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**Action plan for equality and gender equality
at Örebro University 2016–2018**

Approved by: Vice-Chancellor

Date: 2016-04-26

1 Policy on equality and gender equality at Örebro University

This action plan combines the plans for equal treatment, accessibility and gender equality, all of which are documents that the University are required to draw up, under the Discrimination Act and the ordinance on public authority responsibility to implement the national disability policies (*förordning om de statliga myndigheternas ansvar för genomförande av handikappolitiken*). This action plan also contains an activity plan for the upcoming year.

Equality and gender equality emanate from human rights and democracy, where all people have equal value and freedom from discrimination, harassment and victimisation are important mainstays.

Equality and gender equality signify equal rights, equal opportunities as well as equal prerequisites for all to do their best irrespective of gender, gender identity and/or expression, ethnicity, religion or other belief, disability, sexual orientation, or age.

Equality and gender equality shall be embodied at all levels at Örebro University. An approach and an atmosphere that promote equality and gender equality as fundamental values are paramount in the University's efforts to realise its vision of quality education, prominent research and dynamic business and community engagement. They also play a significant role in recruiting and retaining the most competent students and staff.



2 Overall goal for the equality and gender equality efforts 2016–2018

The overall goal for the University's equality and gender equality efforts for the period 2016–2018 is:

Örebro University shall be an equal and gender equal place for study and work, where all students and employees are treated with respect, where no individual or group of people is excluded, and where discrimination and harassment are not tolerated.

Based on this overall goal for equality and gender equality, the University shall be distinguished by

- a study and work environment free from discrimination, harassment and victimisation, and by having a process in place for handling any injustices, which is objective and based on facts while respecting the legal rights of the individual,
- active efforts to integrate the gender equality perspective throughout all activities,
- an open and respectful attitude towards the diverse perspectives, backgrounds and experiences found among students and staff,
- non-discriminatory admission and recruitment processes,
- fair conditions with respect to employees' pay, working conditions, career opportunities, participation, and influence,
- support of all students' opportunities to benefit from their education, and their equal right to a positive study environment and influence on courses and study programmes, and
- accessibility of premises, activities and information for all.

3 Principal strategies

To achieve the overall goal for the equality and gender equality efforts, Örebro University shall

- work systematically and practically for equality and gender equality throughout its operations by incorporating the equality and gender equality issues into the regular operational planning process,
- integrate the gender equality issues and the gender perspective throughout its operations,
- promote knowledge through training and information of various aspects of equality and gender equality and of its own operations viewed through the lens of these aspects, at the student, staff, management and leadership levels,
- earmark sufficient resources to facilitate the work within the equality and gender equality field,
- secure the support and commitment of university management on the equality and gender equality issues,
- stimulate the collaboration between those involved in the work for equality and gender equality within the University, and
- follow up, on a regular basis, the equality and gender equality efforts, and provide feedback to the organisation.

4 Organisation and responsibility

4.1 Equality and gender equality efforts – organisation

The responsibility for the coordination and development of the University's equality efforts lies with a designated function within the central administration. Its *controller* is responsible for

- strategic development work in line with statutes, national directives, as well as the University's vision, goals and strategies,
- preparing policy documents in the equality field,



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- training and information activities geared at students and staff,
- collaboration with internal and external stakeholders in the equality field,
- external environmental monitoring, advice and support throughout the organisation, and
- calling meetings with the Network for Equality as well as organising its work.

The *Equality Committee* at Örebro University is the Vice-Chancellor's committee on equality issues. The committee is made up of members representing teaching, research, students, as well as the trade union organisations. The chair and members are appointed by the Vice-Chancellor and in addition to its advisory capacity, the committee is to initiate and drive forward equality and gender equality activities at the University.

The University's *Network for Equality* is a platform for the exchange of information and experience. It also facilitates professional development for equality representatives at the University schools and offices. The mandate of these representatives is specified in vice-chancellor's decisions and a certain portion of the representative's normal working hours should be reserved for network activities and for working with equality and gender equality issues at their respective schools or departments. It is the responsibility of the manager in question to facilitate the work of the school's/department's representative.

