



Sveriges lantbruksuniversitet  
Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences

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Annex to: Vice-Chancellor's decision on extended period of validity

## **SLU's gender equality work 2022–2025 (2026)**

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## Introduction

The aim of SLU's gender equality and equal opportunities work is to ensure that all employees and students are given equal opportunities and that everyone's equal rights are respected. A non-discriminatory work and study environment characterised by inclusion is a fundamental prerequisite for a sustainable work and study life. Therefore, gender equality and equal opportunities (JLV) are fundamental principles for all activities.

SLU has been commissioned by the government to use gender mainstreaming as a method of contributing to gender equality policy goals. This document contains a description of the starting points and conditions for SLU's gender equality efforts and an action plan for 2022–2025 (2026).

SLU will also report on its efforts to ensure an even gender distribution when recruiting professors. In 2021–2023, the government's target for SLU is that 52 per cent of newly recruited professors be women.<sup>1</sup>

The gender equality action plan is based on the focus and actions set out in the SLU strategy.

The validity of SLU's gender equality strategy has been extended until 31 December 2026, and has been updated to reflect the current organisation for an inclusive work environment (SLU.ua.2025.1.1-1356).

## SLU: Gender equality work

This section describes starting points, organisation and ongoing work within the field of gender equality within SLU.

### Definitions

Equal opportunities is an umbrella term for SLU's work to combat discrimination and promote equal treatment based on the Swedish Discrimination Act. This work is governed by law, unlike the work on gender equality, which is goal-oriented. This means, amongst other things, differences in starting points and perspectives. Equal opportunities work is based on an individual perspective and the individual's right not to be discriminated against. The work carried out within the assignment for gender mainstreaming is aimed at introducing integrated and in-depth working methods within the framework of ordinary decision-making, preparatory, governance and follow-up processes. This is to ensure equal opportunities within the activities of the university based on the gender equality policy goals.

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<sup>1</sup> Appropriation directions for the financial year 2022 concerning the Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences.

The quality of gender equality work and the opportunities for creating sustainable change will be enhanced if the work is broadened to include additional power structures other than just gender. Furthermore, gender is not an unambiguous concept and needs to be defined. The bases for work on gender equality are (most often) predicated on binary definitions of legal gender. When analysing these bases, there should therefore be an awareness that gender also includes gender expression and gender identity, and that interpretation of goals and bases should not risk excluding non-binary persons. A trans-perspective should therefore be acknowledged when interpreting bases and taken into account when planning actions.

## Horizon Europe and gender equality plan

Under the EU's Horizon Europe framework programme, a gender equality plan is an eligibility criterion for all calls for proposals with a deadline from 1 January 2022 onwards. The gender equality plan must contain four process related elements to meet the requirements:

1. **Public document.** The gender equality plan must be signed by senior management and available online. The action plan should show the organisation's development areas, goals and activities.
2. **Resources.** The organisation must show how it allocates resources and competence for the implementation of the gender equality plan.
  - SLU has an organisation and operational support for inclusive work environment work. See more under *Responsibility and organisation*.
3. **Gender-disaggregated statistics.** The organisation must be able to show annual gender-disaggregated statistics for employees and students.
  - Gender-disaggregated statistics are presented annually in the annual report. Gender indicators are accounted for in the management system, including gender-disaggregated data regarding the distribution of research funds divided into appropriations/grants<sup>2</sup>.
4. **Courses and study programmes.** The organisation must show how it works to provide courses and study programmes in gender equality for managers, coordinators and employees.
  - SLU arranges courses and study programmes for managers, coordinators and employees and plans to further develop its initiatives, see further under *Competence and development training* and *Action plan*.

