



# DISCRIMINATION AND HARASSMENT

INFORMATION FOR STUDENTS  
WHO FEEL VICTIMISED

UMEÅ UNIVERSITY

This information was compiled in spring 2017 by a working team consisting of equal treatment coordinators and faculty programme directors at the four faculties as well as the Umeå School of Education at Umeå University, in close collaboration with the student unions.

# ZERO TOLERANCE ON DISCRIMINATION AND HARASSMENT

This pamphlet is aimed at students who experience their own or their fellow students' rights having been violated in a harassing or discriminatory manner during their duration of studies at Umeå University. Umeå University has a zero tolerance on discriminatory conduct.

## ADVICE TO VICTIMS OF UNWANTED CONDUCT:



### WHO DECIDES WHAT ACTIONS ARE UNWANTED?

It can be hard to judge yourself what form of violating, belittling or unfavourable treatment you have been subjected to. But it is up to the individual subjected to the action to decide if the behaviour is unwanted and if it has led to discomfort.



### PUT YOUR FOOT DOWN AND SHOW THAT THE BEHAVIOUR IS NOT WELCOME

It is important to show that the behaviour is not welcome. If you would prefer not to talk to the person who treated you unjustly, you can send a letter or an email. Make sure to save a copy. You can also ask someone else talk to the person in question on your behalf.



### WRITE DOWN ALL EVENTS

Take note of times and places, details of the events, what was said and how you experienced the situation. These notes may form important documentation in a potential investigation. Save any letters, emails, text messages and all other correspondence with the person in question.



### TALK TO SOMEONE

Turn to someone you have confidence in and who can help you clear out what has happened, who can find out what laws and regulations are in place to protect you, and who can support you. In the University's code of rules and procedures, you can find suggestions of people to turn to.

*Please consider that temporary disagreements, conflicts and problems in collaborative situations are generally normal occurrences. These can be solved through communication, listening, accepting and respecting each other's rights to their own opinion.*

# IMPORTANT TERMS

A person can mistreat another person in several ways. Read about what is regulated by law below.

## ■ DISCRIMINATION

Discrimination is an unfair treatment of you as an individual or of a group that you belong to, in relation to other people in a comparable situation, based on the seven grounds of discrimination:

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

## ■ HARASSMENT

Harassment is a violation of an individual's dignity and is based on one or several of the seven grounds of discrimination mentioned above. Harassment can, for instance, be expressed through belittling or depreciating generalisations.

## ■ SEXUAL HARASSMENT

Sexual harassment is bullying or coercion of a sexual nature. Beside comments and unfriendly words, sexual harassment could be unwanted physical conduct or compliments, groping, jokes, invites or suggestions, or looks or images that are sexually alluding and often condescending. Sexual harassment differs from regular flirtation in the way that it is unwelcome.

## ■ PSYCHOLOGICAL HARASSMENT

Psychological harassment refers to conduct aimed at one or several individuals in a harassing manner and that can lead to feelings of exclusion or marginalisation.

It can be hard to judge yourself what form of violating, belittling or unfavourable treatment you have been subjected to. Turn to someone who can help you clear out what has happened, who can find out what laws and regulations are in place to protect you, and who can support you.

# INFORMATION AND SUPPORT

At Umeå University, there are a number of supportive functions for students who experience that they have been subjected to discrimination or harassment:

## STUDENT UNIONS

Student unions at Umeå University have student health and safety representatives (shortened HSAMO) whose task is to safeguard students' equal treatment and work environment. The HSAMOs function as representatives for students in encounters with the University, and also as mediators in conflicts between students. A student union can be compared with a labour union for students. HSAMO union representatives are bound to professional secrecy and only act in consultation with you. Turn to a HSAMO for support, representation or further referral.

## THE STUDENT HEALTH SERVICE

The Student Health Service offers drop-in and scheduled appointments with a counsellor. Counsellors are bound to professional secrecy, and can provide support and guidance. To book an appointment, please phone +46 90-786 50 00 or read more on the Student Health Service website at [umu.se/en](http://umu.se/en).

## CHURCH ON CAMPUS

The Church on Campus offers support through university chaplains. They are experienced and are bound to professional secrecy. Contact them at +46 90-200 25 00 or visit the Church on Campus in the Natural Sciences Building.

## WOULD YOU LIKE TO KNOW MORE?

■ The Umeå University code of rules and procedures for discrimination and harassment. Only available in Swedish.

Link: [http://www.umu.se/digitalAssets/187/187530\\_fs-1.1-45-15-handlaggningsordning-vid-diskriminering-trakasserier-och-krankningar.pdf](http://www.umu.se/digitalAssets/187/187530_fs-1.1-45-15-handlaggningsordning-vid-diskriminering-trakasserier-och-krankningar.pdf)

■ The Swedish Discrimination Act (2008:567; SFS 2014:95; SFS 2017:282)

Link: <http://www.government.se/information-material/2015/09/discrimination-act-2008567/>

■ The Public Access to Information and Secrecy Act (2009:400)

Link: <http://www.government.se/information-material/2009/09/public-access-to-information-and-secrecy-act/>



# REPORTING AND MEASURES

■ If you feel subject to any form of harassment or discrimination, **please contact someone you have confidence in**. This could be a teacher, programme director, director of studies, head of department or other individual. The HSAMO at your student union is another good alternative. They can help you find the support you need regardless of if the violation was performed by a university teacher or employee, or by another student. The objective is for the unwelcome conduct to immediately cease. Information on the supportive functions that are bound to professional secrecy can be found in the code of rules and procedures for discrimination, harassment and bullying.

■ If you as a student should feel harassed or violated by a head of department, you can turn to your HSAMO as well as to the head of department's superior, **the dean**, or to **one of the university's legal affairs officers**.

**PLEASE NOTE!** *If the University is made aware that a person has been subjected to discrimination or harassment, the University has an obligation according to the Swedish Discrimination Act to investigate the circumstances, and, where appropriate, take reasonable measures to prevent future harassment.*

## REPORT TO THE UNIVERSITY

■ You can also file a report straight to the University. A report to the University should preferably be made in writing. Consult your HSAMO or a University legal affairs officer before you submit your report.

■ A report should contain an account of the incident, a description of events, the name of the person accused and where this person works or studies. Underlying evidence, for instance emails or text messages, should also be attached with the report. Both the person accused and the victim will be informed of the registration of such a report.



*Please consider that documents handed in to university employees or those drawn up together with university employees are publicly accessible according to the principle of public access to official documents unless there are particular requirements of confidentiality that prevent public access. Student unions are interest groups and do not count as public authorities and are hence not covered by the principle of public access to their documents.*



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