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Procedures for the investigation of discrimination, harassment and victimization towards students at the Department of Sociology, Stockholm University

Approved by the Departmental Board on 18th of December 2014

Discrimination, harassment according to Chapter 3 Sections 5 – 8 of the Swedish Discrimination act (2008:567), as well as victimization

Actions which have a negative impact on an individual student, or have the effect of leaving the individual outside of the community at the Department, or which limit the ability of the individual to make a good contribution, can constitute discrimination or a type of harassment, according to the Discrimination Act, or victimization/bullying.

Harassment is behavior which violates someone's dignity, and which is based on gender, gender identity or expression, ethnic background, religion or religious beliefs, disability, sexual orientation or age. Sexual harassment is behavior of sexual nature which violates someone's dignity.

Recurring behavior towards an individual, which has a negative impact on that person, but is neither sexual in nature nor connected to any grounds for discrimination, can constitute victimisation/bullying (see AFS 1993:17). It is the person who experiences the behavior who determines whether it is harassment, but sometimes this person has to make it clear that the behavior is unwelcome or is experienced as offensive.

If a representative of the University learns that a student is experiencing the treatment described above, it is necessary that the circumstances are investigated and that measures are taken to stop the treatment immediately. See Chapter 2 Section 7 of the Swedish Discrimination Act (2008:567).

What you can do as a student who experiences discrimination

If someone treats you in a way that you perceive as harassment, take note of what happened, where and when, and talk to someone you trust. At the Department of Sociology we recommend that you first turn to the director of undergraduate and graduate studies.

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Keep in mind that if you make a complaint about harassment etc, the employee who learns about it is obliged to take the matter to the Head of Department. The Head of Department in turn is obliged to initiate an investigation and to inform the Equality coordinator at Stockholm University. If you would like support, or to discuss what happened with someone before you decide that you want an investigation to be carried out, start by talking to someone at the student union or at the student health centre.

Investigation and Follow-up

When a complaint is made about potential harassment, individual conversations are held with the parties involved in order to determine what happened. These conversations are carried out by the Director of undergraduate and graduate studies. The conversation should be documented in writing, preferably summarized in a bullet point format. The matter should be treated confidentially and quickly. The Equality coordinator should be informed of this first stage. The aim of this conversation is to get the unwanted behaviour to stop.

If there is still reason to clarify if discrimination has occurred after this conversation, an investigation of the circumstances should be carried out by the Equality coordinator. If there is cause to believe that what happened was instead victimization, the Department will carry out an investigation.

The Vice-Chancellor makes the final decision about the discrimination case. The Head of the Department should follow up on the matter by contacting the notifying party within a month, in order to confirm that the behaviour has stopped. If this is not the case, then the University's Equality coordinator should be contacted for further action.

If you experience discrimination in connection with your studies you can contact any of the following:

Sociology department

Discriminatory behaviour or harassment should immediately be reported to the study director for undergraduate and graduate level Peter Åkerbäck (for students), peter.akerback@sociology.su.se, or the Head of Department.