

# Guide regarding discrimination, harassment and victimisation for students at LTH

FACULTY OF ENGINEERING | LUND UNIVERSITY





# Introduction

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In compliance with the core values of Lund University and its Faculty of Engineering, we safeguard the protection of human dignity and freedom, equality and human rights.

Diversity, equal treatment and gender equality among employees and students contribute to job satisfaction and high quality in all activities.

Our organisation is characterised by continuous development towards a positive work environment in which all employees and students are to enjoy the best possible conditions in order to develop.

All meetings between employees and students and all contacts with wider society are to be marked by respect and integrity.

Our organisation is to be characterised by openness, international cooperation and a critical approach which contributes to democratic and sustainable social development.

Lund University and thereby LTH have a zero tolerance approach to discrimination and other forms of victimisation.

The aim of this document is:

- to provide information on what constitutes discrimination, harassment and other forms of victimisation.
- to provide support and guidance when a situation arises in which someone feels victimised.

Relevant contact details and links are to be found at the end of the document.

## The seven grounds of discrimination

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- Gender
- Transgender identity or expression
- Ethnicity
- Disability
- Sexual orientation
- Age
- Religion or other belief

## Discrimination, harassment and other forms of victimisation

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Discrimination occurs when an individual person is treated worse than anyone else is treated, has been treated or would be treated in a comparable situation and which is connected to the statutory grounds of discrimination.

**Direct discrimination:** that someone is disadvantaged by being treated less favourably than someone else is treated, has been treated or would have been treated in a comparable situation.

**Indirect discrimination:** that someone is disadvantaged by the application of a provision, a criterion or a procedure that appears neutral.

**Structural discrimination:** that certain rules, norms, procedures, approaches and behaviours that occur in organisations or in other social structures systematically discriminate against certain groups of people.

**Victimisation:** recurrent reprehensible or distinctly negative actions which are directed against individual employees and can result in those employees being excluded from the workplace community. The concept includes phenomena such as workplace bullying, psychological abuse, social exclusion and repeated harassment.

**Harassment:** conduct that violates a person's dignity and that is associated with one of the grounds of discrimination. Unlike victimisation, harassment can be limited to a single event.

**Gender-related harassment:** actions that are related to gender rather than sex oriented.

It is prohibited to take reprisals against anyone who has reported discrimination. It is also prohibited to punish anyone who has taken part in an investigation of discrimination.

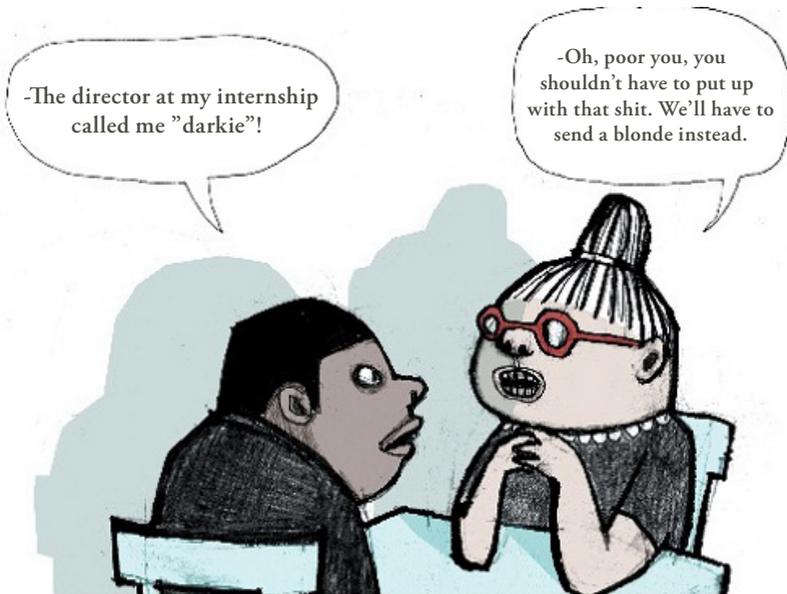


Illustration: Nina Hemmingsson

## Examples

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- a teacher treats you differently due to a factor such as your gender
- someone calls you "slut", "tart", "whore", "pussy", "faggot", "retard", "paki" or any other insulting term related to the grounds for discrimination
- someone posts pictures, symbols, etc. with racist, homophobic or sexist content
- someone makes a disparaging remark about your disability
- someone touches or in some other way subjects you to unwanted sexual advances
- someone writes disparagingly about you as a student or employee at LU on social media, such as Facebook, Instagram or Twitter
- someone systematically ridicules or belittles a student or teacher

When a personal conflict turns into lack of respect for personal integrity, victimisation has taken place. This can take the form of ignoring or freezing out the victim, defamation, withholding of information, insults, unjustified withdrawal of work duties or sabotage of the victim's work or studies.

