

Governing and management documents

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Procedures for study and working environment matters concerning students

At Malmö University, both students as well as employees are involved in the efforts to achieve a good study and working environment. The Vice-Chancellor has overall responsibility for the planning, managing and following up on the work maintain a good working environment and improve it.¹ The Vice-Chancellor assigns tasks relating to working environment measures to the Dean who in turn, is responsible for distributing the working environment tasks on to the Heads of Department (or those in an equivalent position) within their Faculty.

Even if the preventive work is working out in a satisfactory manner, sometimes it simply is not possible to avoid that situations arise which need to be dealt with promptly or urgently, and sometimes with the involvement of several different units and skills. In these situations, the University has an obligation to investigate what has occurred and take action to prevent the recurrence of such incidents.

The purpose of this document is provide support for those who have the responsibility for ensuring a good working environment for students, and who need to act promptly/urgently² in a complex working environment situation. It is intended to be used as guidance, together with the University's guidelines, action plans and policies, for the leadership at a Faculty, Department or other work unit.

Study and working environment matters between a student and other students, or between a staff member and student(s)

Below are a few examples of complex study and working environment situations that must be dealt with promptly/urgently by the person who has the responsibility for ensuring a good working environment at the Faculty, Department or other work unit.

¹ Working Environment Policy (J reg. no. Mahr 15-2014/438).

² However, not emergency situations, i.e. 112.

- Aggressive actions or behaviour; threatening situations. For example, threats of violence, threats of suicide, threats and harassment in e-mail and social media, etc.³
- Under the influence of alcohol or illicit drugs, or suspicion of such behaviour.⁴
- Harassment or other discrimination, entailing insults, withholding of information, ostracism, victimisation, threats, etc.⁵
- Harassment, conduct that violates somebody's personal integrity and which relates to any of the grounds for discrimination.⁶
- Sexual harassment, behaviour of sexual nature that violates someone's personal integrity.⁷
- Serious or severe mental illness is a term that can be used differently, depending upon the particular context. It can mean anything from symptoms of anxiety or depression , to psychiatric diagnoses of psychosis such as schizophrenia, depression, etc.⁸

Assessment of a Study and working environment matter

Many times, there are no clear-cut solutions in these situations. The matters are complex and are often influenced by a strong emotions and urgent demands on prompt solutions. However via dialogue, joint cooperative efforts and a well-functioning support system, the preconditions are created to find a constructive solution for everyone involved. Questions that may be helpful in an initial assessment of a study environment and/or working environment issue follow below:

- Is the matter directly related to the individual who has the responsibility for ensuring a good working environment, i.e. a Head of Department or the equivalent?

³ Hot och våld [Threats and Violence], Swedish Work Environment Authority.

⁴ Malmö University's Alcohol, Drug and Doping Policy (LED 1.3-2016/177).

⁵ Swedish Work Environment Act, AML (1997:1160).

⁶ Swedish Anti-Discrimination Act (2008:567).

⁷ Swedish Anti-Discrimination Act (2008:567).

⁸ Socialstyrelsen, National Board of Health and Welfare (Utvecklingen av psykisk ohälsa bland barn och unga vuxna – Till och med 2016 [Development of mental illness among children and young adults - through 2016]: 2017) and the Public Health Agency of Sweden (Folkhälsan i Sverige [Public Health in Sweden] 2016).

- Does the matter need to be investigated and dealt with urgently?
- Is there a solution in this case for the matter at issue?
- Is the requisite expertise and knowledge readily available, or is additional support and guidance needed in the work?
- Is there a need for a meeting to be convened (see below) with the units that can contribute with additional expertise and knowledge?

Recommended structure for meetings regarding study and working environment issues concerning students

The Head of Department or the equivalent:

- Is the convener and leads the meeting.
- Appoints a person to record notes or otherwise documents during the meeting.
- Follows up which units are represented at the meeting and assesses whether additional knowledge and expertise is needed in the matter.

Recommended agenda based on the following perspective:

1. Overall picture of the situation
2. The student(s)
3. Fellow students
4. Employees/co-workers
5. Follow-up meeting

1. Overall picture of the situation

- ✓ What do we know about the matter?
- ✓ Do we have relevant information and knowledge for the particular situation?
- ✓ Can we decide on action/measures in this phase of the matter?
- ✓ Do we need to schedule follow-up meetings due to the need for continued support of several units' support in the situation or for the purpose of evaluating the joint cooperation and the matter as a whole?