## Responsibility and organisation

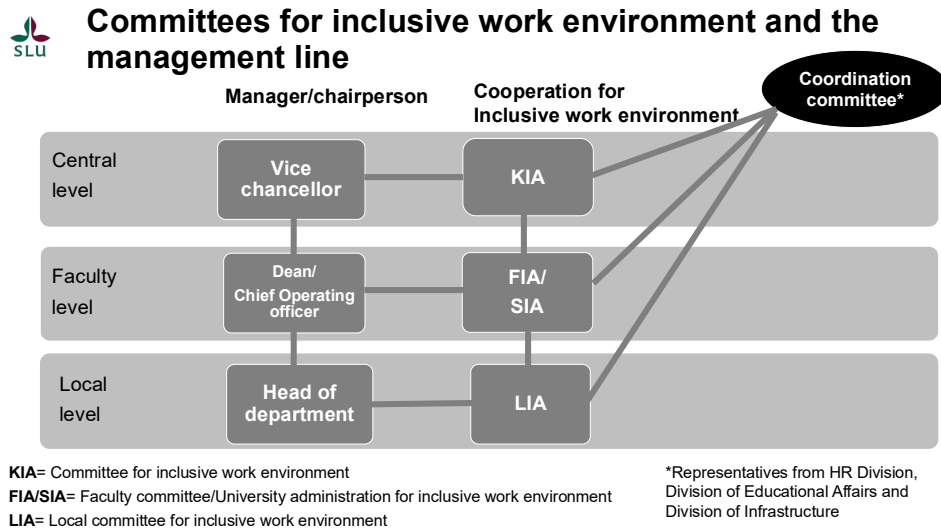
The vice-chancellor has ultimate responsibility for the university's gender equality work and is therefore responsible for the strategic decisions taken in this area. In this role, the vice-chancellor also chairs the committee for inclusive work environment, see Figure 1.

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<sup>2</sup> SLU's management information system.

At SLU, inclusive work environment is an umbrella term for gender equality, equal opportunities and systematic work environment work.<sup>3</sup>

Figure 1: Organisation of inclusive work environment work at SLU.



The committee for inclusive work environment is the central body within which the planning and follow-up of the systematic work is carried out.

The coordination committee provides central coordinating support for the SLU's inclusive work environment efforts where gender equality work is included. The coordination committee supports the organisation and collaborates in various ways, mainly with university management, and faculty committees and the university administration committee.

## Competence development and training

A fundamental requirement for achieving effective outcomes in gender mainstreaming are the efforts aimed at increasing awareness of gender equality issues, including the practical application of gender equality perspectives within the organisation. The training initiatives at SLU in the field of gender equality and equal opportunities involve the entire organisation, at different levels and in relation to different roles.

Many of the initiatives are also integrated into existing training activities. For example, a gender equality perspective is integrated into SLU's management and leadership courses and into higher education teacher training courses. At a central level, all managers and employees are also given targeted digital training in gender equality and equal opportunities.

<sup>3</sup> [Working together for an inclusive workplace | Staff web](#)

## Gender-equal resource allocation

SLU works with a gender-equal resource allocation model that aims to support the departments' work in allocating funds to individual teachers/researchers and research teams.<sup>4</sup> An individual teacher's/researcher's working hours and funding often comprise different elements: state grants for research, external research funding, teaching time, study directorship, and so on. The way these elements are distributed can embed gender unequal opportunities and therefore needs to be clarified and discussed.

The SLU's model for gender equal resource allocation amongst the departments is integrated into the departments' annual budget work. The budget framework includes an instruction linked to specific gender-equality data regarding allocation based on the legal gender at the department, where the department is expected to respond to what significance this gender-equality analysis has for the budget for the next year.<sup>5</sup> At the overall level, a discussion on the allocation of funding from a gender-equality perspective is included in the university administration's preparation of financial allocation for the coming year.

## Statements of intent

### **The forest sector's gender equality council**

In 2022, the forest sector's gender equality council was established as a national forum for dialogue and collaboration with the aim of achieving a gender-equal forest sector. The council consists of around thirty organisations from across the sector. SLU is one of the participants and, as such, is expected to contribute to the development of this work.

The council operates based on Sweden's political gender objectives and has adopted the following additional goal: An inclusive forest sector free from discrimination and with the same power and conditions for everyone, regardless of gender, to become and be active, influence and develop.

The council also has three specific sub-goals:

- Equal education
- Equal working life
- Equal forest ownership

### **Statement of intent for equitable land-based sectors**

SLU is the initiator of a statement of intent for equal and equitable land-based sectors with the aim that they should be places of work and study where everyone feels included and safe. The participants undertake to work actively to create attractive study and work conditions and study and work environments from a gender-equality and equal

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<sup>4</sup> Budgetary provisions 2026 (SLU-ID: SLU.ua.2025.1.1-3292).

