



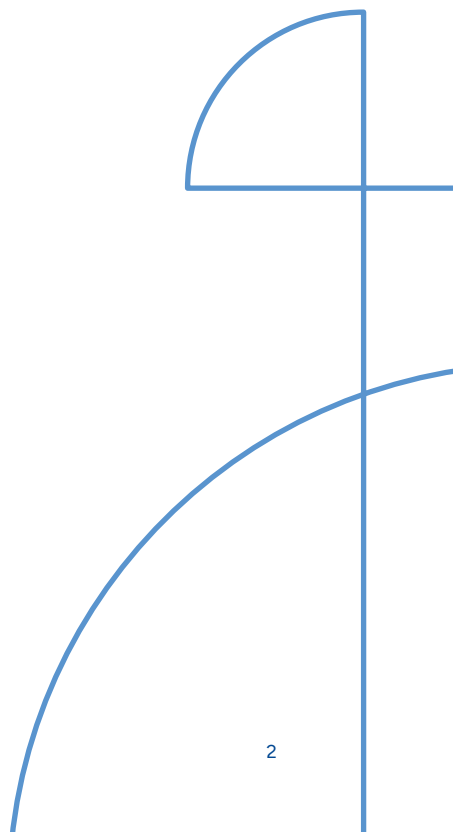
# **Double discrimination against women**

A report on gender-based violence  
in the form of incivility and  
sexual harassment at KTH

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# Introduction

This report on double discrimination concerns the prevalence of sexual harassment and incivility at KTH. Another name for sexual harassment and incivility is gender-based violence. The aim of the report is to contribute to change for a more inclusive culture at KTH through increased awareness of the phenomenon and its prevalence, and by contributing to constructive discussions on what can be done to reduce the problem. The report is intended to be used internally at KTH in training, leadership development, group exercises, at workplace meetings and in other appropriate contexts where the organisation's culture and values are on the agenda. The report contains a brief introduction to the concepts of gender-based violence, sexual harassment and incivility, partly by looking at how these concepts are described and interpreted in research, and partly by looking at how they are defined in Swedish legislation. Research on sexual harassment exists within a variety of disciplines and is based on many different research questions, which is why we have made a number of delimitations. We have chosen to exemplify the research with overall theory of power and imbalance of power, as well as organisational research on sexual harassment, but we do not present research on the broader field of discrimination in organisations.

We present a summary of the results of a national survey conducted in the Swedish higher education sector in 2021

The aim of the report is to contribute to change for a more inclusive culture at KTH through increased awareness of the phenomenon and its prevalence, and by contributing to constructive discussions on what can be done to reduce the problem.

(Research and Collaboration Programme 2022) and results from KTH. The KTH data is supplemented with results from two different group exercises carried out at KTH in connection with presentations of the national study. These serve as qualitative examples in order to give a voice to the figures and diagrams. Finally, the results from the analysis of the KTH data are summarised, followed by suggestions regarding exercises and discussion questions that can be used to discuss change and possible measures.



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The authors of this report are both researchers at KTH in the field of gender research. We have worked with change initiatives for increased gender equality at KTH, in the role of Vice President for Gender Equality and Values 2017-2022 (Anna Wahl) and for a period in 2022 in the role of special expert at the KTH Equality Office (Åsa-Karin Engstrand). We have been involved in the national survey on gender-based violence. We write this report based on our assignments within the framework of gender mainstreaming at KTH.

# The concepts of gender-based violence, sexual harassment and incivility

In the national report (Research and Collaboration Programme 2022), as well as in the survey, a number of concepts are used which have been taken from different research fields.

## Gender-based violence

The concept of gender-based violence is used in the study with the explanation that it is an umbrella term used in research to describe different forms of harassment and violence. The purpose in the survey is to create an understanding that being exposed to different forms of harassment is complex and involves interlinked experiences that take place during a lifetime. An established view in the research field is that vulnerability is created by experiences of different types of abuse of power, e.g. discrimination, bullying, offensive behaviour, incivility and sexual harassment (Hearn et al. 2020; Naezer et al. 2019). The concept of gender-based violence is used to highlight the importance of how a number of inequalities and power structures in society, linked to gender, gender identity, class, race/ethnicity, sexuality, function and age, contribute to vulnerability (Crenshaw 1989; Krizsan et al. 2012).

## Sexual harassment

The national report describes sexual harassment as being exposed to unwanted sexual attention. In Sweden, sexual harassment is regulated in the Swedish Discrimination Act (“DA”) and the Swedish Work Environment Act (“WEA”). In DA, sexual harassment is described as a form of discrimination in work and education, and is defined as “conduct of a sexual nature that violates someone’s dignity” (section 4, subsection 4 of DA). Sexual harassment is prohibited by law, and employers and education providers have a responsibility to investigate and remedy incidents of sexual harassment according to DA and WEA. Employers also have a responsibility to work proactively within the scope of their systematic work environment management in relation to the organisational and social work environment, which includes, among other things, implementing measures to prevent victimisation (AFS 2001:1 and AFS 2015:4).

Sexual harassment can also be interpreted and analysed beyond legal definitions and frameworks. Within research, the view on the concept of sexual harassment has changed over time, and different research methods are used in different disciplines. An example of this is how

questions based on qualitative descriptions of different situations are used in the form of scales that range from looks and innuendos to various forms of physical abuse. Sexual harassment as a concept has also been developed by linking it to other concepts such as work environment and organisational culture.

## Incivility

In research, an intersectional understanding of vulnerability is often applied whereby several dimensions of power interact and contribute to subordination and oppression. Various forms of lack of respect within academia have also been studied in previous research. This is referred to in the study as incivility, which is defined as “low-intensity deviant behaviour with ambiguous intent to harm the target, in violation of workplace norms for mutual respect” (Andersson & Pearson 1999, p. 457). A lack of respect may, for example, be expressed by interrupting someone, saying rude things or spreading rumours. In the following section, we go through the research on sexual harassment and incivility in more detail.

# Research on sexual harassment

Sexual harassment is most often described at an overall level as one of several expressions of gender inequality. In Sweden, gender equality is defined as women and men having the same power to shape society and their own lives (see the Swedish Gender Equality Policy Objectives, [www.regeringen.se](http://www.regeringen.se)). That sexual harassment can be understood as an expression of gender inequality means that it is viewed as being related to power and gender-related imbalance of power. Within research, several different expressions of gender inequality are described, which can be divided into the following four categories: economic differences (e.g. differences in pay, wealth and other material resources), power differences (e.g. representation in decision-making positions), unequal responsibility for

**In an international research review on sexual harassment in academia, it is found that harassment due to gender is the most common form of exposure to violence.**

unpaid work (e.g. caring for children, the elderly and the sick or disabled), and physical exposure to violence (e.g. rape, sexual harassment) (Wahl et al. 2018). The type of gender inequality that is expressed by sexual harassment is thus related to physical vulnerability, i.e. the power to decide over one's own body. This phenomenon has been described, studied and analysed in a number of different ways in various research disciplines since the 1970s. The concept of sexual harassment was created to describe situations in which power relationships are out of balance (MacKinnon 1979, 1982). In feminist research, sexual harassment is an expression of physical vulnerability, in particular women's physical vulnerability. There is thus a connection to other forms of physical vulnerability for women, such as dangerous (or lack of) contraceptives and abortions, sexual abuse, violence in close relationships, prostitution, pornography and rape. The interpretation of sexual harassment as a form of violence is based on a view of violence as an ongoing process of abuse, which

can include both physical and verbal abuse (Andersson 2007). This view is often linked to theories of male dominance and female subordination at an overall structural level of society. In research on men's violence against women, the violence is interpreted as an expression of male dominance and female subordination at the societal level, which at an individual level is intended to create and maintain control (MacKinnon 1982; Lövkrona & Nilsson 2023).

In an international research review on sexual harassment in academia, it is found that harassment due to gender is the most common form of exposure to violence in academia. Sexual harassment occurs within all disciplines in academia, and exposure to sexual harassment is reported by all groups, i.e. students, PhD students and employees (Bondestam & Lundqvist 2018). In the same research review it is, however, stated that there is a need for more studies on sexual harassment in academia. The national survey conducted in the Swedish higher education sector is an initiative based on the need for more research (Research and Collaboration Programme 2022). Previous studies on sexual harassment in academia in Sweden have shown that power structures in academia and academic culture are important factors in terms of how sexual harassment is expressed, and also for how occurrences of sexual harassment in academia are handled (Andersson 2007). In order to focus on research on power structures and organisational culture, we have chosen to primarily refer to organisational research on sexual harassment.

## **Organisational research on sexual harassment**

Organisational research on sexual harassment often takes its point of departure from the view that the phenomenon concerns power and power relationships in relation to values and norms in organisations. Studies on sexual harassment in organisations are often interpreted on the basis of theory of organisational culture. Sexual harassment is always created in relation to a certain context in which power, structures and culture play a role. It is therefore difficult to define certain specific types of behaviour that are, by definition, sexual harassment regardless of context. Some types of behaviour are obvious examples of victimisation regardless of the context, but in many situations there are several aspects that come into play in order for a form of behaviour to be perceived as objectionable or offensive. When it comes to commonly occurring forms of

sexual harassment in working life, the expressions of such behaviour may be seemingly innocent and insignificant on the surface, yet in a certain situation they are still perceived as offensive, demeaning and objectionable. It is therefore important to understand the context in which something happens, and the relationships that people have with each other, in order to be able to interpret why a specific type of behaviour is perceived negatively. A comment or joke can be shared in a certain context with a group of friends without being perceived as offensive, while the same comment or joke takes on a completely different meaning in another context involving other power constellations and relationships. In other words, context and relationship matter. Organisational research also emphasises the importance of the nature of the interactions that take place in a certain context (Wahl et al. 2018). Who is behind the behaviour, at whom is the behaviour targeted, and how do others react? What positions are represented in the room or location where the incident takes place? What do the power relationships look like? What loyalties and dependencies exist between the individuals? In addition to identifying the perpetrator(s) and the victim(s) in a situation of sexual harassment, it is equally important to know who else is present and how they react or don't react. This is called the bystander perspective. It is also possible to analyse the importance of the organisational culture in relation to the incident in a broader perspective based on what is accepted, normalised or even idealised when it comes to the types of behaviour that can be perceived as sexual harassment in the organisation. This is where norms and values come into the picture, which affect everyone in a certain context.

A number of themes regarding sexual harassment have been addressed within organisational research. One of them concerns the different ways in which sexual harassment may be expressed in everyday situations in workplaces (Hagman 1995; Fitzgerald & Cortina 2018). In 1995, Ninni Hagman described a sexual harassment staircase, which has since been used by many in the work aimed at combating sexual harassment. This six-step staircase concretises what sexual harassment can be, and also how the different expressions of sexual harassment can be interrelated. The first step consists of compliments that are given instead of a professional response. This is a good example of a form of behaviour that is related to both context and relationship. In a certain situation, a compliment may entail solely positive signals, while in another situation it could be perceived as both professionally demeaning and something that gives off disparaging signals in relation to other people in the room, e.g. colleagues. The second step involves uncomfortable looks and staring – a feeling of being “undressed by someone's gaze”. In this instance, the victim's physical integrity is violated through behaviour that is unwanted. In the third step, the harassment becomes more physical, but still in a cautious manner. It could involve a friendly pat that is unwelcome and uncomfortable in the situation. In the fourth step, the physical touching becomes more obviously intrusive, for example by rubbing against someone or taking advantage of an opportunity for physical contact.

The definition of sexual harassment based on the Discrimination Act is that it is conduct of a sexual nature that violates a person's dignity.

For example, it can be comments, words, touching, looks, unwelcome compliments, innuendo, as well as derogatory generalisations aimed at ridiculing someone. Based on the legislation, the key factor is that the behaviour is unwanted, and that this is made clear by those who feel exposed.

The fifth step involves words and actions that are clearly offensive and threatening, such as kissing, unwelcome propositions or rape. In the sixth step, some form of coercion or threat comes into the picture, whereby a person uses their position to get what they want, for example in return for an employment decision, promotion or higher salary. The various steps on the staircase also illustrate how the seemingly innocent unwanted compliments, staring at body parts and casual sexist jokes can contribute to a normalisation of a culture where sexual harassment is accepted. This process of normalisation then facilitates and normalises even more serious forms of victimisation and physical abuse (Wahl & Linghag 2013). The victim often feels a sense of guilt or shame and therefore denies the significance of the violation. It is not unusual for the victim to defend the perpetrator and try to find excuses for his or her behaviour, for example that the perpetrator does not actually understand the seriousness of the violation, or that the perpetrator is “like that with everyone” or was drunk at the time (Hagman 1995).

Some examples of other research questions regarding sexual harassment in working life include how common the phenomenon is in different industries and professions (Feldblum & Lipnic 2016), and what types of reactions are common in situations of harassment, both in terms of those who are subjected to the harassment and those who witness it (Terpstra & Baker 1989). Those who witness harassment often also feel uncomfortable, preferring to look the other way because they don't know how they should react. A sense of shame spreads and silence takes over as people feel unsure of what is right and wrong, and what risks they could be exposing themselves to if they choose to react or take action. Cultures in which an acceptance and fear of sexual harassment is created have been called cultures of silence. In cultures of silence,

many people feel that they do not know how they should react if they are subjected to unwanted behaviour or if they see others being subjected to such behaviour, which may, among other things, explain why incidents are not reported (Wahl & Khakee 2018). A common response from those who have been subjected to but have not reported such behaviour is that they are afraid of not being believed, or they believe that reporting the incident will not lead to any meaningful change. Another common response is that the victim is afraid that the situation will only become worse if he or she reports the incident. A number of these previous results are confirmed in the survey conducted in the Swedish higher education sector, where the propensity to report an incident is significantly lower in comparison to the number of respondents who state that they have experience of gender-based violence (Research and Collaboration Programme 2022). It may be a case of a generally accepted culture where it is the norm to accept that sexual harassment will occur. The risk of appearing to be a troublemaker discourages many people from talking about the occurrence of sexual harassment. In the work aimed at combating sexual harassment, it is important to supplement knowledge about the individual's vulnerability with knowledge about the organisational level. There is a need for knowledge about the circumstances and situations that contribute to harassment, and how these can be counteracted.

The research on sexual harassment that was initiated in

the 1970s by highlighting the phenomenon and giving it a name, resulted in consequences with regard to legislation against sexual harassment in many countries, including Sweden. The definition of sexual harassment based on the Swedish Discrimination Act is that it is behaviour of a sexual nature that violates someone's dignity. It may, for example, take the form of comments, words, touching, looks, unwelcome compliments, sexual innuendos or demeaning and ridiculing generalisations. Based on the legislation, it is crucial that the behaviour is unwanted and that this is made clear by the victim. For a more detailed description of the legislation, please see the report from the Research and Collaboration Programme 2022.

In conclusion, it can be stated that, despite many years of research on sexual harassment that has contributed to proactive change initiatives in organisations aimed at reducing the prevalence of sexual harassment, as well as legislation that prohibits sexual harassment, it is still a major problem in society and in organisations. There are, of course, many explanations for this, one of which is that, in cultures of silence, sexual harassment is perceived to be a topic that is difficult and uncomfortable to discuss and remedy. This relates back to the aim of this report, namely to create increased awareness of the phenomenon and thus break the silence regarding the fact that sexual harassment also occurs at KTH. Only in this way can conversations and discussions be initiated to contribute to and bring about meaningful change.

## The sexual harassment staircase

*\* In 1995, Ninni Hagman described a sexual harassment "staircase", which has been used by many in their work fighting sexual harassment.*

### Step 1

Compliments that are given instead of a professional response.

### Step 2

Uncomfortable glances and stares, a sense of being "Undressed with the eyes." This oversteps the mark of physical integrity.

### Step 3

The harassment becomes more physical, but is still done in a cautious manner way. It can be a friendly pat that is unwelcome and unpleasant in that context.

### Step 4

Physical contact gets more openly obviously intrusive, for example by pressing oneself against someone or by exploiting an opportunity for physical contact.

### Step 5

Words and actions that are openly offensive and threatening, like kisses, unwelcome propositions or rape.

### Step 6

Some form of coercion or threat comes into the picture, whereby a person uses their position to get what they want, for example in return for an employment decision, promotion or higher salary.

