bit ahead of the rest like to talk about it more than the others. Or is it possible that you remember those conversations better? And even if you are a bit slower, that really is not something to worry about! Instead, you should use the people that are a bit ahead to your advantage. They are probably more than willing to help you out (see the previous point)!

*Q: I understand this piece of code, so why couldn't I copy/paste it from the internet/someone else.*

A: This is also a very common misconception. You may think you understand a piece of code, but can you actually reproduce it? Make absolutely sure you understand what you submit by writing the code yourself. You are allowed, even encouraged to be inspired by other people, but never copy and paste the code. Again, **never copy and paste the code that you did not write**. If you are unable to explain certain decisions you make to your fellow students, this is considered cheating. It is not enough to believe you understand, you have to know you understand. Own your code!

*Q: I failed a project, I may as well quit the Piscine, right?*

A: No, absolutely not. Literally everyone will fail (many) activities during the Piscine. And that is a good thing, because if a candidate passes all the activities, then they most likely didn't learn anything! The only way to react after failing an activity is by accepting that you learned a lot. And then you try the next activity and learn even more.

*Q: Why is it not allowed to reach for the keyboard of one of my fellow students? I just want to help!*

A: We encourage you to help your fellow students. However, this does not mean you should write their project for them. By taking a keyboard and writing code for someone else, you take a valuable learning opportunity from them, in addition to being rude. If someone takes away your keyboard without asking, let them know that you do not appreciate it. When you are logged in, you own your keyboard!

## **5.2. Communication**

During the Selection Piscine, important information will be communicated to you by email, slack, the intranet or over the intercom. If there is contradictory information, make sure to check again via the official communication channels. We won't always tell you everything you need to know. Once again, finding out what there is to find out is the biggest part of the fun!

For communication among peers, the most valuable method is to talk in real life, of course. Talk while looking at your code, talk while drinking coffee, talk about the Selection Piscine and talk about the rest of your life. If you want to reach someone digitally, there is a chat group in which you can communicate with your peers. If you do not collaborate, you may miss some important aspects of the Selection Piscine! Don't forget that you are in this together. There is no competition, so be helpful and kind!

Be careful with rumours! *"Tom said that she said that Julia said that this guy from the Bocal told him that..."* Rumor grows as it goes. Be aware that sometimes, unintentionally, information is spread that is not (entirely) true. Sometimes it is difficult to discern these rumors from true facts, sometimes it is not. Especially if a rumor contradicts official information, it should be easy to know which source to trust. Check your sources.

### **5.3. Results of the Selection Piscine**

We will need a few days to crunch the numbers, and assess every candidate specifically to make sure we get the fairest results! We commit to revealing the outcome within two weeks after the end of the Piscine by email. If you have not heard from us after these weeks, you can send us an email to inquire. However, we know how impatient you all are for the results, so we will try to send them as fast as possible.

About the results themselves, please keep in mind that we are not evaluating your intellectual abilities, or whether or not you can be a good developer! We are only assessing whether or not Codam will be a good place for you to thrive, if our model will work its magic for you. So if you find out during the Piscine that you love coding, but you're not selected, don't despair! There are many ways for you to learn programming, and if you keep looking you will find one that really suits you.

Also, please don't assume that you know our selection criteria: we look at many different and diverse factors when we select our future students. We cannot disclose them for obvious reasons, the main one being that we don't want candidates to try to maximize their results in these particular criteria, and therefore pretend that they are someone they are not. We want to recruit people who will truly thrive with us!

That means that if you don't get in, we won't have the possibility to give you a detailed feedback of the reasons why. But again, if you love coding, there are other ways to do so that will fit you better!



## 6. The Curriculum

### 6.1. Introduction

In a world where technologies evolve at an insane pace, new trends emerge and fade in a matter of a couple years. This pattern is even more obvious when considering computer science and programming, where trends can emerge and fade within a few months. Also, contrary to other products, programs don't age well. Do the test, try to compile and execute a non trivial program from only 2 years ago. It is very likely that the libraries will be outdated, if not the language itself. The languages and technologies you will be using in your daily job in 10 years from now probably don't exist yet, and it is very likely that they will be severely outdated 10 years after that.

As a consequence, you must not focus on learning specific languages or technologies. What is at stake here is learning how to learn. Only by learning to learn will you be able to adapt to any new trend or technology, and to overcome any challenge yet to be invented.

### 6.2. How to progress in the curriculum?

At Codam, no classes, no sessions (except for purely administrative topics), no schedules, no lectures, no timetable. Mainly practical projects to complete successfully. You are free, but you must act, take control of yourself, choose your next actions, make choices, experiment with these choices, correct them, determine your schedule, and create your very own self-discipline.

We will offer you challenges, with some access restrictions, that you will choose to do or not. Each succeeded challenge gets you one step closer to your goal: being a digital professional. This is a personal goal, your own experience makes you progress differently from your neighbors. The only two elements everyone has in common are: professional integration, and the ability to solve new challenges, either from a personal, collaborative or technological point of view.