<sup>5</sup> With regard to allocation by job category, salary costs, full-time employment, allocations of research funding (appropriations and grants).

opportunities perspective. They also undertake to improve and promote work against discrimination and harassment. In this way, participants intend to be a model for other companies/organisations, as well as for students within the land-based sector. The signatories have promised to:

- take a clear position that an equal and gender-equal work and study environment is a prerequisite for successful work and study outcomes;
- actively work to integrate the gender-equality perspective into everyday activities;
- actively work to ensure that student representatives, employees, elected representatives and managers cooperate on issues in accordance with the purpose of the statement of intent;
- implement awareness-raising measures, such as training courses, with the aim of creating an equal and gender-equal work and/or study environment;
- share good examples and experiences in the field with other organisations.<sup>6</sup>

## Action plan 2022–2025 (2026)

Through identifying problems linked to gender-equality policy goals, SLU has identified two main orientations for gender-mainstreaming work: *Gender equal career pathways* and *gender-equal courses and study programmes*.<sup>7</sup> A number of intermediate goals have been identified within the framework of these two overall orientations.

The measures set out in the action plan are based on assessments and experiences gained during the period of the previous plan 2017–2021. SLU has previously identified a number of elements in its activities as key to creating structural conditions for sustainable change management, such as an organisation for the work that has the potential to meet gender-equality and equal-opportunities goals and requirements. SLU has also integrated a gender-equality perspective in central processes, such as the budget process, and in quality work within SLU's training courses. A gender-equality perspective is also integrated into the framework for quality assurance and quality development within SLU's research and environmental analysis.

The measures set out in the action plan follow the previously established orientation and build on the work and structure already in place.

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<sup>6</sup> Statement of intent for an attractive, equal and gender-equal work and study environment in the land-based sectors (SLU ID: SLU.ua.2021.2.6-251).

<sup>7</sup> The action plan specifically concerns SLU's gender equality work. SLU works at various levels to ensure that the requirements of the Discrimination Act are met with regard to preventive and systematic work, which is not covered by this action plan.

## Implementation

The action plan is based on a problem-oriented approach in which the goals of gender-equality policy have been broken down to HEI level. In accordance with the assignment described in the appropriation directions, the main focus of the work has been on the role of SLU in relation to underlying societal problems in the higher education sector.

In addition to discussions and analysis in the JLV Council (former organisation), the roles that had been responsible for implementing measures in the area of gender equality during previous planning periods have provided input for the development of a new plan. They have been assigned to identify, analyse and prioritise development areas where there is perceived to be potential for influence based on their respective areas of activity. These starting points have influenced the focus of the action plan and also provide the activities with a basis for developing their analyses and designing activities within the framework of their own operational planning.

This action plan sets out the overall orientation of the work on gender mainstreaming. In order for the work to be sustainable and productive during the planning period, the proposed measures in the action plan must be dynamic in such a way that those responsible are constantly working on integrating gender equality into everyday processes and focus areas. The established orientation in the work on gender equality may therefore need to be made specific, clarified and developed at an operational level. The operational support for inclusive work environment supports this work. The action plan specifies the person responsible for each activity together with the proposed support role for the work.

The activities have been updated, see footnotes, in accordance with the extension of the plan's validity period until 31 December 2026 at the latest, and adapted to the current organisation for work on an inclusive work environment.

## Follow-up

The gender perspective must permeate all activities within SLU. Measures and work relating to gender equality are evaluated in regular follow-up activities, such as follow-up of the operational support plan and faculty dialogues. The work is also followed up through systematic work on equal opportunities, in accordance with the Swedish Discrimination Act's requirement for active measures.

SLU's work on gender mainstreaming is reported to the government within the framework of the annual report. The action plan as a whole is evaluated at the end of the planning period. The evaluation is aimed at evaluating the impacts of the gender equality work within the university and establishing how well the work contributes to creating positive impacts at a societal level.