# Research on incivility

In the mid-1990s, psychologists and legal scholars in the USA commenced a research project focused on discrimination in the judicial system. Researchers in psychology – Louise F. Fitzgerald, Lilia M. Cortina and Vicki J. Magler – had previously studied sexual harassment and felt it was an area on which the research project should also focus. The other participants in the project agreed that sexual harassment was a problem, but felt that incivility was just as great a problem and was perhaps even more widespread. To measure this, the researchers developed a scale where the concept of “psychological aggression” was used to describe the types of rude behaviour that were prevalent in the judicial system. Then, in connection with the publication of an article by Andersson and Pearson (1999), this concept was replaced with the concept of incivility (Cortina et al. 2017). Gender was thus included in incivility research at an early stage, and women reported more exposure to incivility than men, especially in male-dominated organisations.

Andersson and Pearson used the concept of workplace incivility and defined incivility as “low-intensity deviant behaviour with ambiguous intent to harm the target, in violation of workplace norms for mutual respect” (Andersson & Pearson 1999, p. 457). They wanted to show that there are different forms of mistreatment and that types of behaviour which, at first glance, are not viewed as serious, can escalate into aggressive behaviour. The article gave rise to a number of studies focusing on behaviour such as spreading rumours about colleagues, ignoring

input from others, sending nasty emails and making snide and demeaning comments. Effects on victims, such as stress, lack of well-being and difficulty focusing on work, were also studied.

Organisational psychologists have found that phenomena such as harassment, bullying and incivility overlap, and they have built on the Scandinavian research on harassment and bullying by developing a scale to measure incivility in the workplace – the Workplace Incivility Scale (Cortina et al. 2001). This scale has been used to examine the effects of incivility on gender and race (“selective incivility”). Furthermore, Cortina (2008) states that incivility constitutes “modern discrimination”, a more subtle type of discrimination than direct discrimination, e.g. in the form of bans on working and studying, or clearly demeaning comments. Modern discrimination can appear neutral as it does not include any directly demeaning comments about gender (or other social categories). Through incivility, a person can be demeaning towards women while still maintaining a self-image of someone who believes in gender equality, as incivility can be rationalised by focusing on flaws in the uncivil individual’s personality or use of language, both by others and by the individual in question, e.g. “he struggles a bit with social relationships” or “I expressed myself a little clumsily”. This rationalisation can also occur by accusing the victim of such incivility of being “over-sensitive”. The uncivil individual may be aware that sexism, the use of offensive stereotypes or promoting discrimination is neither appropriate nor lawful, and may therefore instead use uncivil behaviour in order to avoid detection (Cortina et al. 2013).

Incivility may be viewed as a type of “daily hassles” that lack drama and intensity, but it can still have serious effects (Cortina 2008). Researchers have found that incivility leads to both stress and general dissatisfaction, which in turn can lead to reduced workplace engagement and increased staff turnover. These negative consequences apply not only to those who are subjected to incivility but also those who witness it (Cortina et al. 2013). Most studies have focused primarily on the victims of incivility, secondarily on the perpetrator and only to a small extent on the organisation where the incivility occurs. Employees with less power and influence are more exposed to incivility, while employees with more power have greater opportunities to be uncivil without risking any consequences (Agarwal et al. 2023).



# Summary of the Research and Collaboration Programme's survey on gender-based violence and sexual harassment

The aim of the Research and Collaboration Programme was to increase knowledge about gender-based violence and sexual harassment in the Swedish higher education sector, in order to contribute to a better study and work environment in the university sector in Sweden. The initiative was a result of the #MeToo movement in the autumn of 2017, part of which was a movement involving testimonies of sexual harassment within academia. The programme was started in 2019 by Karolinska Institutet, KTH, Malmö University and the Swedish Secretariat for Gender Research at the University of Gothenburg. The implementation of a national survey was a prioritised issue within the programme, and this survey was carried out in 2021 in collaboration with Statistics Sweden (SCB). The aim of the survey was to establish research-based knowledge on the prevalence and consequences of gender-based violence, including sexual harassment, in order to contribute to the development of preventive measures. The survey was directed at students, PhD students and employees and is the first sector-wide study to be conducted in Sweden. A report on the results of the study was published and presented in May 2022 (Research and Collaboration Programme 2022). The higher education institutions included in the survey were offered the opportunity to order tables of results for a selection of the questions. KTH did this, and it is this data that will be presented in this report. As a background to the KTH data, a summary of the report for the entire sector is presented here. To obtain a more detailed description of the method and results, we recommend reading the report in its entirety (Research and Collaboration Programme 2022).

## **Prevalence and consequences of gender-based violence and sexual harassment in the Swedish higher education sector**

The survey was conducted in May-July 2021 and was directed at employees, PhD students and students at 38 higher education institutions in Sweden. Sexual harassment was examined in several ways, including through the use of two previously tested and proven scales. The survey also contained questions regarding work environment, health, bullying and incivility. The survey was completed

by 38,918 respondents, of which 18,582 were students, 5,256 were PhD students and 15,080 were employees, which corresponds to a total response rate of 31.9 percent. 59.6 percent of the respondents were women, and 40.4 percent were men. The results show that, in response to a direct question, four percent of respondents state that they have been subjected to sexual harassment in the past 12 months. Young people, students and women report the highest level of exposure to sexual harassment. A higher percentage, eight percent, have been aware that other people have been subjected to sexual harassment in the past 12 months.

Another way to measure prevalence of sexual harassment, which was used in the survey, is to combine a number of behaviours into a common metric without specification of a time period. Using this method of measuring prevalence, the study shows that 38 percent of the respondents have experienced one of these behaviours at least once. Female PhD students report the highest level of exposure using this method of measuring prevalence. The most common behaviours reported were asking questions about the person's private life, staring and making comments about the person's appearance or age in an uncomfortable manner. A high percentage of the respondents have experienced incivility. Common forms of perceived incivility include ignoring the person's statements and opinions, and interrupting the person or "speaking over" them. Of the respondents who stated that they have been subjected to sexual harassment, only eight percent of the men and 14 percent of the women have filed a formal report about the incident. For women, the most common reason given for not reporting the incident was that "it wasn't that serious". For men, the most common explanation was that "I dealt with it myself". In comparison to those who have not been subjected to undesired sexual attention, the respondents (both women and men) who reported having been subjected to undesired sexual attention indicate worse general health, higher stress level and higher degree of burnout. Respondents who reported that they have been subjected to sexual harassment indicate to a higher degree that they are considering quitting their work/studies.

# Gender-based violence at KTH

We will now move on from the findings of the national report for the entire Swedish higher education sector, and proceed to a presentation of the results for KTH. The quantitative results in this part of the report come from tables from Statistics Sweden, reported as percentage estimates. The percentage estimates are calculated for the entire population, i.e. the percentages are estimates of what the situation looks like for the entire university, even though not everyone has responded. If the number of responses to a response option for a question is less than five, these responses have not been included. The same applies if fewer than 20 people have answered a question requiring a yes/no response. We will begin by presenting the results from the questions on incivility, after which we will proceed to the questions on sexual harassment.

## Widespread incivility at KTH: women most exposed

In the survey, the questions on incivility were based on the Workplace Incivility Scale (Cortina et al. 2001; 2013, see Appendix 1 for the original questions). Table 1 shows the prevalence of incivility at KTH, with a breakdown between men and women, as well as non-occurrence (“never”) for the entire group. The prevalence for all employees varies between 6-54% depending on the type of incivility. The least common form of incivility is having been targeted with anger outbursts or temper tantrums, while the most common forms of incivility are having been interrupted or “spoken over” and not having attention paid to one’s statements or opinions. This pattern is similar to the most common forms of incivility in the sector as a whole. It is apparent that the most common behaviours are those that are also the most ambiguous, while the more direct and blatant

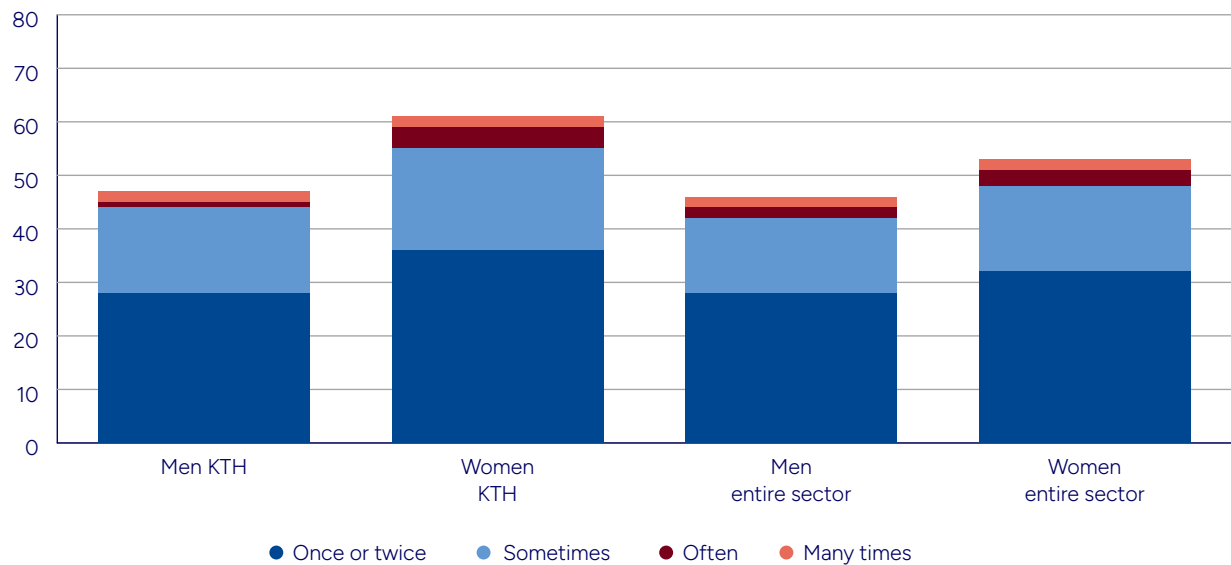
types of behaviour are less common, which is in line with previous research (Cortina et al. 2001). Researchers have explained the prevalence of incivility as being a reflection of the fact that universities are becoming increasingly corporate in nature, which has led to job dissatisfaction and experiences of an aggressive work environment and injustice (Heffernan & Bosetti 2021). Table 1 shows that women at KTH experience more incivility than men at KTH, and that the most common types of behaviour are the same as those mentioned above. It is also common for women to experience the behaviour “doubted your judgement on a matter for which you had responsibility”. Diagrams 1-7 show that women at KTH are more exposed to incivility than women in the sector as a whole. The biggest difference between women at KTH and women in the entire sector concerns the behaviour “doubted your judgement on a matter for which you had responsibility” (diagram 3). The first four forms of uncivil behaviour, i.e. “paid little attention to your statements or showed little interest in your opinions”, “interrupted or spoke over you”, “doubted your judgement on a matter for which you had responsibility” and “questioned your competence”, can all be viewed as forms of epistemic discrimination, i.e. actions suffered by individuals in their position as epistemic agents, that is, as individuals who can acquire knowledge (Puddifoot 2017).

The results show that incivility is widespread in general and, when it comes to modern discrimination against women, this occurs to a greater extent at KTH than in the sector as a whole, which can be explained by the fact that the risk of being subjected to incivility is greater in male-dominated professions, organisations and working groups (Cortina et al. 2013).

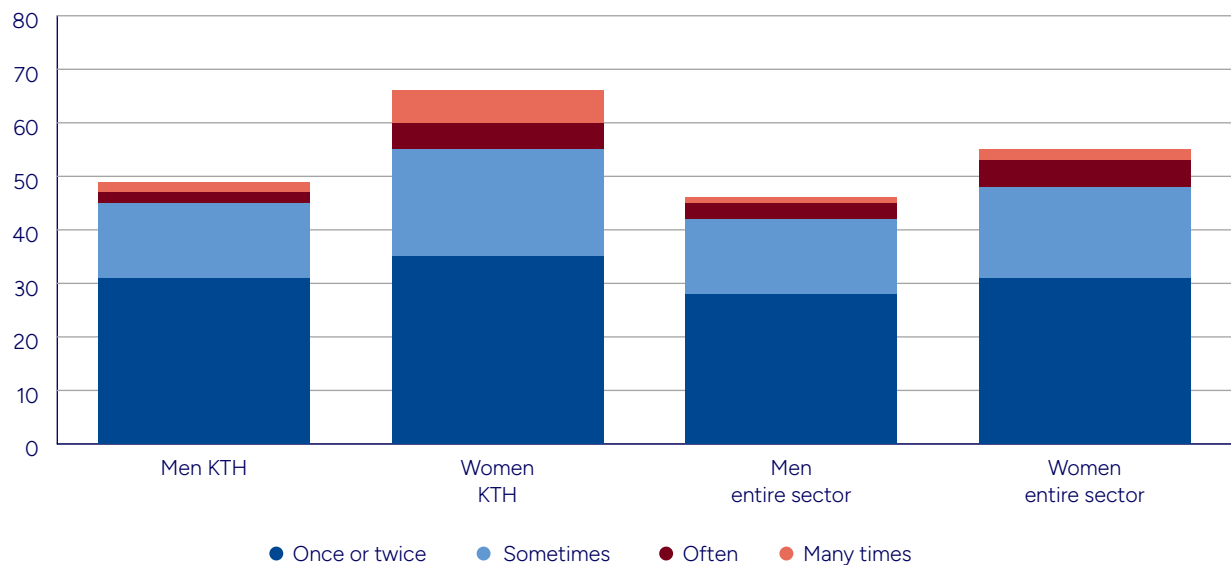
**Table 1. Prevalence of different forms of incivility at KTH. Men and women. Percent.**

In the past 12 months, were you ever in a situation in which any of your supervisors or co-workers / your teachers or fellow students...	Never	Once or twice		Sometimes		Often		Many times	
	Total	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F
...paid little attention to your statements or showed little interest in your opinions	48	28	36	16	19	1	4	2	2
...interrupted or “spoke over” you	46	31	35	14	20	2	5	2	6
...doubted your judgement on a matter for which you had responsibility	61	21	29	10	14	2	3	2	2
...questioned your competence	72	16	25	5	9	1	3	1	2
...rated you lower than you deserve on an evaluation	69	20	23	5	8	2	2	1	1
...addressed you in an unprofessional manner, in front of others or in private	76	13	23	4	5	1	..	2	..
...ignored you or avoided talking to you	75	16	19	4	9	2	2	1	1
...made jokes at your expense	72	16	18	9	8	2	..	1	..
...made insulting or disrespectful remarks about you	86	8	16	2	2	..	..	..	..
...gave you hostile looks or stared or sneered at you	85	8	13	3	5	..	..	..	..
...targeted you with anger outbursts or temper tantrums	94	4	7	..	1	..	..	..	..
...yelled or swore at you	93	5	6	1	1	..	..	..	..

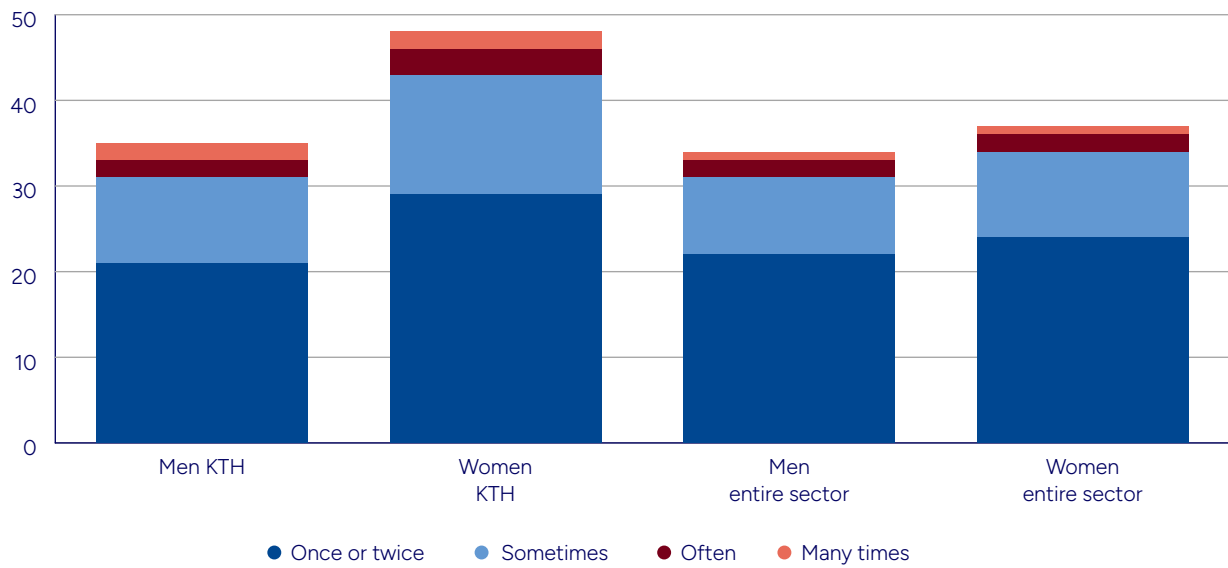
**Diagram 1. In the past 12 months, were you ever in a situation in which any of your supervisors or co-workers / your teachers or fellow students paid little attention to your statements or showed little interest in your opinions?**  
Comparison men-women KTH and the entire sector. Percent.