4.2 Equality and gender equality efforts – policy documents

A three-year *Action plan for equality and gender equality* shall be approved by a vice-chancellor's decision and communicated to managers as per usual distribution of vice-chancellor's decisions. A follow up and evaluation of this action plan is to be undertaken at the end of 2018.

The action plan includes an *activity plan* for the upcoming year. The activity plan shall be followed up at the beginning of each year, after which the document is revised. During the spring, activities for the following year shall be determined. This shall be done in good time so that information on planned activities is available to the university management, faculty boards,

schools and departments prior to the annual operational planning process for the upcoming year.

4.3 Responsibility for implementation and follow-up

The overall responsibility for equality and gender equality issues and their practical implementation in the University's operations lies with the university board and management. Sanctioning from university management is a necessary success factor for this work – it lends a certain status and reduces the risk that equality and gender equality end up off the regular agenda.

The responsibility for implementing and following up the activities set out in the activity plan is shared between all parts of the organisation; university management, faculty boards, schools and departments.

The responsibility for following up and evaluating the University's equality and gender equality work lies with the controller, consulting the Equality Committee, the Chief Planning Officer, and the University Director. The University Director will present the outcome of follow-ups to the administrative management team and to heads of school.

5 Activity plan 2016–2017

Activities for Örebro University's equality and gender equality efforts are determined in the activity plan for 2016–2017. These activities are intended to contribute to compliance with the goals set out in

- the Discrimination Act
- national gender equality policies
- national disability policies
- public service agreements (*regleringsbrev*)
- vision, goals and strategies for Örebro University

For each activity, a time frame and the relevant ground for discrimination are specified.

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The activities are listed at a general level, which requires the various parts of the organisation to translate them to their own operations and specify what they will involve in their particular context.

These activities shall be observed in the regular operational planning process and thus be included in operational plans, implemented in the operations, and subsequently followed up in the annual activity reports.

Goal cluster: Education

Objective: Communication with students that is supporting equality

Activity: Identifying and changing elements in the communication with current and future students that

- lack accessibility,
- counteract social and cultural diversity among students, and
- contribute to gender-differentiated educational choices.

Time frame: 2016–2017

Relevant grounds for discrimination: Disability (accessibility), gender identity, religion, ethnicity, sexual orientation, age (diversity), sex, gender identity (educational choice)

Goal cluster: Research

Objective: Equal access to University internal research funding

Activity: Identifying gender-coded obstacles to women in terms of access to University internal research funding.

Time frame: 2016–2017

Relevant grounds for discrimination: Sex, gender identity

Objective: Increased diversity in research/among researchers

Activity: Initiatives to broaden the social and cultural background of and reduce homogeneity among researchers as a group.

Time frame: 2016–2018

Relevant grounds for discrimination: Sex, gender identity, disability, religion, ethnicity

Goal cluster: Collaboration and innovation

Objective: A society in which everyone's competencies and resources are valued and utilised

Activity: Contributing to highlighting and utilising resources and competencies among persons newly arrived in Sweden and among citizens with an immigrant background.

Time frame: 2016–2018

Relevant grounds for discrimination: Religion, ethnicity

Goal cluster: The attractive study and work place

Objective: Good level of knowledge with all staff concerning gender mainstreaming

Activity: Information and professional development on the import of gender mainstreaming¹.

Time frame: 2016–2017

Relevant grounds for discrimination: Sex, gender identity

Objective: Equal and gender equal recruitment

Activity: Overhaul of how endeavours towards diversity are handled in the recruitment of academic and administrative staff.

Time frame: 2016–2017

Relevant grounds for discrimination: sex, gender identity, ethnicity, religion, disability, sexual orientation, age.

¹ Support provided by the controller at the Faculty and Executive Office.



