

Linnékåren's handling of sexual harassment and other incidents



Introduction

This document specifies how the board of Linnékåren should work in cases where a member has subjected a person to behavior that contradicts our purpose (see Article 1 in the bylaws). The highest decision-making body of Linnékåren, the general assembly, adopted an addition to the organization's values at the third general assembly meeting of the 2022/2023 operational year, which reads: 'Linnékåren stands for the equal value of all individuals and therefore condemns discrimination based on the seven grounds for discrimination referred to in the Discrimination Act (SFS 2008:567, SFS 2014:958). We also strongly condemn sexual harassment. Discrimination according to the Discrimination Act (SFS 2008:567, SFS 2014:958) shall not occur in our student life.'" In addition, it is stated in Linnékåren's bylaws under Article 3: "When a member intentionally acts against the purpose of Linnékåren or otherwise works against the organization, the board may exclude this member from Linnékåren." and under Article 1: "Linnékåren shall also promote the studies of its members, and anything related to the studies in collaboration with the surrounding society."

In light of the organization's values and our bylaws, it is of utmost importance that the board of Linnékåren takes the issue of sexual harassment and violence very seriously. It is important to ensure a safe environment for all during activities organized by our associations and in contexts where many students are present. Therefore, it is the responsibility of Linnékåren to work towards creating a safe and secure environment in these situations.

Confidentiality

Absolute confidentiality applies during the handling of these matters. Persons who may be informed about ongoing case handling include the board, employees, auditors, and individuals involved in a potential investigation.

Terminology

The seven grounds of discrimination

The seven grounds of discrimination according to Swedish legislation are:

- Gender
- Transgender identity or expression
- Ethnic origin
- Religion or other belief
- Disability
- Sexual orientation
- Age

Harassment is behavior that violates a person and can be associated with the grounds of discrimination. To be classified as harassment under the Discrimination Act, it must be established that the harassment is specifically directed towards a person because, for example, they have a disability, based on their sexual orientation, or any of the other grounds of discrimination. The person who experiences harassment should make it clear to the harasser that the behavior is unwanted. In some situations, no explicit statement is necessary because the harassment is clear.

Sexual harassment is behavior of a sexual nature that violates someone's dignity. In addition to comments and words, it can involve touching someone inappropriately, giving unwelcome compliments, invitations, or sexual innuendos. Sexual harassment is unwanted behavior from the perspective of the person experiencing it. Unlike other forms of harassment, sexual harassment does not need to be connected to a ground of discrimination to be considered sexual harassment under the law.

Violence is defined by the World Health Organization (WHO) as the intentional use or threat of physical force or violence directed towards oneself, another person, a group of people, or an

organization, and that leads to or is likely to result in death, physical or psychological harm, developmental disruption, or the inability to meet basic needs.

For the sake of clarity, it should be mentioned that temporary disagreements, conflicts, and issues in collaborative relationships are generally considered normal occurrences. These can be resolved through dialogue, listening, acceptance, and respect for others' right to their opinions.

Harassment, violence, and sexual harassment will be referred to collectively as "**incidents**" below.

Linnékåren's response to incidents:

In the event of an incident, Linnékåren encourages its members **to file a police report**.

Linnékåren's board and staff can also assist in filing a police report. If a police report is filed, it facilitates Linnékåren's and the police's efforts to create a sense of security among students.

All members are strongly urged to report known incidents to the chairman or the responsible person for student social affairs in Linnékåren.

If a member has been subjected to an incident, it is the responsibility of Linnékåren's board to:

- Encourage the victim to file a police report and assist with the report,
- Inform the victim about the existence of student health services and provide contact information, and
- Assess appropriate action against the perpetrator.

When assessing suitable action against the alleged perpetrator, the following should be considered:

- The victim's account of the incident,
- The perpetrator's account of the incident, and
- Testimonies from any witnesses to the incident.

If there is a conflict of testimonies, the board should make a credibility assessment. Factors that may be taken into consideration in such an assessment include:

- The emotions experienced by those involved after the incident, with significant weight given to the alleged victim's feelings,
- Testimonies from the alleged victim's close associates regarding their perception of the situation surrounding the alleged perpetrator, and
- Other circumstances relevant to the specific case.

If the alleged victim has already clearly acted against Linnékåren's purpose, the board can take action without consulting the perpetrator.

However, Linnékåren once again emphasizes that this investigation is facilitated **if the victim files a police report. Linnékåren's staff and board can also provide support in filing a police report.**

If a member of Linnékåren's board commits an incident, the remaining board members will assess appropriate action. Possible actions in this case may include a strong recommendation to resign or a vote of no confidence. If a person has applied or been elected to Linnékåren's board and is deemed to have committed an incident, the board will investigate the matter for appropriate action. Suitable action may involve urging the individual to step down from their position.

If the person refuses to step down, this goes against Linnékåren's values, statutes, and this document, and therefore, the person is not suitable for their position. Therefore, if there is a refusal, it should be considered to issue a vote of no confidence against the person.

Possible measures that can be taken by the board against the perpetrator include:

- Warning of expulsion,
- Corrective conversations with the perpetrator to address the wrongness of these incidents,
- Prohibition from participating in activities organized by Linnékåren,

- Warning of prohibition from participating in Linnékåren's activities,
- Temporary expulsion, and
- Permanent expulsion.