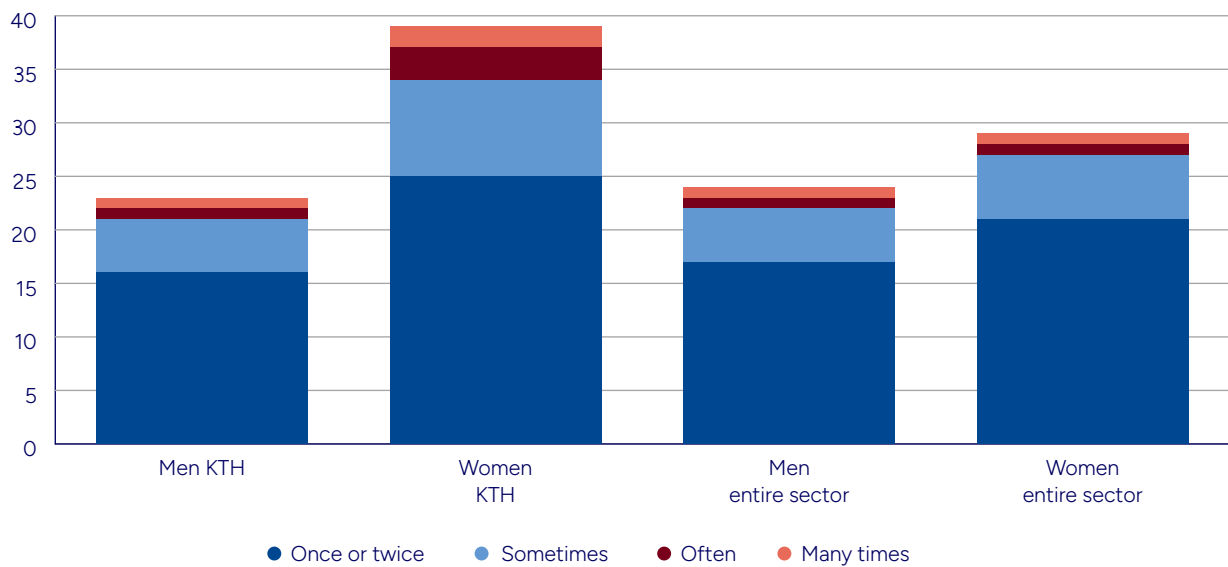
**Diagram 2. In the past 12 months, were you ever in a situation in which any of your supervisors or co-workers / your teachers or fellow students interrupted or "spoke over" you?**  
Comparison men-women KTH and the entire sector. Percent.



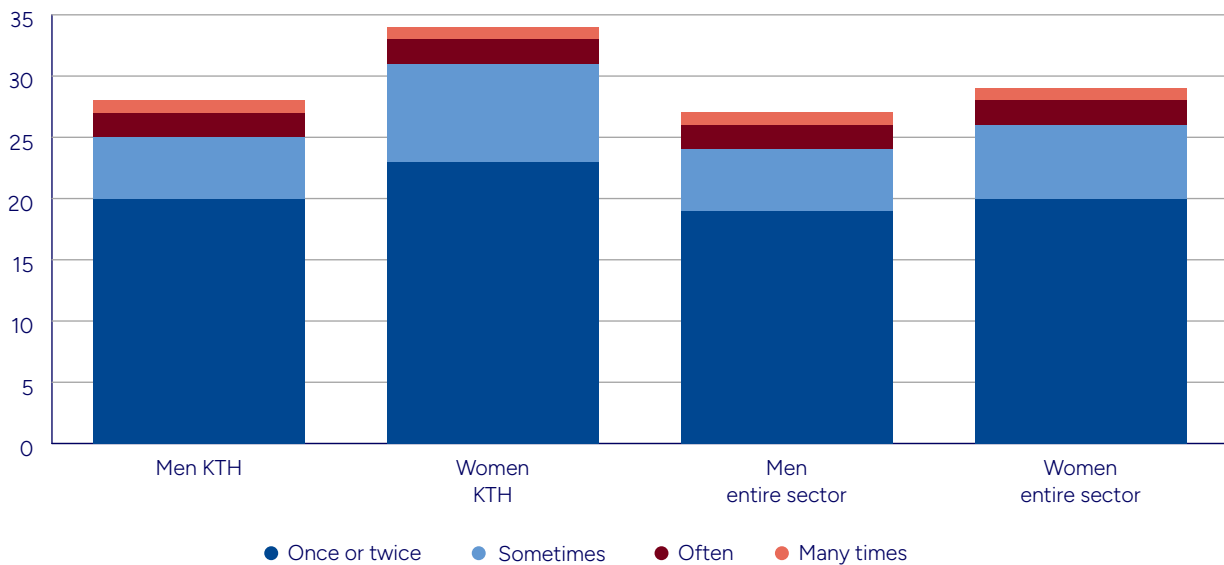
**Diagram 3. In the past 12 months, were you ever in a situation in which any of your supervisors or co-workers / your teachers or fellow students doubted your judgement on a matter for which you had responsibility?**  
Comparison men-women KTH and the entire sector. Percent.



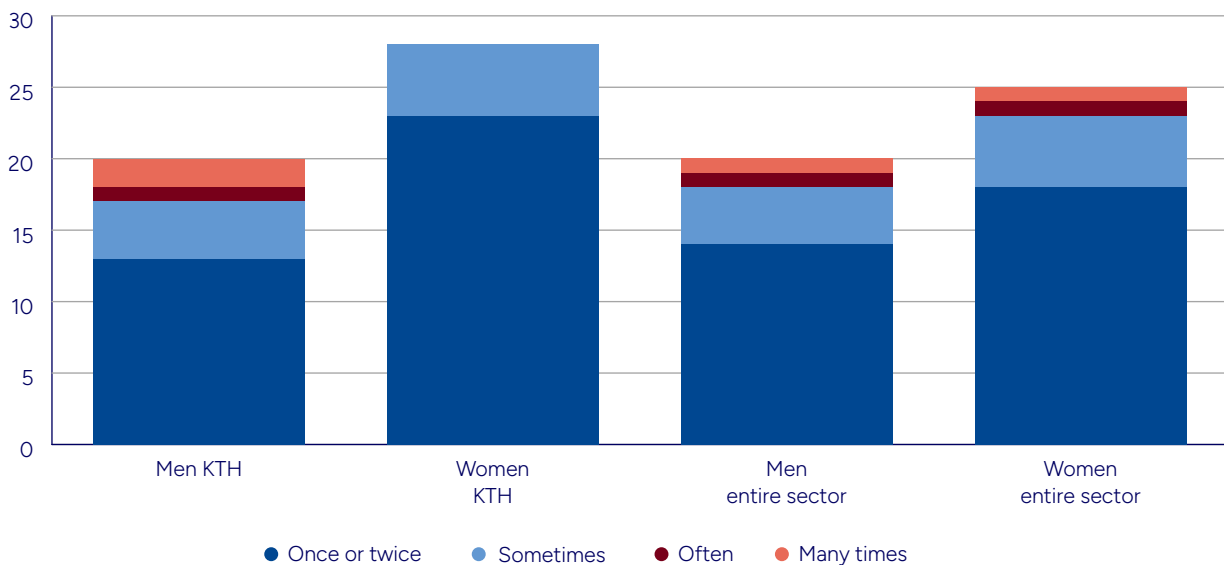
**Diagram 4. In the past 12 months, were you ever in a situation in which any of your supervisors or co-workers / your teachers or fellow students questioned your competence?**  
Comparison men-women KTH and the entire sector. Percent.



**Diagram 5. In the past 12 months, were you ever in a situation in which any of your supervisors or co-workers / your teachers or fellow students rated you lower than you deserved on an evaluation?**  
Comparison men-women KTH and the entire sector. Percent.

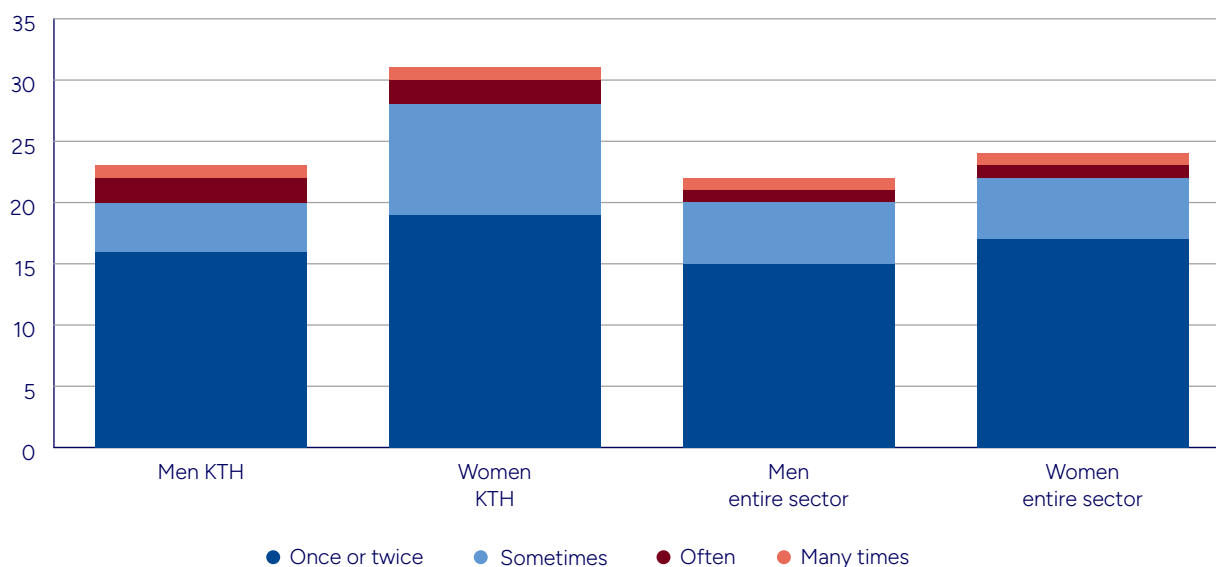


**Diagram 6. In the past 12 months, were you ever in a situation in which any of your supervisors or co-workers / your teachers or fellow students addressed you in an unprofessional manner, in front of others or in private?**  
Comparison men-women KTH and the entire sector. Percent.



**Diagram 7. In the past 12 months, were you ever in a situation in which any of your supervisors or co-workers / your teachers or fellow students ignored you or avoided talking to you?**

Comparison men-women KTH and the entire sector. Percent.



## Female students and employees have the least power and lower status, while male employees have most power and highest status.

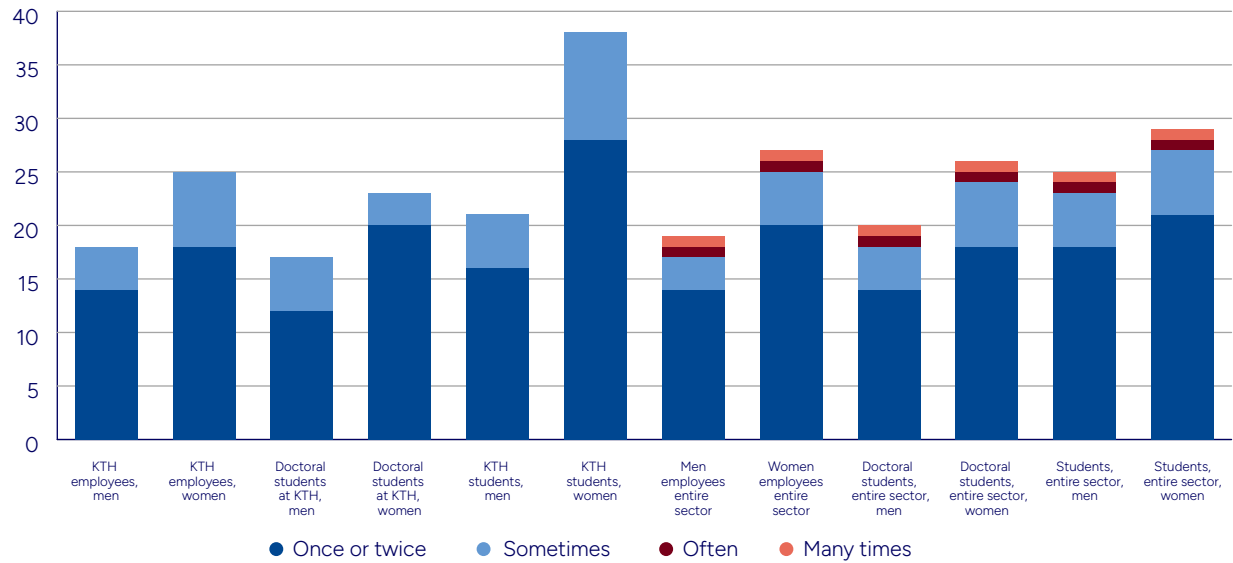
A person’s position in the organisation could potentially play a role in determining who experiences incivility, as incivility involves a power dimension; those with less power/lower status in the organisation may be more exposed to incivility than those with more power/higher status (compare Kabat-Farr, Settles & Cortina 2020). Diagrams 8-14 show that the most vulnerable position at KTH involves female students and female employees, who are roughly equally exposed to incivility. These groups exhibit the highest percentages in relation to most questions: they are interrupted and spoken over, their knowledge and competence are questioned, they feel that they receive a worse evaluation than they deserve, attention is not paid to their statements or opinions, and they are addressed in an unprofessional manner. Male employees are the group that runs the least risk of being subjected to incivility, i.e. the group that reports the lowest percentage in relation to most questions. Given these results, we can state that female students and employees have the least power and lower status, while male employees have the most power and the highest status. Even male PhD students are more exposed to incivility than male employees, which illustrates yet another imbalance of power. If we compare the KTH results with the results for the entire sector, we see that female students at KTH are more exposed to incivility

than female students in the sector as a whole. They report higher percentages in relation to all questions, while the results vary more for the categories of female employees and female PhD students. For men, there is no difference between KTH and the sector in general in terms of being exposed to incivility. Women in STEM (science, technology, engineering and mathematics) are often subjected to discrimination (Blackburn 2017), which can be explained with the concept of “threatening minority”. This concept means that being in a numerical minority is only a problem if the minority is perceived to pose a threat to men’s dominance and power (see also Kanter 1977 on effects of being in the majority and minority in relation to gender and power in organisations). When men feel threatened, they react with an exaggerated form of masculinity (McLaughlin, Uggen & Blackstone 2012) which can include aggressiveness and violence (Willer et al. 2013).

Diagrams 8-14 show that those in the most vulnerable positions at KTH are female students and female employees.

