

Risk assessment and analysis carried out in connection with the action plan for the prevention of gender-based violence and sexual harassment at KI 2024–2025

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**Karolinska
Institutet**

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Risk assessment and analysis

As part of the National Research and Collaboration Programme on Gender-based Violence (Gender Programme) that KI established, together with KTH, Malmö University and the Swedish Secretariat for Gender Research, a questionnaire study was carried out that surveyed the incidence of gender-based violence and sexual harassment in the Swedish university sector. Given the results of the Gender Programme's survey, as well as the results of a KI staff survey and an equal opportunities questionnaire directed towards KI's first and second cycle programme students, (dnr 1–1106/2021), the President has decided that an action plan for the prevention of gender-based violence and sexual harassment should be developed (dnr 1–654/2022).

The work with the action plan (dnr 1–1109/2023) has been carried out within the framework of the laws on workplace environment and discrimination (investigation, risk assessment, action points and evaluation/follow-up). To ensure that the actions outlined in the plan are based on need, an initial risk assessment and systems analysis was carried out to identify challenges and deficiencies in relation to sexual harassment and gender-based violence. This document reviews the analysis and the results of this risk assessment.

The work has as its starting point the questions: Have you/How have you in your role come into contact with gender-based violence or sexual harassment? What do you see as the challenges and areas of development in relation to these questions? What actions do you suggest/what would you like to see implemented?

The risk assessment noted the following published reports: UHRs report "Preventing sexual harassment at universities and colleges", report 2019:2; the Discrimination Ombudsman's (DOs) report "Investigate, take action and educate: An analysis of the active measures taken by universities and colleges to prevent discrimination of students", report 2022:5; surveys carried out by the KI Postdoc Association (KIPA) and Junior Faculty; a KI pilot study on equal opportunities for first and second cycle programme students (dnr 1–1106/2021); the report "What does zero tolerance mean in practice" and documentation from conversations with Occupational Health Service.

The working group consisted of external experts from FIR, UFS and HRA. Meetings have also been held with undergraduate and doctoral student representatives, representatives from Junior Faculty's Equity Focus Group, the KI Postdoc Association (KIPA), the Diversity and Inclusion Officer and the chair of the Medicinska Föreningens Doctoral Students' Association (DSA). The challenges they identified are presented thematically below.

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Case management process	Case management result
Absence of/deficiencies in guidance, support and guidelines for faculties	Few cases lead to actions, experience that nothing happens
Lack of clarity concerning responsibility and its delegation at different levels of university leadership, the demands and expectations of different roles, who should do what in an investigation	Lack of feedback, those involved are unclear about what is happening, the direction the case is going in
Decentralised management of cases can be positive but at KI there is a deficiency/absence of centralised feedback and of a coordinated response which risks creating different approaches in different parts of the organisation.	People are mistreated, feel questioned and that their emotional well-being has not been taken into consideration during the case management process.
KI's role as an educational provider is neglected in the systems surrounding case management	The division of issues into questions of legality and workplace environment leads to an absence of effort to address the work environment if the legal process does not determine that harassment took place.
Lack of clarity and dilemmas in HR responsibility and duty to support or report/investigate university leaders and managers	
Lack of clarity around anonymity, who knows what, which details are necessary	
Lack of clarity regarding how documentation should be presented	
Lack of clarity regarding how the online case management system should operate in these situations	

Knowledge and communication

Lack of clarity among managers, teaching staff and other employees within the educational organisation, need for support

Little or deficient knowledge of how cases should be managed at KI

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Lack of clarity around how the Code of Conduct should be put into practice

Absence of knowledge about, or dialogue around, how KI lives up to or should work to live up to its value statements in its daily work

Deficiencies in information to new employees, undergraduate students and doctoral students

Deficiencies in information to existing employees and students

Deficiencies in information about what people who feel exposed should do, how the incident should be reported, who should be contacted, and what the accountability and action points look like

Deficiencies in knowledge amongst those investigating or acting: colleagues, managers, teaching staff, course coordinators

Trust

A lack of trust in the engagement of employee and student organisations, a lack of leadership initiative

Emphasis on positive results, the "relative numbers" strategy. Few incidents are reported so it seems like there is no problem, which creates a lack of confidence in the organisation's ability to deal with these issues

A lack of trust in the ability of the employer and educational authorities to manage cases in this area; a lack of confidence in the time and resources allocated to case management

Differences within the organisation, "zero tolerance" is communicated but in practice there is tolerance

Insecurity and fear of not being sufficiently anonymous when large amounts of personal information about workplace and employment are included in the investigation