



UMEÅ UNIVERSITY

PROFESSIONAL AND CAREER DEVELOPMENT POLICY

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¹ This document has been translated from Swedish into English. If the English version differs from the original, the Swedish version takes precedence.



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1. Description

The aim of this policy is to:

- institutionalise a long-term, structured and strategic approach to professional and career development;
- strengthen the University's ability to develop and respond to change; and
- advocate thought-through, systematic development plans that promote excellent performance, talent acquisition, competitiveness and a healthy work environment with equal terms for all.

This policy defines key concepts, sets out guiding principles, clarifies who is responsible for what and describes what the University does to achieve this policy's vision.

2. Background

This policy is based on the Vision for Umeå University and basic values of central government. It has a trust-based approach to governance and leadership and applies to all managers and all employees. Its aim is to initiate strategic discussions and initiatives that promote professional and career development at all levels of the University.

It is based on the following laws, agreements and legal frameworks:

- The Work Environment Act (1997:1160)
- The Discrimination Act (2008:567)
- The local collective agreement on cooperation for development at Umeå University
- Work environment and equal opportunities policy
- Management and leadership policy.

The collaboration, student, accessibility, sustainability, international and work environment perspectives have all been integrated into this policy. This policy is regarded to have positive effects on gender equality at Umeå University, as one of its aims is to establish gender-equal professional development processes that take into account individual circumstances.



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3. Key concepts

The key concepts presented in this policy should be guiding when drawing up other policy documents on similar issues and when communicating on the staff website.

Talent acquisition refers to all activities that serve to attract, recruit/introduce, train, retain and transition/offboard staff at Umeå University.

Competence is an individual's know-how, their motivation and their ability to perform in any situation and do whatever a specific assignment or task requires of them. Professional development should always address all three of these factors.

Professional development is the conscious, systematic work of developing managers' and employees' competence to meet the University's short-and long-term needs. It is a dynamic process that takes into account the fact that people's needs can change over time. For a manager or employee who is **new to their role** or their tasks, introduction, instruction, training, guidance, mentorship and the opportunity to work with experienced colleagues will be important. As individuals **become more experienced**, opportunities to coach, cooperate, take on new challenges, network, progress in their career and specialise will become more important.

The term *career* is multi-faceted. It can refer to reaching certain steps on the career ladder, to continuous professional development and the chance to hone one's skills, or to being presented with new challenges and stretching the limits of one's capacity and abilities.

Management (position) refers to a person's formal position and their tasks and responsibilities as an employer, as defined and delegated to them by their superior. *Leadership* refers to the interaction leaders have with their employees as they work to achieve shared goals.

Employeeship refers to the ways in which an employee approaches their work and completes their tasks, and the ways in which they interact and cooperate with colleagues and represent the University. *Active employeeship* is when an employee truly takes responsibility for their work and contributes to the University's development.

A healthy work environment is a prerequisite for a *sustainable working life* that grants security and allows one to develop professionally and/or retrain. As a workplace, Umeå University should be characterised by job satisfaction, security, development, participation, trust and respect for the fact that all people are equal.



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Mentorship is when an experienced professional helps another develop their skills and become more competent professionally. The idea behind the exchange is to capitalise on knowledge gained from experience and share it, dispersing it throughout an organisation. By contributing to someone else's professional development, a mentor can in turn finetune their own skills, capacities and approaches.

4. Professional and career development policy

Long-term talent acquisition is of strategic importance for Umeå University's vision. Qualified lecturers and professional administrative support are a prerequisite for high-quality instruction and research. Umeå University should offer professional and career development that is based on the University's needs, contributes to long-term talent acquisition and a sustainable working life, and sharpens managers' and employees' skills.

Professional and career development must be available to all managers and employees and needs to advance gender equality and diversity at Umeå University. The University must work to hone the skills its managers and employees already possess, so all staff are equipped to handle both their current tasks and any challenges they may face in the future. Developing and strengthening leadership and employeeship is an important part of the University's visionary and quality-assurance work.

Umeå University advocates trust-based governance and leadership, as it is convinced all leaders and staff have the knowledge, the drive and the ability to successfully and efficiently carry out their work, without having to resort to unnecessary micromanagement. Every decision-making level is expected to actively promote a holistic approach, cooperation and relationships based on trust. This means that the purpose and needs of the University must be the guiding principle for the governance, leadership and employeeship, as well as the organisation of the University and its culture and ways of working.

Responsibility

The success of professional and career development work depends on each manager actively taking responsibility, both for operations in general and for their team and individual employees.

In terms of operational planning and talent acquisition planning, managers have the overall responsibility for:

- spearheading the work of analysing, monitoring external trends and predicting which skills and talent the University might need going forward;



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- planning concrete measures; and
- setting aside the necessary resources to ensure the University has the talent it needs to be able to successfully fulfil its mandate.

Managers are also responsible for looking into and analysing whether the training and professional development the University offers benefit all employees equally, without anyone being discriminated against.

Employees, on the other hand, are responsible for actively managing their own professional development, capitalising on opportunities to develop and acquire additional skills, and supporting colleagues' professional development.

The annual development discussion, during which an employee and their manager engage in dialogue, is an ideal opportunity to together schedule activities to further the employee's professional and career development, both in the short and long run.

Umeå University achieves the aims of this policy by

- ensuring all managers and employees get to develop professionally in a way that ultimately strengthens the University and results in job satisfaction, high motivation and excellent performance;
- systematising its approach to professional and career development, drawing up individual development plans and annually following up on these during development discussions;
- making sure managers and employees alike are aware of and able to adhere to applicable laws, regulations and legal frameworks;
- supporting the acquisition of educational qualifications at all steps of teachers' careers. Research and teaching staff must be given opportunities to develop professionally so they can strengthen their research and teaching expertise;
- offering technical and administrative staff plenty of professional and career development opportunities. Employees must be able to develop professionally in their role, progressively gaining more experience;
- supporting research and teaching staff with a leadership position in their roles as scientific and pedagogical leaders;
- ensuring the University has a well-functioning system and the teaching expertise to design and offer high-quality internal training;
- providing tailored professional development initiatives and university-wide training programmes to promote, develop and strengthen management, leadership and employeeship; and
- offering managers and employees the chance to serve as or have a mentor, to promote professional and career development based on individuals' needs and circumstances.