Annex

Starting points for the equality and gender equality efforts

The equality and gender equality efforts at Örebro University proceed from the **Discrimination Act**, the purpose of which is to protect individuals from being disadvantaged or unfairly treated on the basis of seven specified criteria, also known as grounds for discrimination (sex, transgender identity or expression, ethnicity, religion or other belief, disability [including accessibility], sexual orientation and age). The Discrimination Act makes demands on the University in its capacities as a public authority, a place of work, and a higher education institution. This means that the University may not, in any of these different capacities, discriminate against staff, students, applicants or others who are coming into contact with the University. The University also has a responsibility to make sure that staff and students do not discriminate against each other, and that its operations – education and research – in themselves are not discriminatory. With the Discrimination Act as a starting point, the University shall actively work to guarantee an equal and gender equal place of study, research and work, and to prevent and counteract all forms of discrimination, violation and disadvantaging. The Discrimination Act provisions on **active measures in working life** aim to change the structures within the organisation which may lead to persons being discriminated against. Active measures shall refer to working conditions, recruitment and matters of pay.

The gender equality efforts at Örebro University are also based on the government's **national gender equality policy goals** (Bill 2005/06:155) that women and men shall have equal power to shape society and their own lives. The four interim goals included here are:

- even distribution of power and influence,
- economic gender equality,
- women's and men's equal share of the unpaid domestic and care workload, and
- for men's violence against women to cease.

Gender equality efforts are an important part of all operations at all levels. Women and men shall be treated and responded to equally and have the

same opportunities. In addition, gender balance shall be sought in work and study settings. The University's work in the equality and gender equality field shall however proceed from an intersectional perspective focusing on ways in which various social categories and power structures interact and are interdependent. The equality and gender equality efforts shall contribute to the realisation of the goals laid down in the University's vision document, and to the compliance of legal requirements and political goals.

As from 2016, Örebro University will increase its efforts into **gender mainstreaming**, in accordance with the government instructions to the higher education sector. Gender mainstreaming refers to the gender equality perspective being integrated into goals, budgets, and operational plans through to the individual employee's methods and procedures in carrying out their duties. The Council of Europe's definition of gender mainstreaming from 1998 has been adopted by the EU and the UN and reads: "*the (re)organisation, improvement, development and evaluation of policy processes, so that a gender equality perspective is incorporated in all policies at all levels at all stages, by the actors involved in policy-making*".

Policy documents on equality and gender equality

The Discrimination Act and the ordinance on public authority responsibility to implement the national disability policies (*förordning om de statliga myndigheternas ansvar för genomförande av handikappolitiken*) provides that Örebro University as an employer, education provider and public authority shall draw up the following policy documents:

Equal treatment plan (one-year). The plan shall be based on the Discrimination Act (2008:567), which states that higher education institutions are to conduct goal-oriented work to actively promote equal rights and opportunities for the students participating in or applying for the activities offered.

Accessibility plan. This plan shall be based on the ordinance on public authority responsibility to implement the national disability policies (*förordning om de statliga myndigheternas ansvar för genomförande av handikappolitiken*) (2001:526), which specifies that public authorities shall provide accessibility to premises, operations and information for people with disabilities.

Gender equality plan (three-year). This plan shall be based on the Discrimination Act (2008:567), which states that employers are to conduct goal-oriented work to actively promote equal rights and opportunities in working life for employees and persons applying for work or placement. The gender equality plan shall thus describe the measures which, based on the Discrimination Act, Chapter 3, Sections 4–9, are needed in the work place, and to account for which of these measures the employer has the intention to initiate or complete in the next few years.

In 2013, these three action plans were combined into one, the *Action plan for equality and gender equality*. This action plan has been supplemented each year with a separate activity plan, specifying annual subsidiary targets and activities. As from 2016, the activity plan is incorporated into the action plan. The aim is to facilitate accessibility and to clarify the content, and thereby facilitating the organisation's equality and gender equality efforts, in both the short and long term.

Plans and other policy documents relating to the field shall be published on the internal as well as the external website. They shall be translated into English.

There are no provisions in the Discrimination Act specifying that major employers, such as Örebro University, shall prepare plans for equality/gender equality at the department and school level. This is, however, recommended by the Equality Ombudsman (DO). The Vice-Chancellor's decision on the organisation of equality and gender equality efforts at the University also supports the drawing up of such plans if required. Resources for such work exist to some degree in the form of the equality representatives at the schools and departments mentioned above.