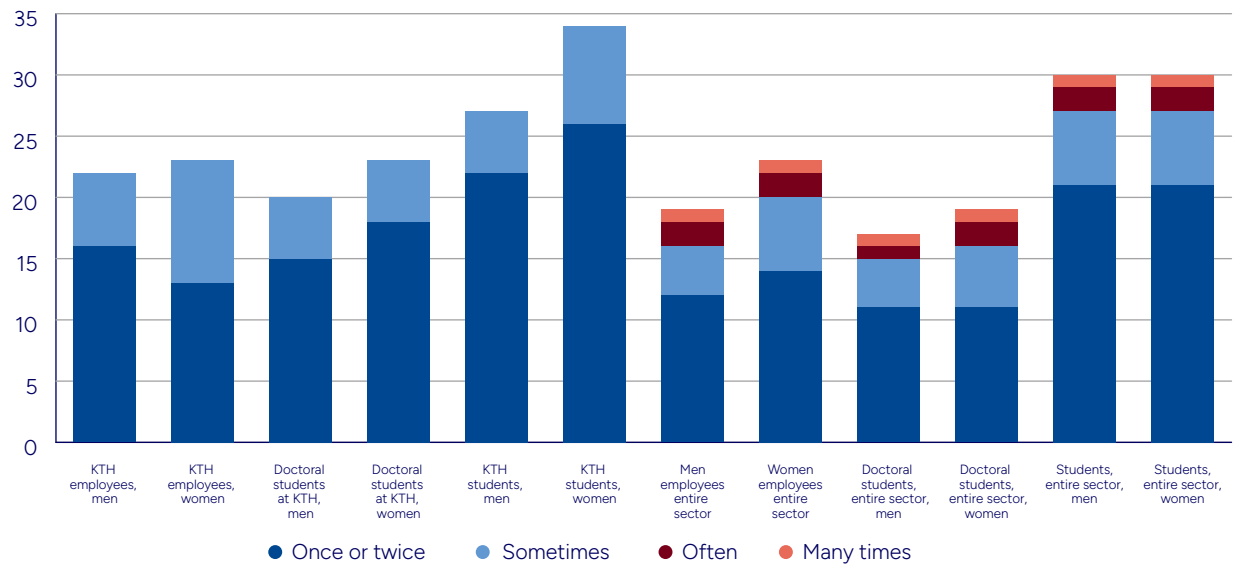
**Diagram 8. In the past 12 months, were you ever in a situation in which any of your supervisors or co-workers / your teachers or fellow students questioned your competence?**

Comparison men-women in different positions, KTH and the entire sector. Percent.

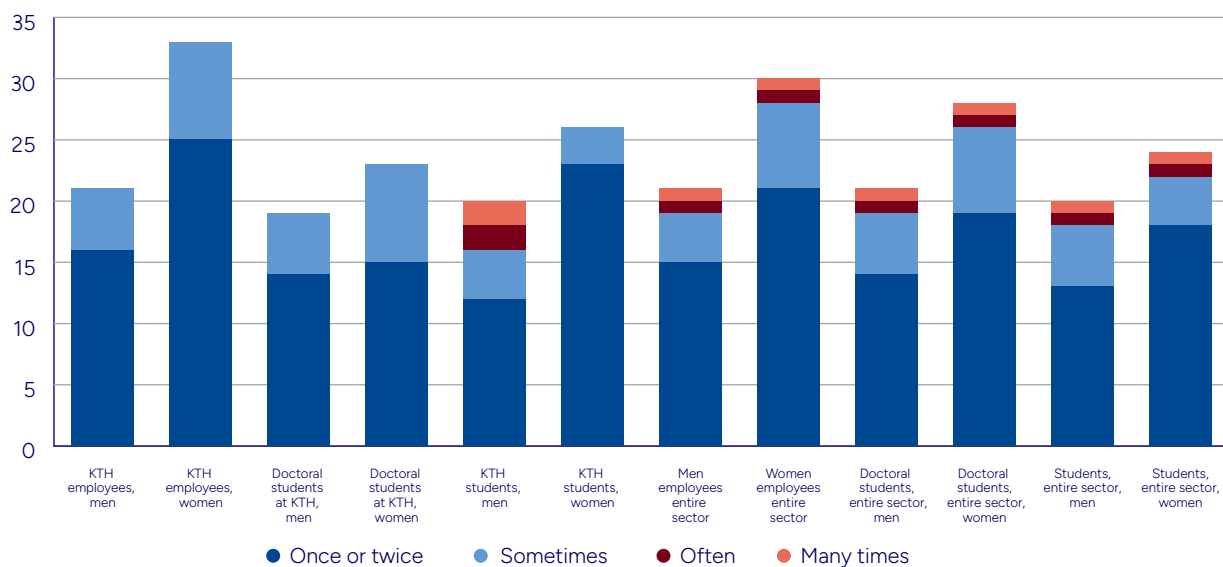


**Diagram 9. In the past 12 months, were you ever in a situation in which any of your supervisors or co-workers / your teachers or fellow students rated you lower than you deserved on an evaluation?**

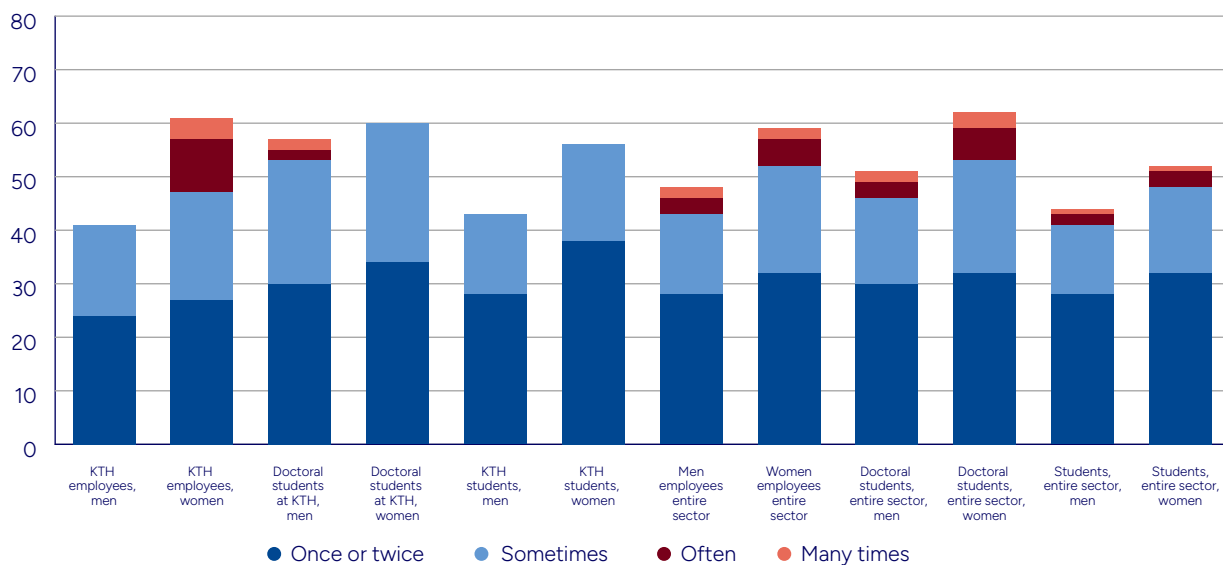
Comparison men-women in different positions, KTH and the entire sector. Percent.



**Diagram 10. In the past 12 months, were you ever in a situation in which any of your supervisors or co-workers / your teachers or fellow students addressed you in an unprofessional manner, in front of others or in private?**  
Comparison men-women in different positions, KTH and the entire sector. Percent.



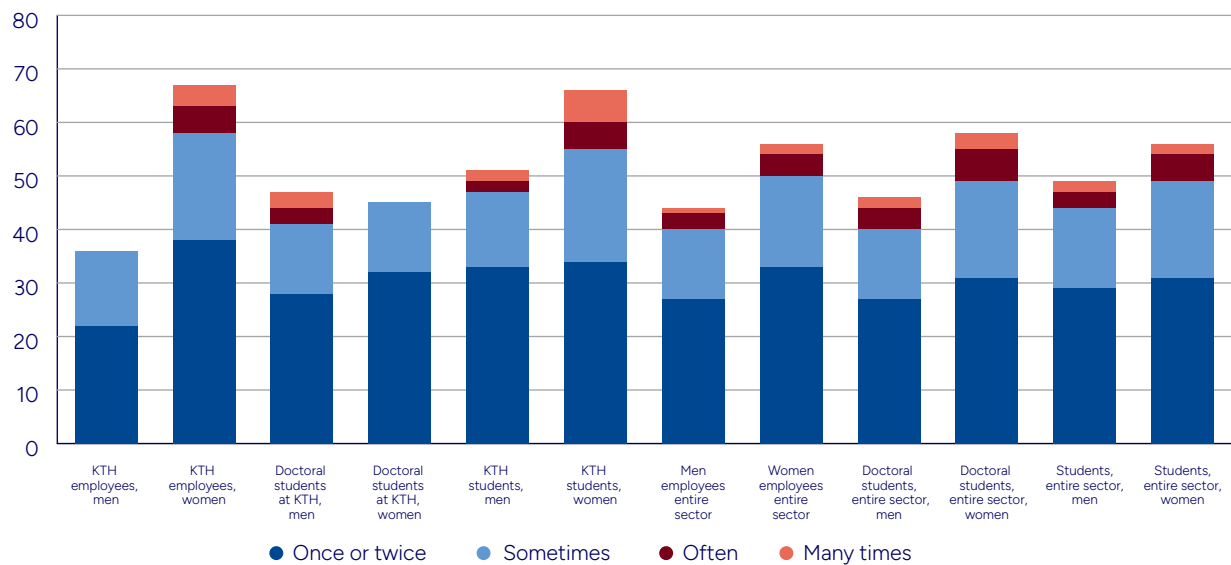
**Diagram 11. In the past 12 months, were you ever in a situation in which any of your supervisors or co-workers / your teachers or fellow students paid little attention to your statements or showed little interest in your opinions?**  
Comparison men-women in different positions, KTH and the entire sector. Percent.





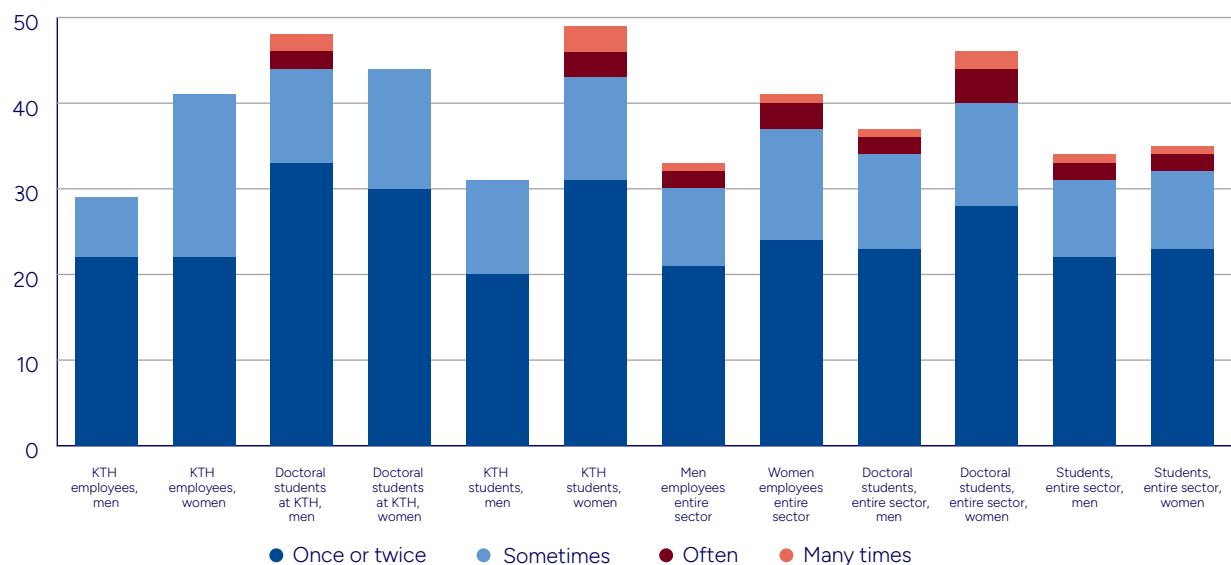
**Diagram 12. In the past 12 months, were you ever in a situation in which any of your supervisors or co-workers / your teachers or fellow students interrupted or “spoke over” you?**

Comparison men-women in different positions, KTH and the entire sector. Percent.

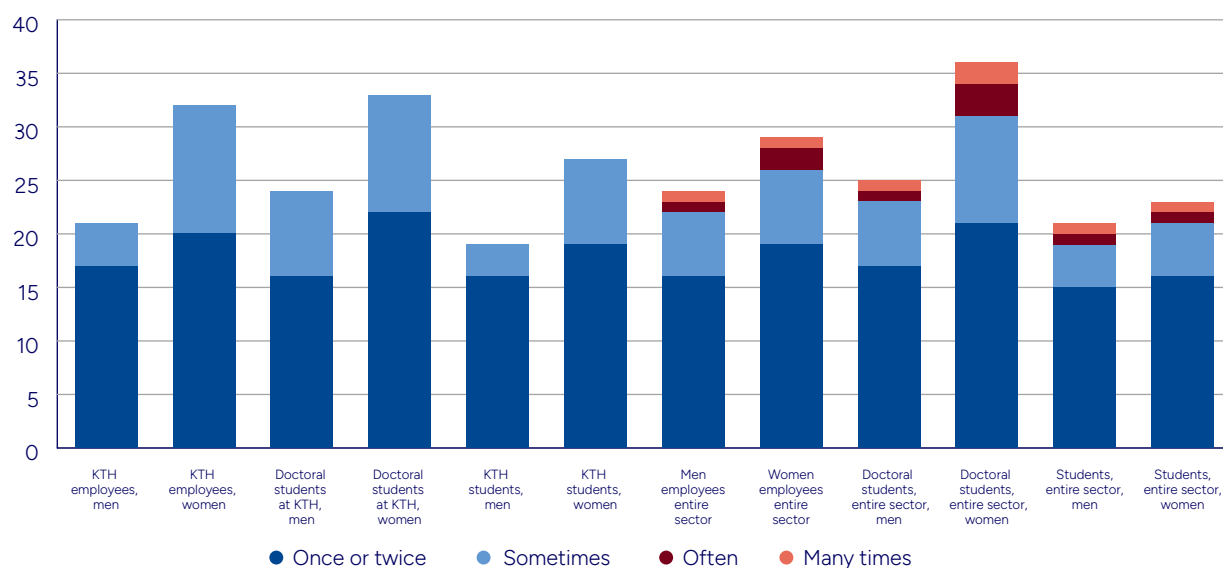


**Diagram 13. In the past 12 months, were you ever in a situation in which any of your supervisors or co-workers / your teachers or fellow students doubted your judgement on a matter for which you had responsibility?**

Comparison men-women in different positions, KTH and the entire sector. Percent.



**Diagram 14. In the past 12 months, were you ever in a situation in which any of your supervisors or co-workers / your teachers or fellow students ignored you or avoided talking to you?**  
Comparison men-women in different positions, KTH and the entire sector. Percent.



### Sexual harassment at KTH: female PhD students and students most exposed

To measure sexual harassment, questions from different tools were used in the survey; a yes/no question from the survey tool Copenhagen Psycho-Social Questionnaire, COPSOQ, and questions about specific behaviours, based on a study on sexual harassment and violence in the EU (Latcheva 2017). Table 2 shows the survey results for the yes/no question from COPSOQ. We can see that the percentages for female employees and PhD students at KTH differ somewhat compared to the entire sector. For male employees and students, there were too few responses to be included in the statistics. The wording of the question leaves the definition of sexual harassment up to the respondent. Another way to measure sexual harassment is to ask more specific questions, i.e. the person formulating the questions determines what constitutes harassment, often with the support of legislation. In research, this method is referred to as the behavioural experiences method (Lengnick-Hall 1995).

**Table 2. In the past 12 months, have you been subjected to undesired sexual attention at your place of work/study?**  
Comparison KTH and the entire sector. Gender and position.