### **6.3. The main steps of the curriculum**

The curriculum has been designed to last on average 3 years and a half, and is split into 5 main steps:

1. The first set of projects aims to refresh the learnings of the Piscine: command line interactions, elementary C programming, elementary algorithms. The projects are carefully designed and just challenging enough to get you started.
2. The second part of the curriculum offers an initial choice between 4 paths: Graphic programming, Algorithmics, C-Unix programming and Web programming. The projects will be increasingly challenging and open to larger teams, until a final project at the end of each path. After finishing one of the 4 final projects, you will be ready for the First Internship of the curriculum.
3. The third part is the First Internship. This mandatory milestone in the curriculum will help you to test your new skills against the real world. The internship must last 4 to 6 months.
4. The fourth part is the main part of the curriculum, and there are close to a hundred available projects, covering numerous and diverse topics. It is the longest and most in-depth part of the curriculum. The projects will require larger teams and more time to be successfully done. The most advanced projects available are real world challenges.
5. Lasting 6 months, the final internship is the final and most important part of the curriculum, acting as a bridge between Codam and your career.

### **6.4. The intranet**

The intranet is the main tool to navigate the curriculum. You can find your current status, your curriculum, your progress in the curriculum, etc. It is also the place where you can find your profile, like an RPG character, with experience points for each of the 17 available skills that will make you level up as they grow. These skills include technical skills as well as soft skills, each craved and sought-after by IT companies.

Reaching level 21 (and also complying with various obligations) marks the end of the curriculum, even though this level can be exceeded. The intranet is also the place to find the projects and their attachments. Some of them are recommended to you, some others are not, and some are forbidden. We advise you to work only on recommended projects to avoid facing too much difficulty. The curriculum is guided at first, but soon enough you'll gain more and more freedom. Finally, the intranet hosts the e-learning and its videos as well as the forum.

## 6.5. Asynchronous curriculum

One of the key ideas of our Educational model is that everyone must be able to learn at their own pace, because everyone is different. Most of the curriculum consists of projects that have no start date and no end date. Everyone is free to start and finish a project whenever they feel ready. As a consequence, everyone can spend as much time as needed to complete a project. But if you feel like it, the intranet offers the option to choose a deadline for a project! It is up to you to activate it or not! We recommend it very much, it is a great way to develop your time management skills.

That's why the actual time span of the curriculum is specific to each student. Some students need only 2 years to complete the curriculum, whereas some others need 4 or 5 years. It's not a race! It's about learning!

Sadly that much freedom is sometimes mixed up with the possibility to slack off. Taking whatever time you need to complete a project is fine. Validating only a couple of projects per year is NOT. Codam IS difficult and IS a demanding journey! Spending less than 40 hours per week at the school is a solid indication that something is going wrong and that you are progressing towards failure. 60 hours is a good average. You have been warned.

## 6.6. Projects and peer-learning

A project can't be successfully completed without peer-learning because the staff won't provide any teaching of any kind. You are on your own, facing a project of which you don't know the solution beforehand. This project is a challenge including technical skills, planning, relationships, and maybe time constraints in regards of the result you're seeking. So, given those constraints, how can you succeed?

It is absolutely vital to develop a specific mindset as soon as possible, and to maintain this mindset throughout your whole career. If you want to be successful at Codam, from now on you must:

- **Consider any problem as an opportunity to learn.** You will face countless situations where you will find yourself clueless: seemingly impossible compilation error, beyond your understanding algorithms, unknown languages or paradigms, etc. Instead of suffering from these situations, appreciate the opportunity to learn something new.
- **Accept to be a beginner when learning something new,** and understand the difference between being a beginner and being bad at something. Anyone skilled at something was once a beginner.
- **Not be ashamed or afraid of failing.** Failing is part of the learning process. Fear of failure is the straightest path to doing nothing. In a similar way, accept that you can be wrong. Check your information sources, acknowledge that you were wrong, and move on.
- **Go for the doc!** Your first step should always be to look for documentation. Read The Friendly Manual! ;)

- **Double check your sources** when reading, and look for other opinions. Maybe the author is not objective or as skilled as expected.
- **Adapt.** Is your implementation flawed or inefficient? Then try something else. Your favorite language or library is maybe not the best option available, so consider other options with an open mind.
- **Don't cheat!** Codam's educational model is designed to defeat the purpose of cheating in the first place. You study at Codam for your own future, not for grades, not for your family, not for anyone but you. Codam will consider cheating any piece of code you submitted that you are not able to write again on your own, let alone explain.
- **Do not copy/paste code.** You will find yourself in the position of accepting a piece of code from a friend to help you. Just refuse politely. Otherwise, you are tricking yourself into believing you actually understood that piece of code when pasting it into your code. If you actually do understand it, then write it yourself since you're able to.