The person who feels discriminated against is always the one who determines what constitutes offensive behaviour. This does not always mean that offensive behaviour constitutes discrimination, victimisation or harassment.

For the sake of clarity, occasional disagreements, conflicts and problems in collaborative relationships should usually be seen as normal and solved where possible through discussion and respect for the right of others to their opinion.

### EXAMPLE

**Anna**, is often subjected to mainly verbal sexual harassment from one of her male fellow students. The fellow student often “happens” to touch her as he passes her. Anna feels uneasy, especially at parties and other events where there is a lot of alcohol. When she raises this issue with her other fellow students, they think she shouldn’t be so boring and sensitive – maybe he fancies you?

**Kalle** is sitting with his fellow students, studying; their banter is usually “crude but cordial” but lately he has noticed that the jokes are cruder than usual. In the autumn, Per, who is openly homosexual, had started studying on the programme and now a lot of gay jokes are flying around. When Kalle tries to talk to his fellow students he is told “come on, you have to be able to take a joke”.

At **Kim’s** final lecture before the exam, the lecturer points to her and says: “You usually want extra time for exams. Come to my office one hour before the exam starts.” Kim doesn’t mind people knowing about her dyslexia, but others might not be ok about being singled out in front of the entire class. When Kim later points out that she is entitled to an additional 50% of the allowed time for the exam, the lecturer says that she shouldn’t go on about what she is entitled to because “it’s too expensive to have someone watch you for 7 hours”.

**Ali** and his parents came to Sweden as refugees when he was a small boy. He recently started studying at LTH and is a few weeks into his first term. So far he is enjoying himself, and is in a good mood. On his way to a lecture he stops in front of a notice board where he sees a poster advertising an Arian society. If you are an LTH student of “honourable Arian stock”, then you are welcome to attend a meeting. Ali is alarmed and wonders if he is going to have to ‘flee’ from LTH, if he maybe doesn’t fit in, and if everyone at LTH shares the views of this society. Then he calms down, realises it probably has something to do with the ongoing fresher’s activities, and removes the poster. At lunch-time he visits the student counsellors’ office. One of the counsellors’ doors is open, and he stops to show her the poster. She reads the text and says that it is definitely not ok. She promises to make sure the posters are removed and that the responsible parties are held to account. She offers him a seat so they can talk some more, but Ali says he’s in a hurry and is careful not to give the counsellor his name. The counsellor asks for his contact details so she can report back on the issue, but Ali simply wants to hand over the poster and leave as quickly as possible. He finds it so unpleasant that he wonders if he really fits in at LTH after all.

The above are examples of occasions when we all should think about what we can do to support people subjected to discrimination. It might be up to you as a student or as an employee to make it clear that nobody should be alone in facing these or similar situations. Naturally, LTH’s staff members in charge of these issues are also available to provide support in these types of situations.

## Remember

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The risk of victimisation, discrimination and harassment increases in the presence of one or more of the following circumstances:

- Difficulty in influencing one's own situation
- Too much stress or too little stimulation at work
- Abuse of power in some form
- Competition or jealousy that entails excessive monitoring of one another

Pay attention to the following signals, which could be a sign of victimisation, discrimination and harassment

- Repeated complaints about an individual or a work situation (looking for scapegoats)
- Someone seems to be outside the workplace community
- seeming to be on the outside of the community or group
- Someone is increasingly absent, takes less care of his or her studies (increased sick leave)

## Who is responsible?

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The Vice-Chancellor of Lund University has overall responsibility for the work environment (which includes the grounds for discrimination). The direct responsibility is delegated to the deans, heads of department

and other heads and managers. In addition, all employees and students at Lund University have a responsibility to contribute to a positive environment for study and work.



## When a student feels victimised

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When a student feels that he or she has been subjected to discrimination, offence, victimisation or harassment, it is important that everyone knows how to proceed and which employees the student can turn to. Whether to make a formal or an informal report of the incident is assessed on a case by case basis. The most important thing is to ensure that the unwelcome behaviour ceases.

**IMPORTANT!** Only the person who feels discriminated against can determine whether offence and/or harassment have taken place. The person should however be able to indicate what caused the feeling of offence and/or harassment.

### INFORMAL INCIDENT MANAGEMENT

If you feel you have been subjected to discrimination, you have the right to seek advice, support and guidance on the subject of discrimination, harassment and victimisation without being obliged to file a formal report. You are welcome to contact LTH's welfare officers, study or career advisors, or the contact person for equal opportunities issues. All of them have a duty of confidentiality and will only take action if you wish them to do so.

You can also contact your student union (TLTH), the Student Health Service or the student representative at Lund University. If you are affected by discrimination, you have the right to receive help and support as quickly as possible. You can decide yourself what support you need and from whom.