	Yes (KTH)	Yes (entire sector)
<b>Total</b>	<b>3%</b>	<b>4%</b>
Men, employees	..	2%
Women, employees	5%	3%
Men, PhD students	3%	2%
Women, PhD students	6%	4%
Men, students	..	3%
Women, students	6%	6%

**Table 3. Prevalence of different forms of undesired sexual attention (%) at KTH.**  
Men and women.

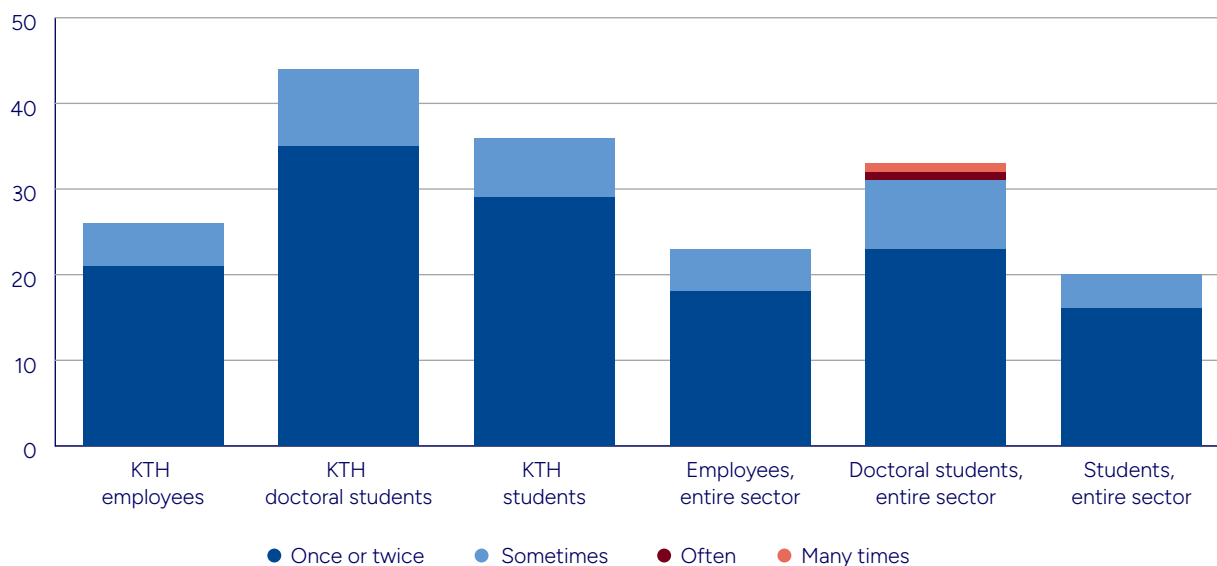
In your work/studies, has anyone ever...	Once/twice (%)		Sometimes (%)	
	M	F	M	F
...asked questions about your private life in an uncomfortable or disconcerting manner?	15	28	2	7
...looked at you in an uncomfortable or disconcerting manner?	9	27	2	8
...made comments about your appearance or age in an uncomfortable or disconcerting manner?	11	25	2	7
...made sexual innuendos in an uncomfortable or disconcerting manner?	5	19	1	4
...touched you in a sexual way, e.g. by grabbing, holding, kissing, hugging or caressing you in an uncomfortable or disconcerting manner?	3	13		1
...made sexual invitations or asked to meet outside of work in an uncomfortable or disconcerting manner?	2	12		3
...contacted you via email, text message or social media in an uncomfortable or disconcerting manner?	3	11		2
...sent you sexually explicit content via email, text message or social media in an uncomfortable or disconcerting manner?	1	3		
...sent, given or shown you sexually explicit pictures, photos or gifts in an uncomfortable or disconcerting manner?		2		
...shown you pornographic images or videos?	3	2		
...indecently exposed themselves to you?	1	1		

Table 3 shows the prevalence when the questions are more specified. The questions used are based on a major prevalence study in the EU conducted by the European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights (FRA) in 2014. The FRA survey contained 11 forms of sexual harassment, linked to unwelcome or intrusive behaviour, and was carried out in the form of a structured interview. However, some of the most sensitive questions were asked in a face-to-face survey. The original questions can be found in Appendix 2. In the survey conducted in the Swedish higher education sector, the response options were modified to be consistent with the response options for other questions in the survey (Research and Collaboration Programme 2022). Table 3 shows that the most common types of behaviour to which women are subjected at KTH are being asked questions about their private life in an uncomfortable or disconcerting manner, being looked at in an uncomfortable or disconcerting manner, and receiving comments about their appearance or age. These are also the three most common types of behaviour experienced by women in the entire sector, although the percentages are lower (Research and Collaboration Programme 2022). The same behaviours are also the most common types of behaviour experienced by men, but the percentages are lower. For men, the percentages at KTH and in the sector as a whole are very similar. When the questions are specified in different ways and omit a limitation in time, the

Around 14 percent of women at KTH report experiences of someone touching them physically, e.g. by grabbing, holding, kissing, hugging or caressing them in a disconcerting manner. This is a higher percentage compared to the result for the sector as a whole.

percentage of respondents who state that they have experienced such behaviour increases in comparison with the direct question about sexual harassment during a certain limited period of time. It is worth noting that 14 percent of women at KTH report experiences of someone touching them physically, e.g. by grabbing, holding, kissing, hugging or caressing them in a disconcerting manner. This is a higher percentage compared to the result for the sector as a whole (six percent). These expressions of undesired sexual attention cannot be considered ambiguous and commonplace – they are clearly physically intrusive and ought rather be categorised as molestation and abuse.

**Diagram 15. In your work/studies, has anyone ever asked questions about your private life in an uncomfortable or disconcerting manner? Comparison of women in different positions, KTH and the entire sector. Percent.**

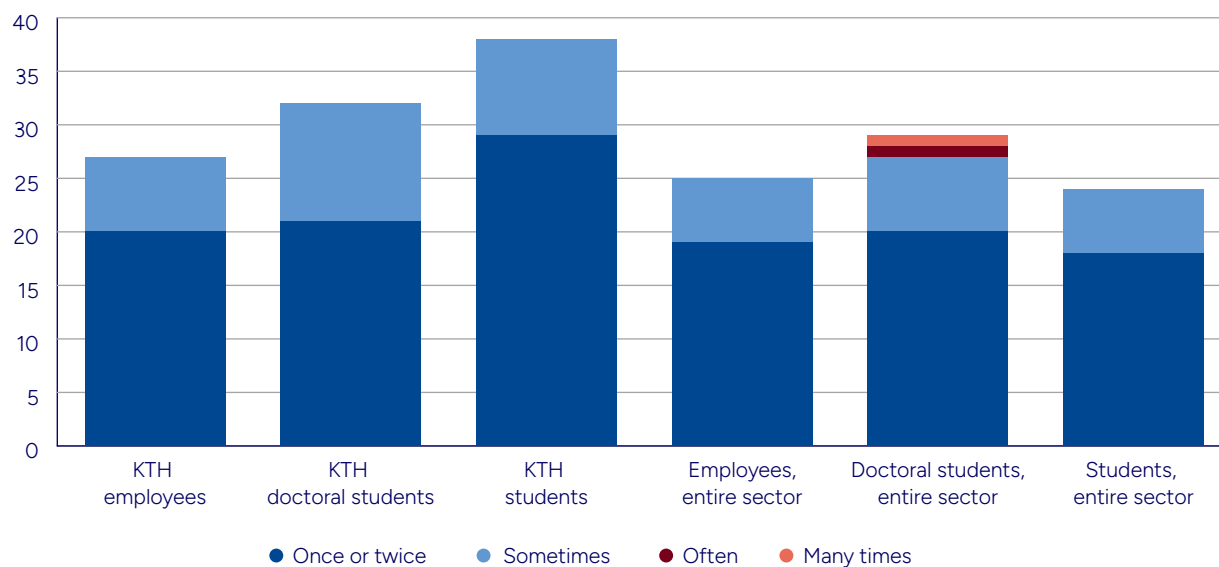


### The importance of gender distribution, position and culture for women's vulnerability

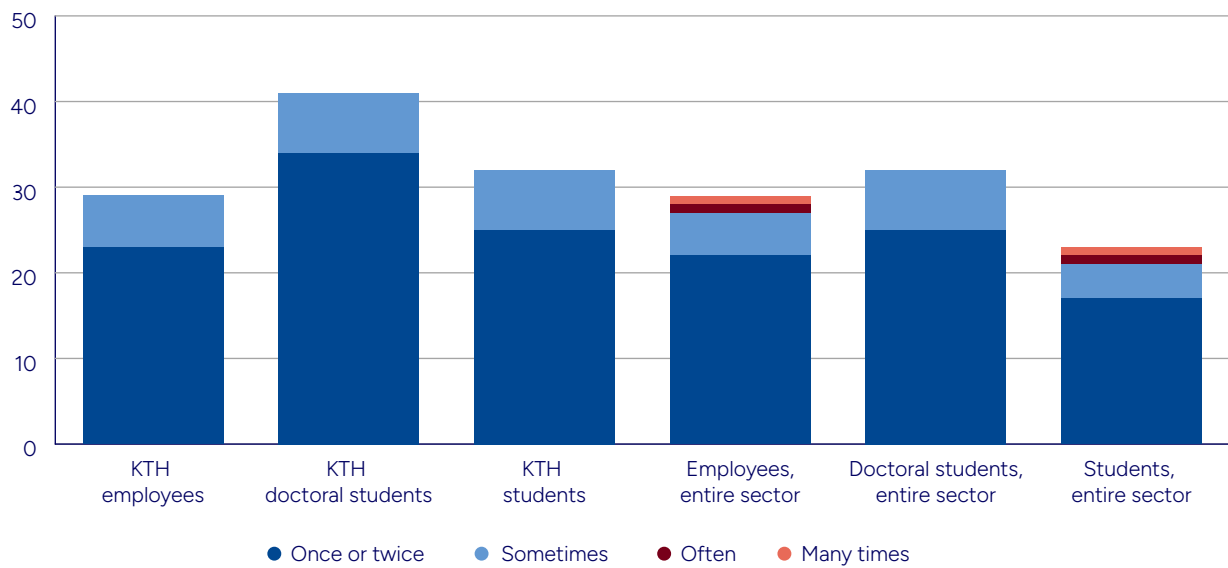
Diagrams 15-20 show prevalence among women broken down by position, both at KTH and in the sector as a whole. We can see that PhD students and students are the most vulnerable groups at KTH. PhD students are also a vulnerable group in the sector as a whole, and students are more vulnerable at KTH than in the sector as a whole. This is consistent with studies in which it is shown that groups in numerical imbalance, and groups defined as deviant by the organisational culture, are more vulnerable (Kanter 1977; O'Connor et al. 2021). At KTH, this is shown in the results for women, postdocs, PhD students and students. We see that both female students and female PhD students can be said to constitute a threatened minority. Other explanations for the prevalence could include acceptance of sexual harassment in the dominant organisational culture, which means that these behaviours have been normalised and are not considered a problem in certain environments. Such cultural acceptance can also be linked to the fact that so few incidents of harassment are formally reported. Perceptions that filing a report is associated with risk, that reports are not taken seriously and that reports rarely lead

to any action being taken against perpetrators, can be interpreted as effects of acceptance in the organisational culture. Other factors that are known to promote prevalence of harassment include the absence of guidelines regarding the handling of sexual harassment, ambiguities regarding how reports should be filed, lack of sanctions, and managers/supervisors who do not care (Cortina & Areguin 2021). Yet another explanation could be that the organisational culture is characterised by a dysfunctional competitive culture, with norms that reward ruthless competition, strength and endurance while de-prioritising good relationships (Berdahl et al. 2018a; Glick, Berdahl & Alonso 2018; Matos, O'Neill & Lei 2018). Researchers in social psychology refer to such environments as masculinity contest cultures (Berdahl, Glick & Cooper 2018b). In masculinity contest cultures, all employees, regardless of gender, are forced to embrace the norms included in the culture, which fuels hostility that becomes an indicator of dominance and excellence. The combination of these factors creates conditions that breed sexual harassment, and it is those who deviate the most from conventional heterosexual masculinity that suffer the worst treatment (Cortina & Areguin 2021).

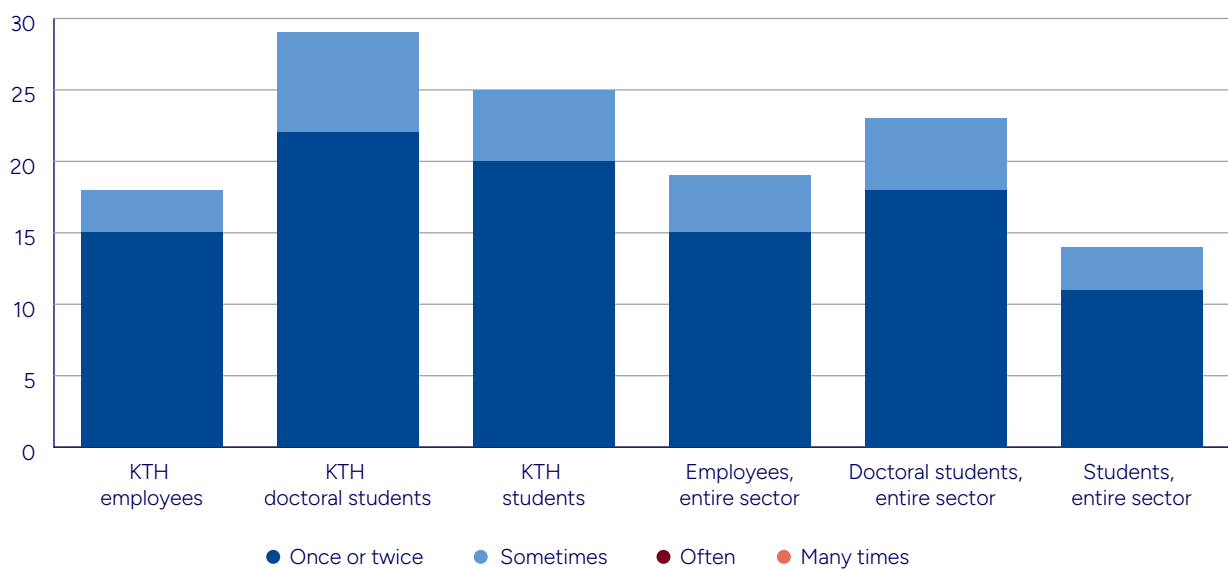
**Diagram 16. In your work/studies, has anyone ever looked at you in an uncomfortable or disconcerting manner?** Comparison of women in different positions, KTH and the entire sector. Percent.



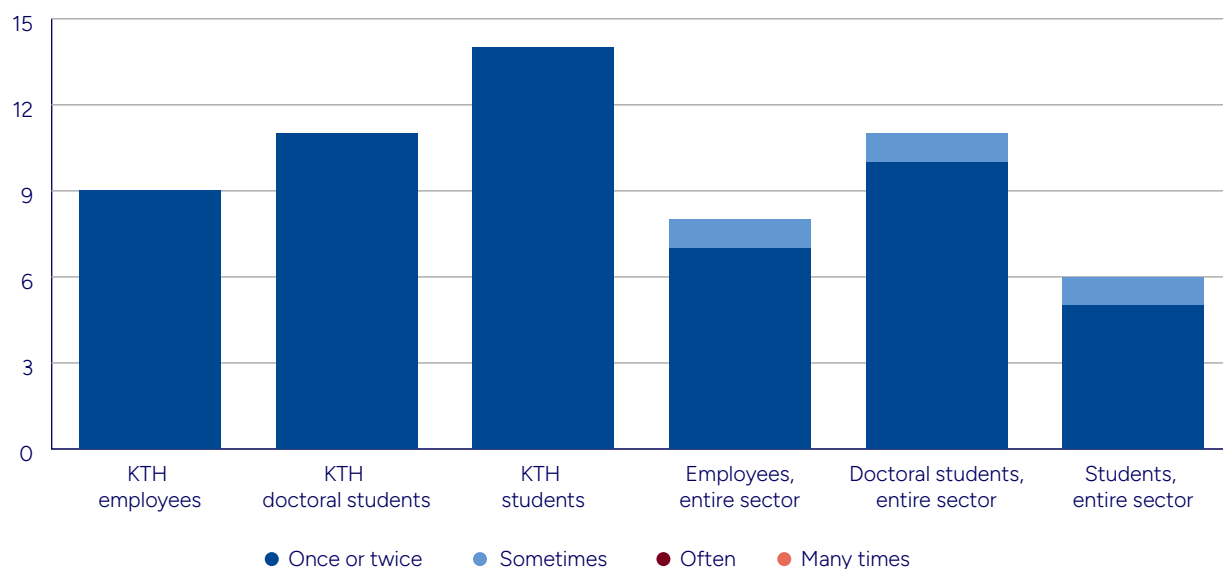
**Diagram 17. In your work/studies, has anyone ever made comments about your appearance or age in an uncomfortable or disconcerting manner?** Comparison of women in different positions, KTH and the entire sector. Percent.