Things to keep in mind:

- ✓ Security and safety
- ✓ Confidentiality

2. The student - how is the information and decision to be conveyed

- ✓ What must/can be conveyed to the student?
- ✓ How/when/where is this to be conveyed?
- ✓ Who communicates this?
- ✓ If information and/or decisions are to be conveyed at a meeting, what units are needed in that meeting?

- ✓ Who documents the information and decision that is given?

Things to keep in mind:

- ✓ To offer the student the opportunity to bring a student representative or equivalent support unit when information and/or a decision is to be communicated.

3. Fellow students - how is the information and decision to be conveyed

- ✓ Must/should fellow students be informed? For what purpose?
- ✓ If information is to be conveyed - how and when does this occur?
- ✓ Who communicates it?
- ✓ If information is to be conveyed at a meeting - what units are needed in that meeting?
- ✓ Who documents in this meeting?

Things to keep in mind:

- ✓ Is it needed that support measures of various kinds are offered to fellow students?

4. Employees - how is the information and decision to be conveyed

- ✓ If information is to be conveyed - how and when does this take place?

Things to keep in mind:

- ✓ If information is to be conveyed at a meeting - is everyone affected at this meeting? Who is missing? Must/should these individuals to be informed, and if so by whom, and how and when?

5. Follow-up meeting(s)

- ✓ Is there any need for further meetings in the matter?
- ✓ Is there a need to evaluate and follow up the matter in its entirety?
- ✓ The Head of Department (or the equivalent) convenes these meetings.

Examples of support units that may be helpful in study and working environment issues

- Affected staff at the Faculty, Department or other work unit concerned, such as teachers, course coordinators, programme coordinators, staff at the faculty offices such as faculty academic supervisors and educational programme administrators often have a depth of knowledge and information which may be valuable for dealing with the matter.
- In the event of threatening situations, or a risk of a violent situation developing, it is important for the University's security coordinator⁹ is

⁹ <https://www.mah.se/medarbetare/for-ditt-arbete/sakerhet/>

made aware of the situation. The security coordinator has also linked a special decision support to the activities.¹⁰ This expertise is a resource for those who have the responsibility for ensuring a good working environment at the Faculty, Department or other work unit.

- In cases where legal expertise is required, the University's lawyer should be brought in.¹¹
- The Student Health Service may be a resource you can turn to in situations of offensive treatment, harassment related to any of the prohibited grounds of discrimination, sexual harassment, serious mental health issues, alcohol and drug dependency, or suspicion of such. Counsellors, social workers, nurses, midwives and public health specialists with coordination responsibility for equal treatment for students work at the Student Health Service.¹²
- As we have students who we receive as exchange students and students who we send out as exchange students, valuable information for the matter can be obtained from the International Office.¹³
- Study and career counsellors, as well as special educational needs specialists along with coordinators from Activities for Students with Disabilities (FUNK) work at the Support and Service Unit at Student Centre. The unit has expertise and knowledge concerning of guidance with perspectives and functional variations¹⁴
- The Universitetskyrkan is open for all students and employees at Malmö University. The Universitetskyrkan can also assist with getting in touch with other religious organisations in Malmö.¹⁵
- In cases where the matter also affects the employee's working environment, obtain the input and assistance of the HR Department and the occupational health services.¹⁶

<https://www.mah.se/medarbetare/For-ditt-arbete/Sakerhet/Hot-och-vald/>

¹⁰ <http://www.psykologkraft.se/>

¹¹ hans.jonsson@mah.se

¹² <https://www.mah.se/ar-student/Stod-och-service/Studenthalsan/>

¹³ <https://www.mah.se/Om-Malmo-universitet/Internationalisering/Kontakt-/>

¹⁴ <https://www.mah.se/ar-student/Stod-och-service/Studieguide-for-studenter/> ,
<https://www.mah.se/ar-student/Stod-och-service/funk/>

¹⁵ universitetskyrkanmalmo@gmail.com

¹⁶ <https://www.mah.se/medarbetare/dinanstillning/hr-avdelningen> ,
<https://www.mah.se/medarbetare/dinanstillning/sjuk-och-frisk/foretagshalsovard/>

- The Student Union representing the affected student as well as the Student Ombudsmen at the Faculty.¹⁷

The units that are called to a meeting concerning a study and/or working environment matter should prioritise making it possible to bring up such matters on short notice, if such is requested by the individual who has the responsibility for ensuring a good working environment in the matter.

¹⁷ Student Union Malmö 040-665 75 65 kansliet@karen.mah.se Website: www.studentimalmo.se Student Union of the Faculty of Odontology in Malmö 040-665 86 50 (Mon-Tues, Thurs-Fri, 12.15-12.45), Ordforande@kaftis.se, Doctoral Student Union Malmö, Doktorandkaren@mah.se .