### FORMAL REPORT

If an informal report is considered to be insufficient, a formal report can be filed,

tentatively by the person who feels victimised or by the head of department. A person within the University who learns of a student feeling exposed to discrimination, harassment or other forms of victimisation should investigate the circumstances surrounding the reported harassment and, where applicable, take the necessary measures to prevent continued harassment. A formal report can be both written and verbal and is shared with the lawyers at Management Support, Legal Division, Lund University. The report is to include an account of what happened, the name of the person or persons who are reported and the workplace or study programme they belong to. Disciplinary measures can be taken against students who subject another student or an employee to harassment or sexual harassment as covered under the Discrimination Act. Measures may not be taken more than two years after the incident occurred.

People who are to be informed in the case of a report:

- The person or persons reported
- The person subjected to the discriminating treatment
- The head of department
- TLTH or other relevant student union

### EMPLOYEE

If the case concerns student and lecture, the person notified is to inform the relevant head of department.

If the case concerns student versus student, the person notified is to inform LTH's equal opportunities officer or the relevant head of department.

## Advice in connection with a report

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The person reported is to be informed of the accusations in order to be able to respond to them.

Harassment is one of the most sensitive problems that can arise in a workplace or in a study environment.

If you have been reported and need support and advice you can turn to LTH's welfare officers or the LTH equal opportunities coordinator.

It is important for all those concerned that harassment ceases as soon and as smoothly as possible. For example, the following recommendations apply:

- Do not wait – start right away – and base your actions on the experience of the victim
- Talk/listen to the person who feels subjected to discrimination first
- Document the main features of the sequence of events
- Adopt an objective and problem-solving approach
- Do not deny or hide the fact that there is a problem
- Provide support to the victim and offer help with dialogues and further contact
- Do not blame and judge
- Do not let majority opinion dictate your actions
- Take the situation seriously and show respect so that the victim is part of the decision-making process on measures
- Confidential interview with the person who feels victimised
- Confidential interview with the person accused of victimisation
- Conversation with both parties together
- Supervision of support and assistance measures

If considered sufficient in relation to the circumstances and the wishes of the victim, an informal incident management is recommended.

- Take all reports of this kind very seriously and never wait to take action
- If there are threats and violence in the picture, contact Lund University's security division
- Contact LTH's welfare officers or the contact person for equal opportunities issues for support and advice
- Allow both parties to tell their version of what happened. Be careful to show respect to both parties – but clearly distance yourself from victimising behaviours of various kinds
- In addition to dialogue support, advice to the victim also includes discussion of active measures. Follow-up interviews with both the victim and the offender can be held and are recommended
- If an informal management of the incident does not help or if the victimising behaviours are of a more serious nature, a formal report is required. Responsibility for this lies with the relevant head of department
- Choose the formal procedure if there is a report (verbal or written) or if an informal procedure is considered insufficient

## Contact information and links

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### LTH WELFARE OFFICERS

**Ulla Bergman**, 046-222 37 14

**Elisabet Hemmingsson**, 046-222 71 93

**Emma Hammarlund**, 046-222 72 47

*[www.lth.se/english/education/master/information-for-current-students/help-and-support/student-counselors/](http://www.lth.se/english/education/master/information-for-current-students/help-and-support/student-counselors/)*

### LTH CONTACT PERSON FOR EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES ISSUES

**Bodil Ryderheim**, 0705-22 31 43

[bodil.ryderheim@kansli.lth.se](mailto:bodil.ryderheim@kansli.lth.se)

### LTH INTERNATIONAL OFFICE

*<http://www.lth.se/english/education/intoffice/>*

### ENGINEERING STUDENTS UNION (TLTH )

Vice Union Chair, responsible for social study issues and educational policy issues

046-540 89 25

[vkos@tlth.se](mailto:vkos@tlth.se)

### STUDENT HEALTH SERVICE

*[www.lu.se/studera/livet-som-student/service-och-stod/studenthalsan](http://www.lu.se/studera/livet-som-student/service-och-stod/studenthalsan)*

### STUDENT REPRESENTATIVE AT LUND UNIVERSITY STUDENT UNIONS

Sandgatan 2 (AF-borgen), 4:e vån  
Petra Holst (Student representative)  
[studentombud@lus.lu.se](mailto:studentombud@lus.lu.se)

### INFORMATION ON LTH'S EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES WORK

*[www.lth.se/english/staff/employment/equal-opportunities/](http://www.lth.se/english/staff/employment/equal-opportunities/)*

### LUND UNIVERSITY'S SECURITY OFFICER

*[staff.lu.se/in-case-of-emergency](http://staff.lu.se/in-case-of-emergency)*





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