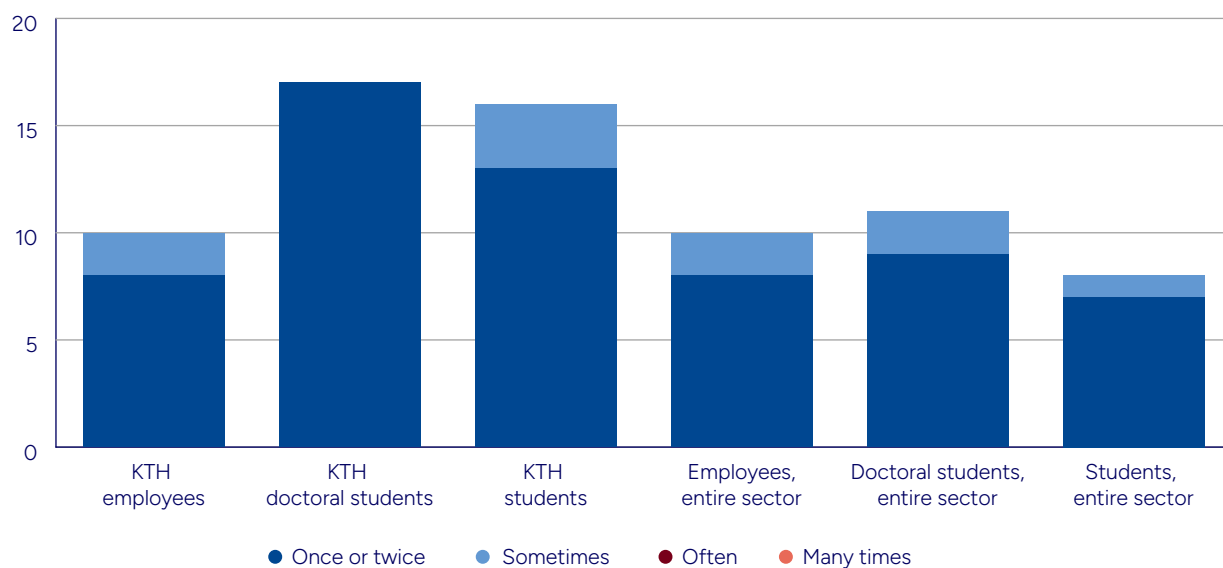
**Diagram 18. In your work/studies, has anyone ever made sexual innuendos in an uncomfortable or disconcerting manner?** Comparison of women in different positions, KTH and the entire sector. Percent.



**Diagram 19. In your work/studies, has anyone ever touched you in a sexual way, e.g. by grabbing, holding, kissing, hugging or caressing you in an uncomfortable or disconcerting manner? Comparison of women in different positions, KTH and the entire sector. Percent.**



**Diagram 20. In your work/studies, has anyone ever made sexual invitations or asked to meet outside of work in an uncomfortable or disconcerting manner? Comparison of women in different positions, KTH and the entire sector. Percent.**

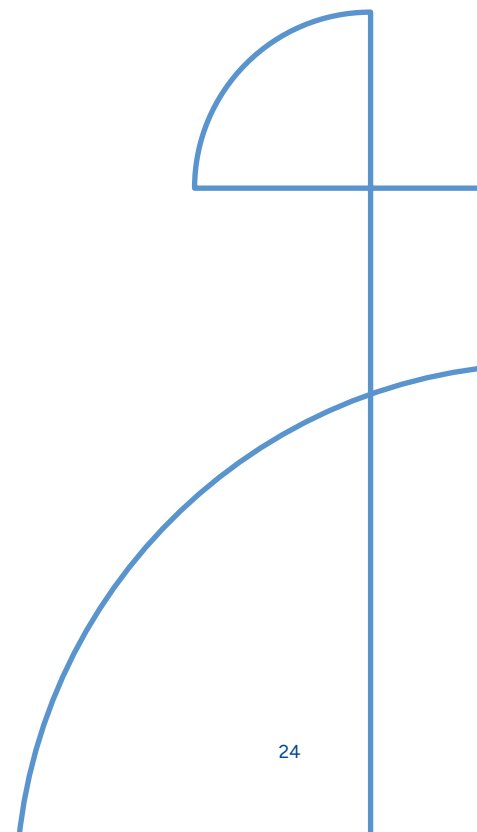
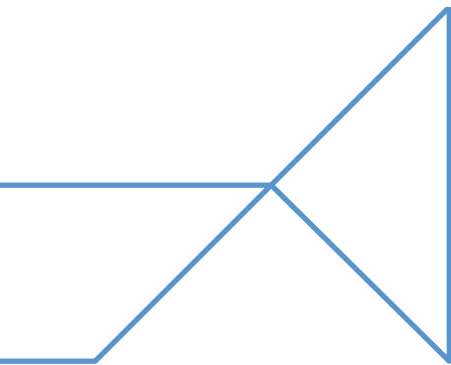


Women at KTH in general, and female students in particular, are affected two-fold; they are exposed both to rudeness and sexual harassment, both of which can cover a range of different actions.

In summary, we can state that women at KTH in general, and female students in particular, are doubly affected; they are subjected to both incivility and sexual harassment, both of which can entail a range of different types of behaviour. Therefore, in the preventive work aimed at achieving change, it is important not to focus too much on results in relation to individual questions or issues, but rather to understand and analyse the overall result regarding both incivility and sexual harassment.

To achieve meaningful change, it is necessary to understand that discrimination consists of a range of different types of behaviour, that these behaviours affect a minority that is perceived as threatening, and that a certain culture contributes to the prevalence of such behaviours.

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# Seminar with PhD students on gender-based violence at KTH and Chalmers

Based on the results of the study on gender-based violence in the Swedish higher education sector at university level, a digital seminar was arranged in November 2022 for PhD students in collaboration between researchers and administrators from KTH Equality Office and Genie at Chalmers. The background to the seminar was the fact that these two technical universities could see a number of similarities in the results on gender-based violence for their own institutions compared to the results for the entire sector. One of the most striking similarities was the finding that PhD students, in particular women, as a group appeared to be more exposed to gender-based violence compared to the sector as a whole. The seminar, which was held in English, consisted of group exercises with the aim of supplementing the survey results with qualitative examples of how experiences of sexual harassment and vulnerability can be expressed in concrete descriptions at the two universities. Initially, the results of the study for KTH and Chalmers were presented with focus on the situation of PhD students. A total of 83 PhD students participated from the two universities. The work involving the group exercises then began, for which the participants were divided into smaller groups with a mixture of PhD students from both universities. The participants were asked to discuss issues they recognised from the results, and to highlight their own examples of experiences of exposure to gender-based violence. The participants and seminar leaders then regathered to share details of the experiences and reflections identified during the work in the nine groups. 56 PhD students took part in this final part of the seminar.

It was apparent from the reporting of the work done in the groups that the participants had primarily focused on issues concerning the types of situations in which sexual harassment occurs, and what the relationship looks like between the person who subjects someone to harassment and the person who is subjected to such behaviour, as well as the different types of uncertainties that surround the issue. It was more unusual for participants to describe concrete examples of experiences of sexual harassment. On the other hand, a large part of the time spent working in the groups was used to discuss the types of measures that should be initiated at the universities in order to reduce the problem. A likely interpretation is that the form of the seminar was not suitable for talking in detail about one's own experiences of exposure to gender-based violence. There were many participants in the exercise from two different universities, which probably led to a

At a seminar in 2022 for PhD students, researchers and case managers from the KTH Equality Office and Genie at Chalmers, the results on gender-based incivility were discussed. At the seminar, the questions that were mainly discussed were in the kind of situations in which sexual harassment occurs and the relationship between the perpetrator and the person exposed to incivility, as well as the different areas of uncertainty surrounding the issue. They also discussed which measures should be initiated at universities to reduce problems linked to gender-based incivility.

certain degree of caution in terms of sharing experiences that were perceived as difficult and revealing. In addition, the exercise was carried out digitally, which may have enhanced the need to talk about the phenomenon in more general terms. The majority of the participants did not know each other, and there was no time to build trust in the groups. That said, the form of the seminar did provide a good platform for gathering experiences of situations and relationships that could be linked to exposure to gender-based violence. In the following sections we summarise the most important results from the work conducted in the groups.

## Common situations of sexual harassment

A consistent theme in the situations of sexual harassment highlighted by the PhD students was that these often occurred in more informal contexts. The participants pointed out that such incidents usually occurred in circumstances where the line between what constitutes a work situation and a more informal situation became unclear. The most common example mentioned by almost all groups was the sense of vulnerability experienced at conferences. Conferences were described as situations where codes of conduct become unclear, where power relationships are activated and where many people no longer feel that it is a work-related activity. This has also been observed in previous research (Karami et al. 2020). The participants attributed the increased risk of exposure to gender-based violence to the fact that alcohol is often available for consumption at conferences (see also Sutton et al. 2021), and that conferences often include activities in the evening with focus on networking. Another example mentioned by the participants as a situation where exposure to gender-based violence could arise was that of lunch and coffee breaks, where

a more informal atmosphere could also play a role in the course of events. These situations were felt to be quite common, and someone described them as situations that arise at least several times a week. In some cases, social media platforms were highlighted as situations where exposure to gender-based violence could be experienced.

As previously mentioned, not many of the participants shared their own experiences of sexual harassment; instead, most chose to describe typical situations of perceived vulnerability in general terms. The examples of sexual harassment that were provided in connection with the group work corresponded to a large extent with the data from KTH that has been presented above, see diagrams 15-18. The data shows that between 30 percent and just over 40 percent of female PhD students at KTH have experiences of being asked uncomfortable questions about their private life and receiving disconcerting looks and comments about their appearance. The experiences that

**The participants pointed out that it happened most often when the line between what is a work situation and a more informal one became unclear.**

were shared from the group work had to do with unwelcome and disconcerting approaches of various kinds, both in word and deed. Asking personal questions or discussing personal topics was perceived as unprofessional and uncomfortable. It could also be described as being treated, as a female PhD student, as someone who is available to be approached. There were also examples of experiences of exposure to gender-based violence in social media, mainly in the form of images and videos, but also words that were perceived as grossly offensive. Other examples have to do with sexist comments or jokes that could be made in different contexts, and the kind of acceptance that these comments are met with by the other people present. This is also recognisable from the KTH data, for example in diagram 18, where almost 30 percent of female PhD students have experiences of someone having made uncomfortable sexual innuendos. Another example was the fact that, when the issue of sexual harassment came up at a workplace meeting, it was commented on as only something that management forces the organisation to pay attention to. This was perceived as a disrespectful comment and a sign that the issue is not taken seriously. In some cases, sexual harassment was described by the groups as various forms of “micro-harassment”, to which no one reacts or speaks out. In other words, incidents of harassment occur in repeated and everyday contexts and are accepted in the organisation.

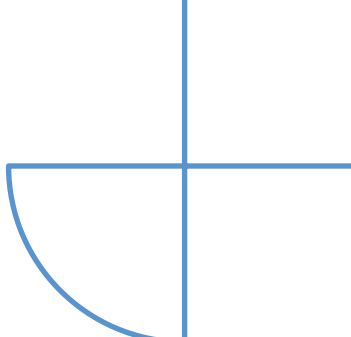
**Of female doctoral students at KTH 30-40% have been asked uncomfortable questions about their private lives, received unpleasant stares and comments on their appearance and almost 30% have experience of being the recipient of unpleasant sexual insinuations.**

### **Relationships between the victim, the perpetrator and other people present**

A number of different relationships were described in connection with exposure to sexual harassment. Harassment often occurs between colleagues, i.e. in this case, PhD students harassing other PhD students. In the examples described by the group participants, it is usually male PhD students who harass female PhD students. There are also instances in which male students harass female PhD students in their role as teachers in teaching situations. In some examples, it is supervisors who harass PhD students. One group summarised their experiences as follows: supervisors and senior researchers subjected them to incivility, while other PhD students more often subjected them to sexual harassment. Another group made the distinction that PhD students more often subjected each other to uncomfortable jokes in groups, while exposure to such behaviour from supervisors was more often experienced behind closed doors. One comment emphasised the importance of senior researchers being present in social contexts, as this often made perpetrators hesitant about subjecting someone to sexual harassment. In one group, the participants had discussed the idea that harassment was often an unconscious act on the part of those who subjected others to it, and that it often has to do with clumsiness and not thinking about what you are saying.

### **Uncertainty surrounding the issue**

There were two types of uncertainty that occupied the groups in their discussions; i) the question of what sexual harassment actually is, and ii) what is expected to happen in the event of an incident. The first type of uncertainty was described by a number of participants as them not knowing how the university defines the phenomenon and therefore being unsure of what actually constitutes sexual harassment. They lacked information about this in the introduction they received when they commenced their time as PhD students. Several of the PhD students felt that they could not determine whether or not they had been subjected to



Several participants had experience of how an incident can disappear by being the subject of a formal report, as investigations take place under a duty of confidentiality, and any consequences of the incident following an investigation remain unknown and invisible to others in the organisation.

sexual harassment. A number of the participants therefore felt that the presentation of the results from the study had helped them gain clarity on this issue, as several questions in the survey are concrete and clear when it comes to examples of sexual harassment and exposure to such behaviour.

In one group, knowledge about the concept of incivility was highlighted as something new and as an important learning – that incivility can take different forms of expression in different situations, and that it has to do with microaggression.

The second type of uncertainty mainly concerned a lack of knowledge about the process for handling cases of sexual harassment at the university. Many participants simply didn't know who they should contact to file a report or to seek support. There was also uncertainty about what the process for filing a report actually looks like, and what they can expect to result from an investigation. Several participants had experience of how an incident can disappear by being the subject of a formal report, as investigations take place under a duty of confidentiality, and any consequences of the incident following an investigation remain unknown and invisible to others in the organisation. One group conveyed an experience of a reported incident being made to appear as if it had never happened. Several groups expressed frustration over the fact that the consequences of subjecting someone to sexual harassment are never made clear in the organisation. Although it is known what types of behaviour are not permitted, it is not known what the consequences will be of violating applicable rules or codes of conduct.

**PhD students want clearer information on what sexual harassment actually is, what rules apply at the university based on core values, and who to contact if you or someone else is subjected to gender-based violence.**

### **Desired measures**

In the exercise that was presented to the participating PhD students, it was emphasised that they were not expected to come up with proposals for measures or answers on how to solve the problems. Rather, the starting point for the exercise was that they should discuss the issues they recognised from the study and, based on this, describe situations and concrete examples of their own experiences of exposure to gender-based violence. However, most groups still included various proposals in the reporting of their group work. These proposals primarily concerned increasing the level of knowledge and awareness throughout the organisation with regard to existing problems involving sexual harassment and exposure to other forms of gender-based violence. They also concerned how the actual process for handling cases of sexual harassment could be made more visible to everyone, and how it could be improved. A common theme of the groups' proposals is that PhD students want clearer information on what sexual harassment actually is, what rules apply at the university based on core values, and who to contact if you or someone else is subjected to gender-based violence. All this is wanted from the moment a person commences his or her time as a PhD student. Different types of mandatory training courses and exercises are also requested, to provide all employees with a clear understanding of the concepts of discrimination, harassment and exposure to gender-based violence, as well as how the code of conduct is formulated. It must be made clearer which types of behaviour are not acceptable. Many participants also think that it should be easier to file a report, that it should not require as many enquiries or as much searching before it is possible to find out who to contact. One suggestion was to make this clearer on the website, with a simple link for filing a report. There also needs to be easy-to-find contact details for people you can contact for support in the event of an incident. In several groups, the need for more discussion about the academic organisational culture was also mentioned. The participants requested the implementation of a preventive initiative that would contribute to making it possible to bring up and discuss sexual harassment and exposure to gender-based violence throughout the organisation. The issue should be normalised as something important to talk about, instead of the phenomenon being normalised.