## Gender-equal career pathways

The career pathways in academia as a whole are subject to conditions that have different consequences for women, men and persons identifying as non-binary. Studies show that



the opportunities available in academia differ in a number of areas that have a particularly negative impact on women's career development.<sup>8</sup> The Swedish Research Council shows that it takes longer for women to reach the level of professor because women generally experience more difficulties than men and have less time for research.<sup>9</sup> For example, a study by SUHF (Association of Swedish Higher Education Institutions) shows that women are excessively encumbered with non-qualifying tasks and inappreciable operational responsibility resulting in unequal career opportunities.<sup>10</sup> The survey on gender-based vulnerability and sexual harassment in Swedish higher education also reveals the extent of sexual harassment in academia, where women are particularly vulnerable.<sup>11</sup>

Actions around gender-equal career pathways at the SLU are tied in with underlying societal problems in that career pathways within academia are impacted by unequal structures and norms. In turn, this problem ties in with the intermediate goals of gender-equality policy, in particular the equal distribution of power and influence and financial gender equality.

During the period 2021–2023, the government's goal was that 52 per cent of newly recruited professors at SLU be women. In 2021, a total of 13 professors were employed, two of whom are women.<sup>12</sup> The recruitment goal is therefore far from being realised. The gender distribution based on legal gender in different job categories is, apart from among professors, reasonably even at SLU as a whole. However, there are relatively large differences between the faculties.

The actions set out in the action plan are based on the work undertaken in the context of equal career pathways since 2017.

SLU has identified actions in three sub-areas linked to gender-equal career pathways: recruitment and allocation of assignments, equal opportunities and resource allocation.

### **Recruitment and allocation of assignments**

Actions relating to recruitment and allocation of assignments are aimed at promoting gender-equal recruitment and at avoiding gender bias in preparation and assessment processes through training and a review of instruments and procedures. The expected outcomes of the actions are monitored, amongst other things, using indicators linked to the recruitment target for newly recruited professors.

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<sup>8</sup> For example, see: Bondestam, F & Grip, L. (2015). *Fördelning eller förfördelning? – en forskningsöversikt. Research funding; allocation or pre-allocation? – an overview*. Swedish Secretariat for Gender Research. University of Gothenburg

<sup>9</sup> The Swedish Research Council (2021). *How equal is higher education? The requirements for women and men carrying out research*.

<sup>10</sup> Fagerlind Ståhl, A-C. (2022). *Spotlight on equality – when uncertainty overshadows everything*. Swedish University Teachers and Researchers (SUHF).

<sup>11</sup> Research and the collaboration programme (2022). *Survey on gender-based vulnerability and sexual harassment in Swedish higher education*. Karolinska Institute, Royal Institute of Technology, Malmö University & the Swedish Secretariat for Gender Research, University of Gothenburg.

<sup>12</sup> SLU's Annual Report 2021.

Action	Responsible/supported by	Expected long-term outcomes	Indicators
Provide continuing training in competence-based recruitment to managers and employees involved in recruitment where gender equality and norm-critical perspectives are integrated.	Division of Human Resources	<p>The training initiatives have contributed to a more equal gender distribution (legal gender) at department level.</p> <p>The training initiatives have contributed to increased awareness of bias and methodology in the recruitment process.</p> <p>The training initiatives have contributed to increased quality assurance in recruitment.</p>	<p>Percentage of managers and employees who have completed the training.</p> <p>Percentage of new recruitment that has led to more equal gender distribution at job level.</p>
Conducting of training in competence-based recruitment with integrated gender equality and norm-critical perspectives for newly appointed academic appointments boards.	Division of Human Resources	<p>The training initiatives have contributed to a more equal gender distribution (legal gender) at department level.</p> <p>The training initiatives have contributed to increased awareness of bias and methodology in the recruitment process.</p> <p>The training initiatives have contributed to increased quality assurance in recruitment.</p>	<p>Percentage of new recruitment that has led to more equal gender distribution at job level.<sup>13</sup></p> <p>The gender distribution among newly recruited professors is equalised.</p>

<sup>13</sup> Associate senior lecturer, senior lecturer and professor.

