Guide regarding discrimination, harassment and victimisation for students at LTH

FACULTY OF ENGINEERING | LUND UNIVERSITY
Introduction

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 for discrimination

- Gender – that someone is a woman or a man
- Transgender identity or expression
- Ethnicity
- Disability
- Sexual orientation
- Age
- Religion or other belief

Discrimination, harassment and other forms of victimisation

Discrimination is 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 for 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. The concept includes phenomena such as workplace bullying, mental violence, 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.

**Sexual harassment:** conduct of a sexual nature that violates someone’s dignity.

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

- 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, 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 to be the one to determine what is offensive behaviour. This does not always mean that offensive behaviour constitutes discrimination, victimisation or harassment.
For the sake of clarity, it should be mentioned that 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.

**EXEMPLE**

Anna, who has chosen to study a fairly male-dominated specialisation within engineering, 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, 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”.

Eva, 19 years old, moves to Lund to study at LTH. Already during fresher’s week she is subjected to sexual advances and propositioned by male students. This occurs mostly at various parties, but also at other events at the faculty. Sometimes the advances are direct, such as attempts to hug and kiss her by someone she is only talking to, but there are also propositions such as “come home with me after the party and we’ll have a bit of fun”. Eva finds it unpleasant to have to “defend herself” and be on her guard and she also notices that a refusal on her part is not taken well. Subsequently she gets excluded by these male students and is told by them directly that her behaviour isn’t fair. Several of her female fellow students are also subjected to the same treatment, but they think that they just have to “deal with it” or that “this is nothing to worry about”. Gradually, Eva stops going to parties connected to the faculty, feeling left out and lonely as she doesn’t yet have any friends outside her studies. Eva thinks that she doesn’t fit in at LTH and considers dropping out after the first year, even though she likes the programme. She contacts her study advisor and welfare officer and for the first time at LTH she gets support for the fact that she has been subjected to sexual harassment and is told that nobody needs to accept such treatment just because they are studying at LTH. She also finds out that she can report these cases of harassment in accordance with the Discrimination Act, but she doesn’t want to do that for fear of being even more excluded.

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 people in charge of these issues are also available to provide support in these types of situations.
Remember that

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

- 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 seeming to be outside the workplace community
- Someone increasingly absent, taking less care over his or her studies (increased sick leave)

Who is responsible?

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, and in certain cases, as at LTH, to the chair of the study programmes board.

In addition, all employees and students at Lund University have a responsibility to contribute to a positive study and work environment.
When a student feels victimised

When a student feels that he or she has been subjected to discrimination, offence, victimisation or harassment, it is important that everyone should know 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 or harassmen 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 advisors or 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 a right to immediate help and support. You can decide yourself what support you need and from whom.

FORMAL REPORT
If an information report is considered to be insufficient, a formal report can be filed, tenta-
Advice to those subjected to discrimination, harassment or other forms of victimisation

If you feel that you have been subjected to discrimination, victimisation or harassment – get help without delay. You have the right to be treated with respect.

The University has an obligation to work to promote a study and work environment that is free from discrimination, harassment and victimisation.
Advice to those notified in relation to a report

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 co-ordinator.

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 support 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 psychological support, advice to the victim also includes discussion of active measures. Follow-up interviews with both the victim and the perpetrator 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 chair of the relevant programmes board.
- Choose the formal procedure if there is a report (verbal or written) or if an informal procedure is considered insufficient
Contact information and links

**LTH WELFARE OFFICERS**
*Ulla Bergman*, 046-222 37 14
*Elisabet Hemmingsson*, 046-222 71 93
*Emma Hammarlund*, 046-222 72 47

[www.student.lth.se/stod_i_studierna/kuratorer_lth/](http://www.student.lth.se/stod_i_studierna/kuratorer_lth/)

**LTH CONTACT PERSON FOR EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES ISSUES**
*Bodil Ryderheim*, 0705-22 31 43
bodil.ryderheim@kansli.lth.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

**LTH INTERNATIONAL OFFICE**

**ENGINEERING STUDENTS UNION (TLTH )**
Vice Union Chair, responsible for social study issues and educational policy issues
046-540 89 25
vkos@tlth.se

**INFORMATION ON LTH’s EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES WORK**
[www.lth.se/omlth/jamstalldhet/lika_villkor_fr_studenter/?L=nbvepfivxk](http://www.lth.se/omlth/jamstalldhet/lika_villkor_fr_studenter/?L=nbvepfivxk)