



UNIVERSITY OF  
GOTHENBURG

POLICY, RULES AND PLANS  
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# PROCEDURE FOR MATTERS RELATING TO DISCRIMINATION AND HARASSMENT

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Decision-maker	Pam Fredman, Vice-Chancellor
Responsible Body	Human Resources, University Administration
Date of decision	14 April 2014
Period of validity	Until further notice
Summary	This procedure describes the processing of a matter relating to discrimination or harassment in light of the Discrimination Act (2008:567).

# PROCEDURE FOR MATTERS RELATING TO DISCRIMINATION AND HARASSMENT

This Procedure describes the processing of a matter relating to discrimination and/or harassment with reference to the Discrimination Act (2008:567) and its application at the University of Gothenburg. The purpose and objective of the university's gender equality and equal treatment work are laid down in the Gender Equality and Equal Treatment Policy (dnr: V 2013/513). Processing in connection with this Procedure will take place in accordance with the Administrative Procedure Act (1986:223).

## **Active measures against discrimination**

The University of Gothenburg actively works to prevent and counteract discrimination and harassment. The purpose of this preventive work is to ensure that no one, whether a student or employee or anyone else who comes into contact with the university, is subjected to discrimination or harassment. Our preventive work will thereby ensure a good psychosocial environment that inspires security as regards both the work and study environment. Preventive measures include, among other things, training in respect of gender equality and equal treatment issues and information about the university's guidelines for matters relating to discrimination and harassment within the university's competence development programme. The university draws up action plans for gender equality and equal treatment in this respect to guide the preventive work to counteract discrimination and harassment.

## **Responsibility and duty to investigate under the Discrimination Act (DiskL)**

The Vice-Chancellor is the person ultimately responsible for compliance with the rules and regulations at the university. The University Director, deans, Chief Librarian, heads of department or equivalent is responsible for compliance within each area of responsibility. There is an obligation to intervene in the event that a student or employee considers that they are being subjected to discrimination or harassment. This obligation arises regardless of whether or not a formal complaint has been made. The objective is to rapidly and discretely ensure the cessation of the discrimination and/or harassment.

The university has an extensive duty to investigate, which means that the duty to investigate is far-reaching and also arises in the event that a person discloses circumstances that may indicate that discrimination and/or harassment occurs. The group of people covered by the duty to investigate comprises both applicants for courses and study programmes, students, employees, applicants for work experience placements and jobs, people on work experience placements or jobseekers holding themselves available to perform or performing work as agency or seconded manpower. The purpose of the duty to investigate is to ensure that attention is paid to circumstances that may indicate discrimination and that appropriate action is taken.

## Procedure for matters concerning discrimination

In order for an event to be covered by the Discrimination Act, the discriminatory or harassing occurrence or circumstance must be associated with one of the grounds for discrimination stated in the Discrimination Act, i.e. sex, transgender identity or expression, ethnicity, religion or other belief, disability, sexual orientation or age.

If a representative of the university discovers that a student or employee feels that they have been subjected to discrimination and/or harassment, the representative has an obligation to notify the head of department or equivalent or other responsible university representative of this. The representative responsible is duty bound to take action in the event of circumstances concerning any discrimination and/or harassment. The situation that has arisen is either to be resolved on the representative's own initiative or they must refer the matter to another specially appointed representative for further processing and preparation for a decision.

## Administrative routines

A matter relating to discrimination and/or harassment should be investigated and processed where the matter has arisen as far as this is possible. The purpose of this rule is that most of the material knowledge about the circumstances and possible action that may be available to ensure that the discriminatory or harassing situation ceases is obtainable at the place where the matter has arisen. A student or employee thereby has the opportunity to refer to the head of department or equivalent at the department or equivalent. It is also possible to refer to another representative such as, for example, the director of studies, equal treatment representative, study adviser or another employee.

The department or equivalent shall post notices regarding the contact persons for issues relating to discrimination and/or harassment. It is possible to contact a higher level of the organisation in the event that the individual is of the opinion that it is inappropriate to contact the representative of, for example, a department for some reason.

There are no formal requirements for an investigation in connection with a discrimination and/or harassment matter. In the case of a discrimination and/or harassment matter, the person making the complaint and, when applicable, the person being reported shall be informed about the applicable administrative routines. Both the person making the complaint and, when applicable, the person being reported shall be afforded an opportunity to have access to all of the documents in the matter and shall also be afforded an opportunity to express their opinion in the course of the investigation. Principles relating to administrative law shall generally be observed. The investigation must be implemented promptly to enable any action to be taken rapidly. Documentation must be kept during the investigation and the matter must be followed up after it has been concluded to ensure that the action taken achieved the intended effect.

## Complaints

In the event of a complaint relating to discrimination and/or harassment, the matter shall be transferred to [registrator@gu.se](mailto:registrator@gu.se) for registration, entry into the records and the appointment of an administrator. The administrator responsible must conduct the investigation promptly, discretely, impartially and objectively. The matter must be administered on the basis of the principle that the matter should be investigated as far as possible where the matter has arisen. Any complaint concerning discrimination and/or harassment should be made as soon as possible after the event(s) has taken place. There is a limitation period of two years after the

event has occurred. The parties to the matter are to be provided with information about the matter having been received, details of the administrator and file reference and also, if possible, the length of the handling time for the matter. The head of department or equivalent, dean or equivalent or Vice-Chancellor, respectively, must make a decision on the matter and adopt a position on the measures to be taken. Matters relating to discrimination and/or harassment may be subject to the consideration of the Human Resources Board (for employees) or the Disciplinary Board (for students).

## **Complaints to the Equality Ombudsman**

Both students and employees may refer their complaint directly to the Equality Ombudsman (DO). In such cases, the university will be afforded an opportunity to express its opinion with reference to the complaint.

## **Contact persons at the University of Gothenburg**

The University has specially appointed resource staff within University Administration whose work involves prevention measures for issues concerning discrimination and harassment. These resource staff also assist with training, information and advice for both students and employees. The resource staff can be reached via the university's switchboard, tel: +46 31-786 00 00, or by sending an email to [personalenheten@gu.se](mailto:personalenheten@gu.se).

## **Union personnel organisations**

Employees have an opportunity to refer to their union personnel organisation for advice and support. The role of the union personnel organisation in discrimination matters is to represent its members. The union personnel organisation is entitled to represent and assist members who are both jobseekers and employees.

## **The Occupational Health Service**

The Occupational Health Service will take preventive measures to ensure that employees are not at risk of ill health or accidents at work. They also assist with rehabilitative measures to avoid long-term sickness, support in the event of crisis management and assistance with training initiatives.

## **The Student Unions**

Students may refer to their student union for advice and support in respect of their contacts with the university.

## **The Student Health Service**

*Akademihälsan* provides occupational health services for students on behalf of the university and Chalmers. *Akademihälsan* also assists by providing students with individual crisis and counselling support in relation to their study situation.