# Seminar for PhD students on gender-based violence at KTH

Another seminar with group exercises, also held in English, was arranged for a smaller group of PhD students solely from KTH. The seminar took place on location during an afternoon in November 2022. The aim of this seminar was to obtain concrete examples from KTH of situations that could supplement the survey results regarding PhD students' experiences of sexual harassment and incivility. Five women and one man participated in the exercise – all of whom had taken part in the first digital seminar. They were thus very familiar with the results of the study, both at an overall level and at KTH level. In the invitation, which was sent to all PhD students who attended the first digital seminar, the aim of the exercise was described as exploring qualitative dimensions based on the results presented regarding the prevalence of gender-based violence at KTH. Even on this occasion, results and important concepts from the study were presented as a form of introductory repetition. The participants presented themselves to each other, which contributed to the creation of trust within the group. The participants were then divided into two groups and were instructed that the exercise would be carried out in two stages, firstly based on questions regarding incivility, and thereafter based on questions regarding sexual harassment. The participants were asked to reflect on one question at a time in both parts of the exercise, and to share the time in the group equally and listen attentively to each other. They were also asked to endeavour to describe the situations in detail and to make notes.

The exercise began with questions regarding experiences of incivility at KTH. The two questions for discussion were taken from the survey. The first question had to do with situations where the participants had experience of supervisors or colleagues showing a lack of interest in statements they made or opinions they expressed. The second question had to do with experiences of supervisors or colleagues yelling or swearing at them. After the participants had shared their answers to the questions on incivility, the group work continued with

A seminar was held with group work on site at KTH during one afternoon in November 2022. The seminar was aimed at a small group of PhD students with five women and one man participating. The purpose of this seminar was to get tangible examples from KTH of situations that could supplement the survey results on PhD students' experiences of sexual harassment and incivility.

questions regarding experiences of sexual harassment. The questions presented to the participants had to do with experiences of intrusive questions about their private life, appearance or age. There were also questions about experiences of sexual innuendos in comments and jokes, as well as inappropriate invitations of various kinds. In the presentations that were shared with the whole group, it turned out that the participants did not feel that they had enough time, and they therefore chose to concentrate more on some of the questions.

## Descriptions of situations of incivility

The question about incivility which the participants discussed the most had to do with experiences of being ignored and other people openly displaying a lack of interest. The examples raised involved situations in which issues of gender inequality and discrimination had often been ignored, questioned or downplayed at meetings. The participants described several examples of being completely ignored in group conversations, for example due to other people "speaking over" them. One woman had been questioned as being overly emotional when she explained her stance on an issue. Several participants described experiences of men dominating the conversations during coffee breaks. A common situation was described as men talking to each other and women being silent. Some of the participants had experiences of being unpleasantly treated in laboratories when they asked for safety equipment. One woman also shared an experience of someone yelling at her and accusing her of exaggerating. Several women described situations in which they were demeaned. Below are some examples of situations described by the participants and the specific types of uncivil behaviour involved in these situations.

### **Situation 1: In the laboratory**

A woman who has been a PhD student for several years tries to explain to a new male researcher how a piece of software works and how he can improve its use. The male researcher interrupts her by repeatedly saying “I know, I know”, despite being new to the lab and inexperienced in the use of this software. We recognise the behaviours “paid little attention to your statements or showed little interest in your opinions” from diagrams 1 and 11, and “interrupted or spoken over” from diagrams 2 and 12.

### **Situation 2: Communication via email**

The behaviours “paid little attention to your statements or showed little interest in your opinions” (diagrams 1 and 11) and “doubted your judgement” (diagrams 3 and 13) are illustrated in the following example. A male professor disregards that a female PhD student has expressed wishes to purchase necessary equipment for a lab. The professor is also the PhD student’s principal supervisor. The PhD student has proposed a reusable piece of equipment, but the professor wants to save money and suggests a cheaper alternative. According to the PhD student, the cheaper alternative does not meet applicable safety requirements, which she points out.

### **Situation 3: Coffee break**

Situation 3 illustrates how a female PhD student is ignored (diagrams 7 and 14). A group of PhD students, all of whom are men except for one who is a woman, are enjoying a coffee break with a male professor. The professor mentions a recently published article he has written. The male PhD students ask questions about the article, and the professor answers their questions. But when the female PhD student asks him a question, he completely ignores her and just keeps talking. A few more questions are then asked by the male PhD students, all of which are answered by the male professor. None of the male PhD students reacts to what happened.

### **Situation 4: In the kitchen of the research division**

Several PhD students and senior researchers are in the kitchen of the research division. A male professor talks about a meeting he attended at which the topic of discussion concerned the importance of women holding senior positions. Without hesitation, another male professor immediately asks: “Really? Why should that be important?” By questioning the importance of women holding senior positions, the professor is denying the existence of gender inequality, i.e. the problem of men dominating senior positions in organisations and in society. His statement can also be viewed as a way of criticising women’s demands for access to positions of power. Cortina et al. (2013) view denial of the existence of gender inequality, and claims that women make unjust demands and use unjust strategies to usurp privilege and power, as examples of modern discrimination.

### **Situation 5: Imbalance of power**

A group consisting of PhD students, the majority of whom are men, and a few male faculty members are sitting at a table during a coffee break. During the conversation, one of the male professors begins criticising the methodology of a recently published study on the gender pay gap. One of the female PhD students responds by making a general comment about the gender pay gap as a phenomenon. The male professor continues to assert his critical position and now wants the female PhD student to agree with him. However, she is not interested in continuing the conversation. The professor nevertheless continues to assert his argumentation in a lively manner, which makes the female PhD student feel uncomfortable about the imbalance of power in the situation. Several other people join in the conversation, which forces the female PhD student to defend her point of view. Another male faculty member tries to get the professor and the female PhD student to reach agreement, instead of interrupting the discussion. The female PhD student is badly affected by the situation, and by the fact that no one reacts or intervenes. The criticism of the methodology of the study can be interpreted as another example of modern discrimination (i.e. denial of gender inequality). At the same time, the case illustrates examples of incivility in the form of showing a lack of interest in someone’s opinion (diagrams 1 and 11) and addressing someone in an unprofessional manner (diagrams 6 and 10).

The most common behaviour that women are exposed to at KTH is being asked questions about their private lives in an uncomfortable or unpleasant way, being looked at in an uncomfortable or unpleasant way or receiving comments about their appearance or age.

## Descriptions of situations of sexual harassment

The following descriptions contain participants' experiences of being subjected to sexual harassment, as well as experiences of seeing other people being subjected to such behaviour. The latter applies, in particular, to the only man who participated in the seminar, who primarily described observations of how women in his vicinity had been subjected to sexual harassment, for example in the form of comments about their appearance. The women in the groups had experiences of receiving intrusive questions about their private life, for example whether they would be "producing" kids soon. Several of them had experience of being warned about men in the work environment who often make advances to women. The participants also provided several examples of various kinds of intrusive comments about their appearance. Male PhD students had repeatedly brought up the topic of sex in conversations between colleagues, which was perceived as uncomfortable. There were also examples of more physical advances by senior faculty members and visiting researchers in the laboratory environment. Sexist jokes were perceived as more common in certain environments compared to others. Below are some examples of situations in which sexual harassment occurs.

### Situation 6: Warning about perpetrator

We mentioned earlier that the prevalence of sexual harassment may depend on organisational acceptance. A consequence of acceptance is individual solutions (McDonald 2012). Situation 6 represents one such example. A new female PhD student was warned about a man by another woman in the same division. She was urged to be careful and was informed that "he flirts with and hits on all women".

The higher prevalence at KTH than in the sector as a whole can be explained by the fact that the risk of being exposed to incivility is greater in male-dominated professions and organisations.

### Situation 7: PhD student and supervisor having lunch

Table 3 shows that unwelcome questions about their private life was the most common type of behaviour to which women were subjected. Situation 7 illustrates this behaviour. A (married) female PhD student is eating lunch with her assistant supervisor, who is a man. They hear a baby crying in another part of the dining room, whereupon the man asks the female PhD student if she "produces kids", with an undertone of asking if she plans to have children.

Women at KTH experience a higher degree of gender-based incivility than men at KTH.

### Situation 8: Declarations of love

Situation 8 represents an example of sexual invitation (diagram 20). A female master's student and a male researcher are collaborating on several projects. The female student finds several anonymous love letters on her desk. The male researcher then expresses his feelings for her in words in front of the entire division in a work context where a majority was present.

### Situation 9: Extra help from teacher

In table 3 and diagram 20, we see that the behaviours sexual invitations / asking to meet outside of work in an uncomfortable or disconcerting manner are included in the same question. The latter behaviour is illustrated in the following situation. A female PhD student teaches a course. She enjoys teaching, and she encourages students to ask questions and ask for help. She gets a lot of questions, especially from one male student. He likes to stay behind after class and talk. Towards the end of the course, a support lesson is given by the female PhD student to the male student because he wants to receive extra help. But he then invites her out for coffee instead. The female PhD student declines the invitation, but finds the situation uncomfortable. She reports the incident to the course coordinator, who arranges a conversation with the male student during which it is explained that he should only ask questions during class hours in the future.

### Situation 10: Comments about and invitations to female students

A male professor from another university has several collaborations with KTH. He has a habit of openly commenting on the appearance of female students among colleagues, and also expressing his interest directly to female students, both on campus and in the lab. This example can be linked to the following types of behaviour: sexual innuendos (diagram 18) and sexual invitations (diagram 20).

### Situation 11: Visiting researcher wants to take a photo with women

A well-known visiting researcher comes to KTH to give a seminar. He is guided around and is introduced to some of the researchers in the division. Before the seminar, some female researchers arrive in the auditorium. The visiting researcher insists that he wants to take a photo of them together with him, and he pulls them together for a group photo. The female researchers don't know him and perceive the situation as uncomfortable and unwanted. They perceive it as a lack of respect when he physically pulls them together and expects them, as women, to surround him in the photo.

# Summary

Firstly, the results regarding the prevalence of gender-based violence at KTH show clear differences based on gender when it comes to exposure to incivility and sexual harassment. Women at KTH experience a higher degree of exposure to gender-based violence than men at KTH. Secondly, women at KTH experience a higher degree of exposure to gender-based violence than women in the sector as a whole.

The most common types of uncivil behaviour at KTH are those that are the most ambiguous, while the more direct types of behaviour are less common. Women at KTH experience more incivility than men. Diagrams 1-7 show that women at KTH are more exposed to incivility than women in the sector as a whole. The biggest difference between women at KTH and women in the entire sector concerns the behaviour “doubted your judgement on a matter for which you had responsibility” (diagram 3), with almost half of the women at KTH having experience of this type of behaviour. Incivility has also been likened to a form of modern discrimination against women,

The results clearly show that gender-based incivility of several kinds takes place at KTH. There is a connection to dimensions of power when it comes to position and gender and to organisational culture, where behaviour like incivility, discrimination and sexual harassment is normalized and accepted. Power, structure and cultural aspects must thus be addressed in the future work on change at KTH.

which is apparent at KTH. The higher level of prevalence at KTH than in the sector as a whole can be explained by the fact that the risk of being subjected to incivility is greater in male-dominated professions and organisations. This result is in line with other research on gender-based discrimination (see, for example, Wahl 1992). Incivility involves a power dimension whereby those with less power and lower status in the organisation are often more vulnerable than those with more power and higher status. Several of diagrams 8-14 show that the positions female students and female employees are more vulnerable than others and exhibit the highest percentage in relation to most questions.

Female students and employees are more often interrupted and spoken over, their knowledge and competence are questioned, they feel that they receive a worse evaluation than they deserve, attention is not paid to their statements or opinions, and they are addressed in an unprofessional manner. Male employees are the group that reports the lowest percentage in relation to most questions. Compared to the entire sector, female students at KTH are more vulnerable than female students in the sector as a whole. They report higher percentages in relation to all questions, while the results vary more for the categories of female employees and female PhD students. For men, there is no difference between KTH and the sector in general in terms of being exposed to incivility. The results from the survey are illustrated in the examples that emerged during the seminars conducted with PhD students. Experiences of being ignored and of other people openly showing a lack of interest were recognised and exemplified. Several of these concerned the fact that topics such as gender inequality and discrimination had often been ignored, questioned and downplayed in meetings.

The results regarding sexual harassment at KTH are similar to the results regarding incivility. In response to the direct question about exposure to undesired sexual attention, women experience a higher degree of exposure than men, and women at KTH experience a higher degree of exposure than women in the entire sector. Similar to the results for the entire sector, the vulnerability of the respondents becomes more apparent when the questions are formulated in a way that describes the behaviours. The most common types of behaviour to which women are

subjected at KTH are being asked questions about their private life in an uncomfortable or disconcerting manner, being looked at in an uncomfortable or disconcerting manner, and receiving comments about their appearance or age. These are also the three most common types of behaviour experienced by women in the entire sector, although the percentages there are lower. The same behaviours are also the most common types of behaviour experienced by men, but the percentages are lower, both at KTH and in the sector in general. For men, the percentages at KTH and in the sector as a whole are very similar. Diagrams 15-20 show prevalence among women broken down by position, with PhD students and students as the most vulnerable groups at KTH. PhD students are also a vulnerable group in the sector as a whole. One difference between KTH and the entire sector is that students are more vulnerable at KTH than in the sector as a whole. Women at KTH in general, and female students in particular, are doubly affected; they are subjected to both incivility and sexual harassment. In the seminars with PhD students, a consistent theme in the situations of sexual harassment was that they often occurred in informal contexts. The participants pointed out that such incidents usually occurred in circumstances where the line between what constitutes a work situation and a more informal situation became unclear. The female participants had experiences of having received intrusive questions about their private life and various kinds of comments about their appearance. There were also examples of more physical advances and that sexist jokes were perceived as common in certain environments. Of women at KTH, 13

percent report that someone has touched them physically in a disconcerting manner, compared to six percent of women in the entire sector, e.g. by grabbing, holding, kissing, hugging or caressing them. Based on the sexual harassment staircase and other scales used in research, these expressions of undesired sexual attention can be considered more serious than uncomfortable questions and comments.

The results clearly show that several types of gender-based violence occur at KTH. There are connections to dimensions of power, as position and gender play a role, and to organisational culture, as behaviours of incivility, discrimination and sexual harassment are normalised and accepted. The aspects of power, structure and culture must therefore be highlighted in future change initiatives at KTH, and it is then also important to relate back to the consequences of exposure to gender-based violence. In the results for the entire sector, it was noted that, in comparison to those who have not been subjected to undesired sexual attention, the respondents (both women and men) who reported having been subjected to undesired sexual attention indicate worse general health, higher stress level and higher degree of burnout. Respondents who reported that they have been subjected to sexual harassment indicate to a higher degree that they are considering quitting their work or their studies. In other words, exposure to gender-based violence has negative consequences on several levels; for individuals, the consequences are stress, lack of well-being and difficulties focusing on work; for the work environment, the consequences are lower motivation and poorer performance in research and education; and for the organisation as a whole, the consequences are that students, PhD students and staff members are absent on sick leave or quit their position at KTH.

This report does not contain a more in-depth theoretical analysis of the results for KTH. The primary aim of the report is for the results to serve as a basis for constructive reflections and discussions that can contribute to the reduction of problems involving gender-based violence. This can be achieved when more employees and managers become aware of and more observant of situations of exposure to such behaviour. Discussions can also contribute to a greater sense of security when it comes to taking action and speaking up in a situation where someone else is being subjected to gender-based violence. The overall goal is, of course, to create an organisational culture where inclusion and respect contribute to reduced prevalence of gender-based violence, in the direction of a zero-tolerance approach in practice.



# Work aimed at achieving change: Instructions and discussion questions

Initially, the aim of the report was described as contributing to change towards a more inclusive culture at KTH. The hope is that managers and employees, by receiving, reading and discussing the report, will gain increased awareness of the phenomenon and its prevalence at KTH, and will thus find it easier to contribute to the achievement of change. In this concluding section, some suggestions are provided on how constructive discussions can be created with regard to what can be done to reduce the problem. This report can be used at KTH in training, leadership development, seminars, group exercises, teaching, at workplace meetings and in other appropriate contexts where the organisation's culture and values are on the agenda.