Hence, the **peer-learning**. Constructive debates are key to your success. And after data is collected and processed comes the time for testing. By testing, we mean that you should start from a hypothesis, run some tests, fail a bunch of times, adapt your hypothesis a little, and then start all over again. For this step, Google won't be as much as a friend as it used to be, but your peers are going to prove themselves invaluable. Meet as many fellow students as possible. Codam's community is your sharpest tool!

Then comes the evaluation. The intranet manages all the defenses planning and a full scale documentation about peer-evaluation is available in the e-learning. **Please read it.** By all means, please do not focus solely on technical aspects of a project. You would miss a lot. Review your performances, and adapt! How was your team management? How was your involvement? What could you improve?



## **6.7. The community**

As you already understand, your peers play a major role in your progress along the curriculum. But Peer-learning can't be reduced to projects only. Living at Codam must also be peer-living. Codam needs everybody to co-exist and progress together. And I'm not talking about the curriculum part of Codam. Go to events, barbecues and parties! Attend the conferences, attend the hackathons! Have fun together! Our college needs everybody to shine and gleam! Attend others' events, and create your own!

## **6.8. The staff**

The role of the Codam staff is to create the specific learning environment that is necessary for you to improve your skills for the digital world. This includes providing you with a clean working area, a reliable network, efficient digital tools for your administrative procedures, and allowing you to progress through your curriculum. We set the goals and manage the settings, we organize your journey through the curriculum, but we do not guide you, we do not help you find the information you need if we consider that you should find it by yourselves. You can come to us to talk about the curriculum, we can discuss the weather, the latest news, your personal problems and the tunings you might need for your curriculum. But if a staff member tells you to go away to read a manual or to search online, it's because we consider it wouldn't be a favor to answer you. It would prevent you from finding the answers you seek by yourself.

We set-up a process about how, where and why to reach the Staff.

Situation 1: in case you want to talk about the curriculum, weather, news, personal problems and tunings you might need for the curriculum, you reach out to the Head of Studies or an Education Assistant offline in the Bocal or send an email to schedule a meeting via [pedago@codam.nl](mailto:pedago@codam.nl). Slack is also fine.

Situation 2: In case you want to talk about personal problems or studying methods, you can reach out to the Student Counsellor or send an email to request an appointment via [confidential@codam.nl](mailto:confidential@codam.nl).

Situation 3: In case you want to discuss any issue with a Staff member, you can send an email to request an appointment with the Student Counsellor via [confidential@codam.nl](mailto:confidential@codam.nl). This appointment is purely offline, and everything that will be discussed will be considered confidential. The email and appointment is managed by the Student Counsellor and the Student Counsellor only. In case of a life-threatening situation, the Student Counsellor will contact the official authorities. The Student Counsellor is independent from the Staff and is not allowed to share information with us.

Situation 4: in case you want to discuss any issue about the Student Counsellor, you can send an email to request an appointment with Codam's trustee Janneke Niessen via [janneke@janneke.tv](mailto:janneke@janneke.tv). This appointment is purely offline, and everything that will be discussed will be considered confidential. The email and appointment is managed by Janneke Niessen and Janneke Niessen only. In case of a life-threatening situation, Janneke Niessen will contact the official authorities.

## **6.9. What does a “regular” curriculum look like ?**

We ask you to think outside the box! Explore, try, test, fail! Fail as much as you can! Exploring your own way to success will lead you there more efficiently than any specific sequence of projects provided by the educational team. If you really need somebody to hold your hand at first, focus on recommended projects. At first, only 2 or 3 projects will be available. But with enough time and experience, you'll gain self confidence as more and more projects will be available and recommended for you.

The very first part of the curriculum focuses on solo and small teams projects using the C language to help you grow your *Rigor*, *Algorithmics* and *Unix* skills. When you will reach level 5 or so, you will start dealing with larger team projects. Once you have completed the First Internship, you will be ready for virtually anything. Start by the introduction project for different topics: security, web, network, object-oriented programming, artificial intelligence, etc. Or even better, start with the associated Piscine if it exists. At this point, you shouldn't need any guidance. The end of the curriculum is “open”. We want to help you grow into digital professionals, but each of you will have his or her unique set of preferred skills. There is no such thing as a “regular Codam student”. There is no such thing as a “regular Codam curriculum”!

## **6.10. Why such an educational model?**

Well, first of all, because it works! For the last 15 years, 42's educational team has been experimenting with this educational model in the field of new technologies, and it's been a huge success. But it doesn't come out of nowhere: for many years, even a century, worldwide experimentations have been proving the efficiency of alternative pedagogies. Freinet and Montessori approaches, the Finnish education system, practical and problem solving oriented teaching, active pedagogies, all these approaches have already proven themselves. They share a personalized learning pace and self appropriation of knowledge. Piaget and Vygotsky theorized the concept of “socio-cognitive conflict” that we try our best to include into our peer-learning. The idea is that if multiple peers with no prior knowledge regarding a situation are confronted to the said situation, constructive debates and conversations are bound to emerge. We are not trying to be different for the sake of being different, our educational approach is based on sound theory and previous implementations, and matches a real, concrete need in the IT world.