



UMEÅ UNIVERSITET

GENDER EQUALITY PLAN FOR UMEÅ UNIVERSITY

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1. Description and background

Umeå University's work with gender equality is based on Swedish legislation, national guidelines and gender-equality objectives. The overall gender-equality objective is for women and men to have the same power to shape society and their own lives. Gender mainstreaming is the central strategy and is integral to the University's processes, rules and decisions. Active measures to prevent discrimination and promote equal right and opportunities are an integral part of the work taking place at the University. The University strives to create an inclusive culture where all employees and students have equal opportunities.

Horizon Europe, the EU's framework programme for research and innovation, requires higher education institutions applying for research funding to have a Gender Equality Plan (GEP). This document describes and summarises Umeå University's work with gender equality and serves as the University's GEP.

The areas addressed in the document reflect the University's efforts to integrate gender equality perspectives into its regular processes and activities.

2. Definitions

The plan refers to the concept of equal opportunities. Equal opportunities is used as a collective term at the University and includes:

- regulated work as per the Discrimination Act, which aims to mitigate discrimination and promote equal opportunities and rights regardless of gender, gender identity or gender expression, ethnicity, religion or other beliefs, disability, sexual orientation or age; and
- goal-oriented gender equality work, which is based on the national gender equality objectives and focuses on achieving equality between women and men.

In this document, the term gender refers to legal gender, i.e. female or male.

3. Recommended areas

3.1 Gender balance in leadership and decision-making

The University's policy documents clearly state that the organisation is to actively work towards an even gender balance among academic leaders and decision-makers. This is put into practice through several concrete measures:

- The gender equality perspective is to always be considered when appointing management positions, such as heads of department, directors of studies, directors, deans, deputy deans, associate deans, pro-vice-chancellors and deputy vice-chancellors.
- Special consideration is given to gender balance when appointing members to faculty boards.

- When requesting internal nominations for individuals for boards, groups, councils or committees or recipients of prizes, awards or similar, the request is to stipulate that at least one woman and one man be nominated.
- All university-wide policy documents and decision-making documents must include an analysis of gender equality consequences.

3.2 Gender equality in career development and recruitment

Umeå University has joined the European Charter for Researchers and the Code of Conduct for the Recruitment of Researchers. The University has been awarded the “HR Excellence in Research Award” from the Human Resource Strategy for Researchers (HRS4R) process (from 2023 called the HR Award Process).

The University is to use open, transparent and merit-based recruitment processes designed to attract highly qualified applicants from diverse backgrounds and perspectives. This is achieved by:

- Promoting and considering gender balance and based on active measures, counteract risk of discrimination in recruitment and promotion.
- Effective career support in all stages of a career, which creates clear and fair opportunities for development.
- Review panels, experts and appointment committees should have an equal gender balance to ensure representativeness and fair assessments.
- Gender equality is considered when allocating resources to ensure decisions about priorities and funding do not contribute to gender inequality.
- An annual salary survey is conducted to identify, address and prevent unjust salary differences between women and men.
- Umeå University regularly conducts training in gender-equal recruitment and in methods and tools that mitigate unconscious bias in recruitment processes.

3.3 Gender equality in research and education

Education is to be designed and conducted in a manner that promotes equal rights and equal opportunities regardless of gender, gender identity, gender expression, ethnicity, religion or other beliefs, disability, sexual orientation or age. The University also works to promote gender equality in how research is planned and conducted. The University achieves this by:

- Applying gender equality systematically in quality assurance and enhancement procedures within research.
- Integrating gender equality in the quality system for education.
- Research resources are allocated in a transparent and easy to understand way and are followed up and designed in a manner that enables evaluation of impacts, including from a gender equality perspective.
- Regular training of different target groups, students and employees in gender equality, intersectionality and norm criticism with the aim of improving understanding of how power structures and prevailing norms impact opportunities for individuals within higher education.

3.4 Work-study-life balance and organisational culture

Umeå University's work environment and equal opportunities policy states that it is crucial to have equal access to a good physical, psychological, organisational and social working environment. Focusing on the health of staff and students enables a sustainable work and student life. It should be possible to combine parenthood with work and studies, and the University offers flexible solutions, such as flexible working hours, distance working, and distance and hybrid courses. Collective agreements ensure the right to parental benefit supplements, flexible working hours and additional funds for temporary parental benefits.

Access to student health and occupational health services and easy availability to health, wellness and other activities near campus promote health and well-being. Through the *Living Values* project, the University is working to create an ongoing dialogue on approaches and values. The goal is to develop a strong and sustainable workplace culture grounded on the University's core values: academic freedom, academic collegiality and academic integrity.

3.5 Measures to prevent gender-based vulnerability and sexual harassment

Umeå University has zero tolerance for any form of discrimination, including sexual harassment and victimisation. The work and study environment are to be safe and inclusive where everyone is treated with respect and dignity. The University has guidelines and procedures to address incidents that involve harassment, sexual harassment and victimisation. A dedicated support team is available to assist managers and directors in handling these issues. Active work is ongoing to ensure that all employees and students know where they can turn if they experience victimisation and discrimination.

Training initiatives to increase awareness and knowledge of gender equality within organisations are regularly conducted for different target groups, including as an integrated perspective in training for managers, heads of research and teaching staff. Special training initiatives to address gender-based victimisation and sexual harassment, focus on acting as an active bystander.

4. The organisation for work environment and equal opportunities

The University has an organisation that works with work environment and equal opportunities, with clearly divided responsibilities at both department and unit levels as well as within faculties and equivalents. Resources have been allocated to support managers to allow them to achieve their mission of conducting systematic and long-term work for a good working environment and for promoting equal opportunities.

The university-wide level has Work Environment and Equal Opportunities Coordinators for both students and staff (*ALV coordinators*) who provide strategic support developing and coordinating initiatives in the area.

5. Data collection and follow-up

The University conducts an annual compilation and analysis of gender-disaggregated statistics for employees and students, based on established indicators and legal gender. These statistics allow assessment of developments in gender equality and equal opportunities and are reported within the work environment and equal opportunities organisation and in the University's annual report. The Human Resources Office is responsible for collecting, quality assuring and monitoring these statistics.

6. Related national regulations and legislation

- Work Environment Act (1977:1160)
- AFS 2023:1, AFS 2023:2
- Discrimination Act (2008:567)
- Parental Leave Act (1995:584)
- Swedish Higher Education Act (1992:1434):
- Swedish Higher Education Ordinance (1993:100)
- The Public Service Agreement for the 2025 budget year for Umeå University defines recruitment goals for professors (Government decision I:18).