Many people find it difficult and sensitive to even mention issues surrounding gender-based violence, let alone discuss them with others. It is therefore important to ensure that exposure to gender-based violence is not allowed to become an issue that must simply be "ticked off a to-do list" as quickly and simply as possible. Good conditions are required to create a constructive discussion on gender-based violence, and a fundamental prerequisite is ensuring that there is a sense of security in the group where the discussion will take place. We want to emphasise the importance of the fact that the results show that gender-based violence is occurring at KTH, which is why this should form the basis and starting point

for relevant exercises. In most training courses and meetings, it is beneficial to discuss the results at a general level, with focus on what can be done to reduce the problems at KTH, and we therefore place greatest emphasis on the type of discussion questions shown below. By general level, we also mean that it mainly has to do with discussing how all of us – as colleagues, managers and leaders – can act and take action in the situations described. It is therefore important that groups do NOT discuss what the victim should do in the situation, as such a discussion requires other conditions and expert competence.

However, groups may exist or be created where the members of the group want to discuss and analyse their own experiences of exposure to gender-based violence and then use this as a basis for further discussion on possible strategies for dealing with gender-based violence in general. We therefore provide suggestions for questions that can be used to form the basis for such a discussion. In these groups, we recommend that there is a discussion leader with expert knowledge in the field.

This report can also contribute to discussions and questions about how a formal report of sexual harassment can be filed at KTH, and what the process for handling the case looks like. In the final section we therefore provide a brief discussion on seeking support or filing a report at KTH.

## Instructions for group exercises aimed at reducing incivility and sexual harassment at KTH

The following instructions for group exercises may be appropriate in different types of working groups at KTH. Prior to a seminar on the report, it is important that all participants are asked to read the report in advance. The person responsible for coordinating and leading the exercise should be prepared to begin by repeating some of the results from the summary section of the report. This is followed by a presentation of the design and structure of the day's exercise, for example the questions that are to be addressed, the amount of time available and the purpose of the exercise. Ideally, time should also be allocated to a presentation round with everyone present in the room. This makes it possible for each participant to share a brief reflection on the day's topic of discussion. It could, for example, be a reflection on the participant's thoughts and expectations prior to the exercise. The group is then divided into smaller discussion groups (we suggest 3-5 people in each group).

Instructions for the group discussions are provided by the person responsible for coordinating and leading the exercise:

- Discuss one question or issue at a time
- Do NOT discuss what the victim should do in the situation
- Focus on what we can all do as colleagues, managers and leaders
- Appoint a member of the group to keep an eye on the time
- Ensure that everyone is given an opportunity to have their say
- Ensure that the available time is shared equally
- The aim is to share reflections – not debate issues
- Listen actively to each other
- Each participant takes responsibility for what he or she wants to share
- Do not spread details of the group's discussion outside the group, unless it is agreed to do so
- Reach agreement on the information that is to be shared with the larger group

## Exercise 1

# Incivility

### Initial round of reflections on the overall results regarding incivility

Reflect initially on the results in the report regarding incivility. Begin by allocating a few minutes during which each participant thinks about the results and writes down some reflections about them. Then go round the group and allow each participant to share their reflections. Share the time equally.

Focus on the results which show that the most common types of uncivil behaviour at KTH are those that are the most ambiguous, while the more direct types of behaviour are less common. That women at KTH experience more incivility than men. Diagrams 1-7 show that women at KTH are more exposed to incivility than women in the sector as a whole. Diagrams 8-14 show that the positions female students and female employees are more vulnerable than others and have the highest percentage in relation to most questions. Female students and employees are more often interrupted and spoken over, their knowledge and competence are questioned, they feel that they receive a worse evaluation than they deserve, attention is not paid to their statements or opinions, and they are addressed in an unprofessional manner. Male employees are the group that reports the lowest percentage in relation to most questions.

### Constructive discussions aimed at achieving change

- a. *How can we work to achieve a culture where attention is paid to people's statements and opinions, and where interest is shown?*
- b. *How can we create a culture where we don't interrupt or "speak over" each other?*
- c. *What can be done in a situation where a person's judgement and competence (in a certain position) is questioned?*
- d. *How can a culture be created where we address each other with respect?*
- e. *What can be done in a situation where someone feels ignored?*
- f. *How can we react to inappropriate jokes and jokes that are made at someone's expense?*

Feel free to modify the questions in a manner that helps formulate ideas. Remember to primarily focus the discussion on what we can all do as colleagues in a work environment. Shift positions in the discussion, from employee to manager and research leader. Who can do what? How can we make a difference, on our own and together?

Finally, reach agreement within the group on the information from the discussions that is to be shared with the larger group. Remember to also connect ideas on change to different positions and situations in terms of who can do what. The person responsible for coordinating and leading the seminar gives each group an equal amount of time to present the group's shared reflections and suggestions. The whole group then discusses and agrees how the exercise should be followed up. Who is to do what, and when follow-up activities are to take place time-wise.

## Exercise 2

# Sexual harassment

### Initial round of reflections on the results in the report regarding sexual harassment

Reflect initially on the results in the report regarding sexual harassment. Begin by allocating a few minutes during which each participant thinks about the results and writes down some reflections about them. Then go round the group and allow each participant to share their reflections. Share the time equally.

Focus on the results which show that, in response to the direct question about exposure to undesired sexual attention, women experience a higher degree of exposure than men. That women at KTH experience a higher degree of exposure than women in the entire sector. Similar to the results for the entire sector, the vulnerability of the respondents becomes more apparent when the questions are formulated in a way that describes the behaviours. The most common types of behaviour to which women are subjected at KTH are being asked questions about their private life in an uncomfortable or disconcerting manner, being looked at in an uncomfortable or disconcerting manner, and receiving comments about their appearance and age. PhD students and students are the groups most exposed to sexual harassment at KTH. PhD students are also a vulnerable group in the sector as a whole. One difference between KTH and the entire sector is that students are more vulnerable at KTH than in the sector as a whole. Another difference is that, of women at KTH, 13 percent report that someone has touched them physically in a disconcerting manner, compared to six percent of women in the entire sector, e.g. by grabbing, holding, kissing, hugging or caressing them. Based on the sexual harassment staircase and other scales used in research, these expressions of undesired sexual attention can be considered more serious than uncomfortable questions and comments. Women at KTH in general, and female students in particular, are doubly affected; they are subjected to both incivility and sexual harassment. The situations of sexual harassment highlighted by PhD students in seminars indicated that such incidents often occurred in informal contexts where the line between what constitutes a work situation and a more informal situation became unclear.

### Constructive discussions aimed at achieving change

- How can we increase awareness of the inappropriateness of asking questions about someone's private life in an uncomfortable or disconcerting manner?*
- How can we increase awareness of the inappropriateness of looking at colleagues and making comments about their appearance and age in an uncomfortable or disconcerting manner?*
- How can we improve the conditions in the work environment for female PhD students?*
- How can we improve the study environment for female students?*
- How can we increase awareness of the risks of sexual harassment in informal contexts? What appropriate measures can be taken or implemented?*

Feel free to modify the questions in a manner that helps formulate ideas. Remember to primarily focus the discussion on what we can all do as colleagues in a work environment. Shift positions in the discussion, from employee to manager and research leader. Who can do what? How can we make a difference, on our own and together?

Finally, reach agreement within the group on the information from the discussions that is to be shared with the larger group. Remember to also connect ideas on change to different positions and situations in terms of who can do what. The person responsible for coordinating and leading the seminar gives each group an equal amount of time to present the group's shared reflections and suggestions. The whole group then discusses and agrees how the exercise should be followed up. Who is to do what, and when follow-up activities are to take place time-wise.

# Memory-work and separatist method: Group exercise on participants' own experiences of incivility and sexual harassment at KTH

This section describes suggestions on how the report can be used for groups, primarily groups with female participants, who want to discuss their own experiences of sexual harassment and incivility. In these groups, we recommend that there is a discussion leader with expert knowledge in the field.

The concept of women sharing their own experiences of different types of discrimination is an established feminist method called memory-work (Haug 2008) or separatist method (Wahl and Holgersson 2021). In this context, the term “own experiences” means having been subjected to such behaviour yourself or having witnessed or found out that someone else has been subjected to such behaviour. The method is structured in several steps, whereby the participants' own experiences of exposure to gender-based violence or discrimination form the basis for a joint theoretical analysis in the group. Based on this joint analysis, which is based on research, a discussion can then take place on possible change strategies. The individual experiences are therefore brought together so that the participants can interpret them from a structural power perspective. In this way, the change strategies are also designed on the basis of an understanding of discrimination and exposure to gender-based violence as structural phenomena. Studies show that women can then experience a sense of empowerment that makes it easier to discuss strategies and change. In these groups, we recommend that there is a discussion leader with expert knowledge in the field. For those who want to read more about how their own experiences can be a starting point for group discussions and a joint analysis, we recommend, in addition to the references named above, the following books: Wahl and Holgersson (2013) for different types of group composition, and Wahl et al. (2008) for separatist groups.

Below we provide some examples of questions regarding a person's own experiences of incivility and sexual harassment, which can be used as a starting point for a discussion on strategies and proposed measures. We have deliberately limited the questions to types of gender-based violence that concern commonly occurring and everyday events in a work environment, out of respect for the fact that questions and issues regarding more serious types of abuse require more support and expertise.

## Questions regarding incivility

- Describe a situation from KTH in which you felt that your statements and opinions were ignored, for example by a colleague, supervisor or manager.*
- Describe a situation from KTH in which your judgement on a matter for which you had responsibility was questioned, for example by a colleague, supervisor or manager.*
- Describe a situation from KTH in which you were ignored, for example by a colleague, supervisor or manager.*
- Describe a situation from KTH in which a colleague, supervisor or manager yelled or swore at you.*

## Questions regarding sexual harassment

- Describe an experience from KTH of having received intrusive and uncomfortable questions about your private life.*
- Describe an experience from KTH of having received intrusive and uncomfortable comments about your appearance or age.*
- Describe an experience from KTH involving uncomfortable comments or jokes with sexual innuendos.*
- Describe an experience from KTH involving inappropriate and unwanted invitations to meet outside of work.*

## Instructions for group discussions

- Reflect on one question or issue at a time.*
- Go round all members of the group and share the time equally.*
- Listen carefully and ask each other follow-up questions.*
- Describe the situations in detail, and make notes of what you remember.*

## Focus in particular on the following aspects:

- What type of situation is it? Seminar, meeting, conference?*
- Where is it taking place? Campus, premises for a party?*
- Who is present? (you can refer to individuals as A, B, C...)*
- What relationships are represented?*
- What loyalties are represented?*
- What do the various individuals say and do? (A, B, C...)*
- What happened next?*

### Use the descriptions as a starting point for:

- *A theoretical analysis at a structural level (with the support of researchers in the field).*
- *A discussion on strategies for dealing with the situation. What is it possible to say and do in the situation?*
- *Formulation of proposed measures for implementation at KTH. Try to focus the proposals on specific categories and positions, e.g. management, heads of division or school, supervisors, PhD students, students.*

### Support in the work aimed at formulating proposals for KTH

Prior to discussions on proposed changes for implementation at KTH, we recommend reading the following reports. They can be found in the KTH Necessity Bag.

1. Read the following reports on gender inequality at KTH: Ekman Rising and Vänje (2013) and Ekander et al. (2009), for a more in-depth understanding of the problem.
2. Read the JML (Gender Equality, Diversity and Equal Conditions) plans at KTH to gain the overall analysis of gender inequality at KTH, as well as insight into the strategies for change in the areas of Organisation, Equal Conditions, Inclusive Culture and Knowledge and Awareness that KTH has been working with since 2017.

*An Equal KTH. Plan for Gender Mainstreaming of KTH, V-2017-0469.*

*Plan for continued work for a gender equal KTH in 2021-2022, V-2021-0209 1.2*

*Plan for continued work for a gender equal KTH in 2023-2025, V-2021-0209.*

### Constructive discussions on change

- a. *How can we raise awareness of the inappropriateness of asking questions about private lives in an uncomfortable way or unpleasant way?*
- b. *How can we raise awareness of the inappropriateness of looking at colleagues and commenting on their appearance and age in an inconvenient or unpleasant way?*
- c. *How can we improve the conditions in the working environment for female PhD students?*
- d. *How can we improve the study environment for female students?*
- e. *How can we raise awareness of the risks of sexual harassment in informal contexts?*

Feel free to modify the questions so that they be helpful for formulating ideas. Keep in mind to mainly discuss what everyone can do as colleagues in a work environment. Change around the positions in the discussion, from employee to manager and researcher. Who can do what? How can we make a difference on our own and together?

To conclude, the group will agree on what should be shared with the whole group from the discussions. Also be sure to connect the ideas on change to different positions and situations. Who can do what? Whoever leads the seminar should give equal time to each group to present the group's common reflections and suggestions. The group then agrees as a whole about how the exercise should be followed up. Who does what and when and when a follow-up should take place.

# Receiving support or filing a report at KTH

There is help and support available if you or someone close to you has been subjected to discrimination, harassment, sexual harassment or victimisation at KTH. You can also report the incident, which may lead to an investigation of the case.

## Employed (including as a PhD student)

If you are employed (including as a PhD student), you can talk to your immediate manager or HR. There are different contact persons within HR, depending on which school you work at or if you work at University Administration. The contact details are available on KTH's intranet, and it is easy to find what you are looking for if you search on "discrimination employee KTH" via Google or a similar search engine. You can also contact your trade union and the Occupational Health Service.

## Student

If you are a student, you can talk to your school's office of student affairs. You can find the contact person for your school on KTH's student website, if you search on "discrimination student KTH" via Google or a similar search engine. It is also possible to file an anonymous report via the website, on the same page where you find the contact details for the contact persons. You can also contact the Head of Student Welfare in the Management Team for THS (the Student Union), as well as the Stockholm Student Health Services.



**Please also see the administrative procedure:**

[intra.kth.se/polopoly\\_fs/1.1115574.1643874990!/Handlaggningsordning-arenden-om-diskriminering-trakasserier-sexuella-trakasserier-och-krankande-sarbehandling.pdf](https://intra.kth.se/polopoly_fs/1.1115574.1643874990!/Handlaggningsordning-arenden-om-diskriminering-trakasserier-sexuella-trakasserier-och-krankande-sarbehandling.pdf)

## Appendix 1. Workplace Incivility Scale (Cortina et al. 2013)

During the PAST YEAR, were you ever in a situation in which any of your supervisors or co-workers...

- Paid little attention to your statements or showed little interest in your opinions
- Doubted your judgment on a matter over which you had responsibility
- Gave you hostile looks, stares, or sneers
- Addressed you in unprofessional terms, either publicly or privately
- Interrupted or “spoke over” you
- Rated you lower than you deserved on an evaluation
- Yelled, shouted, or swore at you
- Made insulting or disrespectful remarks about you
- Ignored you or failed to speak to you (e.g. gave you “the silent treatment”)
- Accused you of incompetence
- Targeted you with anger outbursts or “temper tantrums”
- Made jokes at your expense

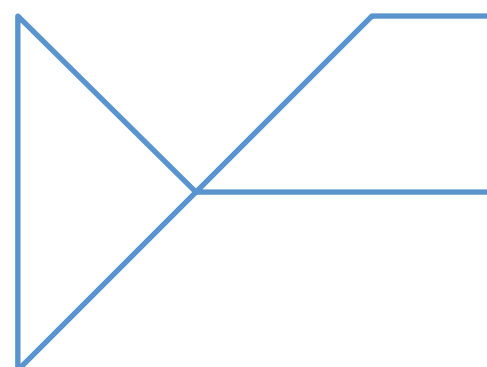
## Appendix 2. Questions from the FRA survey (Latcheva 2017)

At times you may have experienced people acting towards you in a way that you felt was unwanted and offensive.

How often have you experienced any of the following?

How often has this happened to you in the past 12 months?

- Unwelcome touching, hugging, or kissing?
- Sexually suggestive comments or jokes that made you feel offended?
- Inappropriate invitations to go out on dates?
- Intrusive questions about your private life that made you feel offended?
- Intrusive comments about your physical appearance that made you feel offended?
- Inappropriate staring or leering that made you feel intimidated?
- Somebody sending or showing you sexually explicit pictures, photos, or gifts that made you feel offended?
- Somebody indecently exposing themselves to you?
- Somebody made you watch or look at pornographic material against your wishes?
- Unwanted sexually explicit emails or SMS messages that offended you?
- Inappropriate advances that offended you on social networking websites such as Facebook, or in Internet chat rooms?





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