

## Summary of the investigation

**X's version in brief:** X arrived at Lund University at the end of August 2017. During the autumn and spring semesters she took courses with Y as her teacher. She found his teaching to be substandard/unstructured and he also talked about his private situation - during lectures - including about his seriously sick son. X thought that his behaviour was strange but also felt empathy and understanding due to Y's situation. Y did not show any particular interest in X at the time. It was only at the end of February that they developed more friendly contact in an informal context. X told Y about her idea for a future project and he was very interested; he said that she could use his platform and that he could introduce her to a prominent researcher (N) in this research field. On that evening, Y also invited her to have a beer with him, and afterwards found out that Y had said that he was "waiting for someone" and therefore did not invite X to join the other colleagues who were there. She felt that their meeting was presented as a date, which was not her intention at all. After the pub closed she went with Y to his house with a few other students and another senior co-worker. When she was there she drank more alcohol which she was offered, and finally became so drunk that she could not speak, and the others looked after her. She was laid onto Y's sofa and slept until the morning. She felt very irresponsible and uneasy about what had happened.

Soon afterwards, an opportunity arose for X to meet N, but X did not have much money and so she could not afford the trip. Y offered to pay half the price of the flight for her (which then never happened). The meeting took place at Y's hotel. They continued to socialise a little that evening and X had more alcohol and food which Y paid for. This time X was more cautious with her alcohol consumption and left the group early in the evening.

She also describes that she was asked if she wanted to sleep in his hotel room in Athens; he opened up his computer and pornographic pictures flashed up; he implied that a younger man would not be able to satisfy her. There is no written confirmation of these events.

During a period of leave she was in Turkey and received an sms message from Y late in the evening asking if she was asleep. She did not reply. Shortly before her letter, she decided to suspend all contact with Y saying that she was ill. She met him unexpectedly in a corridor and he questioned whether she was really sick in a way that made her very afraid.

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X has known all along that something felt wrong, but she thought that she could manage his invitations and carry out the course and project with Y. Her fear of being graded with a fail and of him “stealing” her project meant that she waited before she made her story public. X interpreted the email of 21 March (see Appendix 3 List of X’s points of reference No. 13) as threatening where Y writes that he will take revenge on those who had subjected him to this witch hunt. He also describes in the email that he would be happy if X could also endorse the view that his conduct was professional. Now, when she looks back, she sees that Y has excellent manipulation skills.

(See Appendix 3 List of X’s points of reference and Appendix 4 Scanned documents)

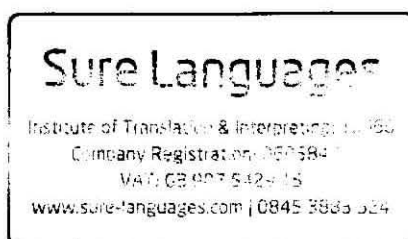
**Y’s version in brief:** Y describes that he did not have any particular intentions with X at all. A colleague from the US had introduced X to him (see Appendix 5 Greetings from the US). He claims that it is standard practice that it is acceptable to drink alcohol with students and sometimes there is even social interaction at the private residence of a senior member of staff. He cannot understand how X has understood his kindness to help her in various ways, for example in the project and his establishing contact with N, as something negative. From his perspective this is a continuation of the previous complaint against him and he sees it as a witch hunt in the wake of the “metoo” movement. Y claims that nobody has explained to him what is acceptable and not acceptable to do together with a student. But he emphatically denies that he intended to initiate a sexual relationship with X. In addition, he says that since 2014 he has been very cautious in terms of contact with students. With regard to the airline tickets, he had told X that it was a loan and not that he would pay for it.

In order to confirm that nothing inappropriate happened between X and Y during the Athens trip, Y asked for the opinion of the other colleagues who participated in the meeting (see Appendices 6 and 7).