Action	Responsible/supported by	Expected long-term outcomes	Indicators
Experts are trained in bias before assessing the candidates' merits in the appointment of associate senior lecturer, senior lecturer and professor.	Academic appointments boards	<p>The training initiatives have contributed to a more equal gender distribution (legal gender) at department level.</p> <p>The training initiatives have contributed to increased awareness of bias when assessing qualifications.</p> <p>The training initiatives have contributed to increased quality assurance in recruitment.</p>	<p>Percentage of new recruitment that has led to more gender equality at job level.</p> <p>The gender distribution among newly recruited professors is equalised.</p>

### Equal opportunities

The actions aim to ensure that the conditions for pursuing an academic career are equal regardless of gender. The actions take account of external conditions within research and careers, such as norms linked to gender and assignment allocation, and aim to achieve a better understanding of the requirements for an academic career from a gender-equality perspective.

Action	Responsible/supported by	Expected long-term outcomes	Indicators
Oversight of procedures and guidelines in the event of harassment. <sup>14</sup>	Division of Human Resources/JLV coordination group <sup>15</sup>	Procedures and guidelines in the event of alleged harassment of employees are up-to-date, clear and well known to managers and employees.	<p>Procedures and guidelines are revised on the basis of the review carried out.</p> <p>The employee survey and the doctoral student survey</p>

<sup>14</sup> The measure has been implemented and has resulted in a new policy with new guidelines and procedures: [Reporting harassment and victimisation | Medarbetarwebben](#)

<sup>15</sup> The JLV coordination group according to the previous organisation for work on gender equality and equal opportunities (JLV).

Action	Responsible/supported by	Expected long-term outcomes	Indicators
Develop guidelines for trans-inclusive governing documents. <sup>16</sup>	Vice-Chancellor's Office/JLV coordination group <sup>17</sup>	Increased inclusion based on gender.	Guidelines developed.  Number of governing documents with (trans)inclusive wording.
Managers must identify and address deficiencies in academic culture and structure related to power and norms, for example in the allocation of tasks.  The work can be usefully integrated with the systematic equal opportunities work.	Manager/the faculties' JLV coordinator, collaboration teams department level or equivalent. <sup>18</sup>	Better awareness of how norms and conditions in academic culture are expressed at SLU and increased opportunities for gender-equal career pathways.	Employee survey
Mapping and action proposals in relation to career pathways at SLU from a gender-equality perspective. <sup>19</sup>	University administration for JLV. <sup>20</sup>	Increase awareness of career pathways from a gender equality perspective at SLU.	Mapping and action proposals completed.

### Resource allocation

A gender perspective on resource allocation involves casting light on the consequences of financial management in terms of unequal opportunities in the core activities. This means

<sup>16</sup> This measure has been partially implemented through the style guide for English (and Swedish) at SLU and its guidance on inclusive language use: [Style guide for English | Staff web](#)

<sup>17</sup> The JLV coordination group according to the previous organisation for work on gender equality and equal opportunities (JLV).

<sup>18</sup> JLV coordinator and local collaboration teams under the previous organisation for work on gender equality and equal opportunities are now replaced by the coordination committee for an inclusive work environment and the local committees for an inclusive work environment in the new organisation for work on an inclusive work environment.

<sup>19</sup> Apart from some preparatory work during the planning period, this has not yet been initiated. With the extended validity of the plan, the focus of this measure is to explore possibilities and conditions for mapping career paths at SLU, thereby contributing to the development of a new plan for SLU's gender equality work

<sup>20</sup> Operational support for JLV is now provided by the coordination committee for an inclusive work environment under the new organisation for work on an inclusive work environment.

that facts, analysis and awareness of how employees are affected by resource allocation are provided at all levels of the budgetary procedure, and that the effects of the budget are analysed from a gender-equality perspective. The goal is for academic staff to have equal financial opportunities regardless of gender.

Action	Responsible/supported by	Expected long-term outcomes	Indicators
A gender-equality perspective is integrated into the budget work and is developed on an ongoing basis.	Faculties/Division of Planning and Research Support, the faculties' JLV coordinator. <sup>21</sup>	Financial decisions are taken on the basis of information and awareness of gender equality effects. The desired long-term outcome is a gender equal allocation of resources.  Equal opportunities for qualification regardless of gender.	Gender equality perspectives were discussed in the faculties' budget dialogues.  The indicators linked to gender-equality budgeting in the management system.