When the consultant asks specific questions about his question at midnight when she was sleeping and about the flirting line he sent, he accepts that it was not very good. However, mainly he sees himself as the victim of a negative group action against him. In his view, many of his colleagues should be given warnings etc. because they do exactly the same thing as he did. He has lost his friends at CMES and no longer participates in any social activities.

Brief summary of the interview with the **third co-worker:** This person was selected and asked to be a respondent as their name recurs in both complaints. They also have a long-term friendship with Y. The consultant asks questions about the organisation culture at CMES. It is described as having a friendly atmosphere where everyone is very dedicated to their work. There is an open atmosphere and interesting discussions are part of everyday life. Seniors and students interact regularly but there is a clear rule: never meet students individually. This person confirms certain events which X describes where they were present. At times when it happened, they did not know in which way they were involved. (For example, when X came to the pub and was not invited to join the other colleagues, and the flirting line in Greek, see Appendix 3 point 9). When this was clarified, they advised Y not to do anything inappropriate. When they realised that they were being exploited in an improper way, the trust was lost, and they now have very little contact.

They also state that students have sometimes helped out with private chores for senior members of staff, such as babysitting and walking the dog. They deny that the social behaviour which Y considers to be standard practice (alcohol consumption with students and spending time in the homes of seniors) are generally applicable, but understands that these are Turkish university standards that Y imported and therefore does not consider to be inappropriate.



## Analysis

Against the background of the actions taken in 2013 by the management at the time, the consultant considered that Y's explanation for his informal behaviour - nobody told him what is acceptable or not - is not credible. The consultant's assessment is that Y acted unprofessionally and inappropriately towards X. Possibly with good intentions, but which led to negative consequences. **The adaptations that need to be made from one cultural context to another do not seem to have been made fully.** In view of the fact that there are only three respondents, the consultant wants to be cautious about giving an opinion on whether Y's behaviour is a natural consequence of the organisational culture at the centre, which could be an explanation. The third person described a grey area in which it could be difficult to find the right balance. On the other hand, only Y has been the subject of complaint and clearly exceeded the boundaries expected from a senior co-worker.

Unfortunately, Y has not shown that he accepts appropriate responsibility for his behaviour, the change needed requires external pressure to change via active leadership. The conflict that exists between the head of department and Y makes this active leadership more difficult. The head of department cannot exercise leadership on Y and be the person to follow up the change in behaviour. Y is mainly at a different institution but retains his position at CMES. The two of them have very little contact and this could also be a reason that Y has been able to act without restriction. If Y is to continue to have his position at the other department, it is of the utmost importance that this department is also involved in the work towards change.

There is also a limit to the extent of the employer's obligations. Much of what has been referenced in the appendices has taken place outside working hours. The consultant recommends that the management clarifies its position about the organisational culture they want to achieve and the employee/student responsibility for what happens in their free time.

In her role as a student, X benefits from someone senior who can open up opportunities, introduce her to networks etc. and was initially also flattered by the attention from Y. Her boundaries with respect to Y were not clear (prior to 22 March, see Appendix 8) and the consultant considers that it would have been to her advantage if this had been the case. However, psychological processes where a person is gradually and unwittingly manipulated are difficult to manage when they occur. The consultant therefore also sees a need to clarify for the students that they also have a responsibility for their boundaries, for example not to accept alcohol that is offered.

The unequal power relationship between the senior/student must always be taken into account - by both parties. If not, students, post doc students and others who are at the outset of their academic career could easily end up in a position of dependence. Seniors have a particular responsibility to manage the psychological power advantage that the mere position of being a senior gives them.

The parties do not currently have any ongoing work that requires cooperation. Therefore, there is no need for conflict management in order to repair their working relationship based on this aspect. However, the working relationships at CMES must be both clarified and monitored. (Everything that has happened as a result of the last two complaints has created concern and much speculation about the different people. The consultant therefore believes it is important to inform staff about what is currently happening and to resume the work from 2013 regarding professionalism and boundaries.

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