## Gender-equal courses and study programmes

One of the intermediate goals in terms of gender-equality policy concerns gender equal courses and study programmes; that everyone, regardless of gender, should have the same opportunities in terms of education, study choices and personal development. In the context of the work on gender mainstreaming, SLU has implemented a number of actions to promote gender equality in the content and implementation of courses and study programmes, including through the integration of a gender-equality perspective into the quality assurance system for SLU's courses and study programmes. The actions contained in this action plan are further based on principles of the importance of gender mainstreaming in courses and study programmes.

To a large extent, women and men study different subjects in first cycle, second cycle and third cycle courses and study programmes. This both reflects and contributes to the gender-disaggregated labour market as a whole. The underlying factors for gender-based study choices are complex<sup>22</sup>. In SLU's courses and study programmes, unequal gender distribution is

<sup>21</sup> The JLV coordinator's role is now replaced by the JLV strategist in the new organisation for work on an inclusive work environment.

<sup>22</sup> Selection by own gender. A summary of knowledge on gender differences in educational choices. The Swedish Gender Equality Agency, Report 2022:4.

exemplified by forestry courses and study programmes, where most students are men, and animal-related courses and study programmes, where a large majority of students are women.

A strategy for SLU's work on broader recruitment and wider participation is adopted<sup>23</sup>. An action plan is being drawn up in 2022, where persons of an underrepresented gender are one of the target groups for broader recruitment. Equal opportunities in education are an important component of broader recruitment and wider participation.

### Gender equality in the content and implementation of education

The actions aim to ensure that all students, regardless of education and legal gender distribution in the course or study programme concerned, have equal opportunities. Those responsible for educational and training programmes and courses should have good awareness of how gender equality can be integrated into the content and implementation of the course or study programme.

Action	Responsible/supported by	Expected long-term outcomes	Indicators
Design course for course coordinators, directors of studies and principal supervisors in applying gender perspectives in the content and implementation of education and training courses. <sup>24</sup>	Division of Educational Affairs/JLV operational support	Course teachers, directors of studies and principal supervisors have knowledge of how gender equality can be integrated into the content and design of education and training courses.	The course has been developed.  Percentage of people in the target groups who have participated in education and training courses.  Within the context of the quality assurance work for courses and study programmes
Department heads are responsible for giving course coordinators, study managers and principal supervisors for doctoral students the opportunity to continue their studies within the field of JLV, including by taking SLU's cross university JLV course.	Head of department		

<sup>23</sup> Strategy for SLU's work on broader recruitment and wider participation 2021-2025 (SLU.ua.2021.1.1.1-1465).

<sup>24</sup> The measure was implemented in 2023 through the course *An Inclusive University*, which is part of the course offerings provided by the Educational Development Unit (EPU).

Action	Responsible/supported by	Expected long-term outcomes	Indicators
Gender equality must be taken into account in the planning and implementation of education and training courses.	The education organisation (Board of Education/UN, programme boards/PNs and programme directors of study)/ Division of Educational Affairs	Goals linked to gender-equality and equal-opportunities perspectives are included in all programme syllabuses and in course syllabuses, where applicable.	Followed up within the context of the systematic quality-assurance work.
Review of current standard wording on gender equality and equal opportunities in the programme syllabuses.	The education organisation (UN, PN, study administrative node)/JLV coordination group <sup>25</sup>	Goals linked to gender-equality and equal-opportunities perspectives are included in all programme syllabuses and in course syllabuses, where applicable.	Followed up within the context of the systematic quality-assurance work.
Review of procedures and guidelines in the event of student harassment. <sup>26</sup>	Division of Educational Affairs	Procedures and guidelines in the event of alleged harassment of students are up to date, clear and well known to teachers and students.	Procedures and guidelines are revised on the basis of the review carried out.  The student barometer survey  Survey of doctoral students

<sup>25</sup> JLV coordination group under the previous organisation for gender equality and equal opportunities is now replaced by the coordination committee for an inclusive work environment in the new organisation for work on an inclusive work environment.

<sup>26</sup> The measure has been implemented and has resulted in a new policy with new guidelines and procedures: [Reporting harassment and victimisation | Student web](#)