

Action plan for equal opportunities and gender mainstreaming at the VH Faculty 2019

As of 2017, universities and faculties are no longer required to draw up equal opportunities action plans. Instead, faculties are expected to support heads of department in documenting and following up this work at department level. The VH Faculty's equal opportunities committee has decided, awaiting clearer instructions from SLU centrally, to draw up a combined action plan for equal opportunities and gender mainstreaming.

The plan was drafted by the faculty's equal opportunities committee, where both students and staff are represented. The staff organisations were informed on 11 December 2018, ahead of the dean's decision. The dean bears overall responsibility for compliance with the plan.

Introduction

The action plan is based on the following principles:

- Fairness in organisation and processes
- Safety of staff and students in a good work and study environment
- Quality in education and research
- Developing knowledge of equal opportunities

According to the Discrimination Act – see below – employers and higher education institutions must work to prevent discrimination.

‘The purpose of the Act is to combat discrimination and in other ways promote equal rights and opportunities regardless of sex, transgender identity or expression, ethnicity, religion or other belief, disability, sexual orientation or age.’ The Discrimination Act, 2008¹

At SLU, the term ‘equal opportunities’ is used. This concept includes gender equality, diversity and the equal treatment of employees and students at the university. The work carried out to achieve this is based on current legislation – the Discrimination Act, the Higher Education Act, the Equal Opportunities Act and the

¹ The act in its entirety can be found on the website of the Swedish Equality Ombudsman at www.do.se.

Equal Treatment of Students at Universities Act – and SLU's public service agreement.

In addition to this, during 2016–2019 SLU has the special task of developing a plan for how to gender-mainstream our operations. We also have to continually report measures and results to the government. The strategic direction document for gender mainstreaming was adopted in May 2017 (SLU ID: ua 2017.1.1.1-1795), and the action plan was adopted in May 2018 (SLU ID: ua 2018.1.1.1-1622).

The dean, heads of department and other managers are responsible for ensuring that the action plan is specified and complied with by ensuring that equal opportunities aspects are observed in all decisions and all work, at all levels within SLU.

The Academic Appointments Board plays a key part as a recruitment body and must strive to observe equal opportunities aspects throughout all phases of the recruitment and employment processes. When calling for applications, assessing applications and employing new staff, the Academic Appointments Board must be aware of elements in the employment process in which equal opportunities are to apply. The Academic Appointments Board must maintain a high level of knowledge with regard to equal opportunities issues by means of further training and actively working with good procedures, as well as through contact with other universities. The gender mainstreaming action plan has a section dedicated to recruitment to higher academic posts.

During student recruitment work, the faculty must work in cooperation with the communication department at SLU and be aware of how degree programmes are presented to prospective students so that gendered structures or career choices do not present obstacles to diversity and equality.

Within education, all teaching staff, supervisors and students must be aware of the provisions of Swedish law concerning equal opportunities and SLU's and the faculty's action plans for equal opportunities. All employees and students must comply with the rules relating to equal opportunities. The programme board must lead work on equal opportunities initiatives in education, and do so in cooperation with programme directors, directors of studies and teaching staff. Teaching staff and students must be taken into account and in all teaching, attention must be paid to the different backgrounds and values of students based on democratic values and respectful treatment. The faculty must ensure that students are given equal opportunities regardless of gender, ethnicity, religion or other belief, sexual orientation or disability. The gender mainstreaming action plan has sections on student recruitment and study environment norms, gender and gender equality in educational content and design as well as prerequisites for teaching staff.

All work within the faculty – in workgroups, on boards and committees – must be characterised by working methods that promote respectful encounters and meetings and ensure good meeting procedures that prevent discrimination.

Equal opportunities means that students and staff, men and women, must have the same rights irrespective of age, ethnicity, religion or other belief, disability or sexual orientation.

Discrimination, harassment or sexual harassment are not tolerated at SLU.

‘Harassment involves degrading treatment associated with gender, ethnicity, religion or other beliefs, disability or sexual orientation. Both staff at the university and students may be guilty of harassment. Harassment may involve ostracism, acting as if someone is invisible or making insulting comments. Sexual harassment is behaviour of a sexual nature which offends a staff member or student. This may involve touching, groping, jokes, suggestions, looks or images which are sexually explicit and degrading. Sexual harassment differs from ordinary flirting in that it is unwelcome. The person being harassed is the person who determines what is offensive and what makes the work or study environment seem unsafe.’

Definition from the Swedish Equality Ombudsman

1. Equal opportunities objectives and actions

The faculty's action plan is based on SLU's joint action plan for equal opportunities 2013 (reg. no. SLU.ua.Fe.2013.2.5.5-1088), in which the following ongoing assignments are allocated to the faculties:

- The equal opportunities committees of each faculty must revise their equal opportunities plans annually. These plans will then be approved by the dean of each faculty. This plan must be based on the university-wide equal opportunities strategy and action plan.
- Gender distribution objectives² for newly hired research and teaching staff are set annually by the respective faculty.
- Teaching hours should as far as possible be scheduled with due consideration to students with parental responsibilities.
- Instruction and examination forms must be adapted to increase accessibility for students with disabilities while maintaining quality and with the intended learning outcomes as a starting point.
- Teachers and other members of staff at the faculty must pay attention to equal treatment issues in their work. They must also know where to find information about the procedure to follow in case of suspected discrimination or harassment.

² This is a secondary objective aimed at, over time, achieving an even distribution of gender within the interval 40–60.

- Work placement contacts and external supervisors must be informed of the Discrimination Act and be aware that it also applies to work placements.

The term 'equal opportunities' means that all staff, students and applicants must be given equal opportunities regardless of gender, sexual orientation, transgender identity or expression, disability, ethnic origin, religion, other belief or age.

Actions which should always be applied at the faculty:

- Working to ensure gender parity on boards, committees, workgroups, etc. as far as possible.
- Inviting lecturers of both sexes.
- Both men and women must be taken into account when presenting honorary awards.
- Both men and women must be encouraged to take parental leave.
- Accessible teaching for all students.
- Respectful treatment of both staff and students.

2. Faculty objectives and actions

Knowledge of equal opportunities

Objective 1: The departments must have good knowledge of effective equal opportunities measures.

Action: During 2019, contacts from each department will attend conferences in the field of equal opportunities.

Responsible: The department's contact on the cooperation group and the secretary of the faculty's equal opportunities committee.

Budget: SEK 3,000 per department per year, for one delegate (approximately half a conference fee)

Objective 2: The faculty must have good knowledge of equality and gender issues.

Action: Members of the Equal Opportunities Committee must be able to attend and participate in conferences in the field of equality and gender.

Responsible: Equal opportunities committee

Budget: SEK 10,000 per year

Information on handling procedures for equal opportunities issues

Objective: Ensure that equal opportunities measures and procedures for handling related issues are clearly defined and known to the faculty's departments and other units.

Action: Contacts from each department will work together to gather information on equal opportunities issues, suggested measures and activities. Information on equal opportunities issues must be readily accessible to staff at the departments. The equal opportunities committee will select and distribute information and supporting data to the departments.

Responsible: Head of department or a person designated by the head of department.

Information on equal opportunities

Objective: All staff and students must be able to easily find information on equal opportunities issues on the SLU websites.

Action: Create clear, readily accessible information on equal opportunities issues on SLU websites. The following documents must be available on the equal opportunities web pages of the VH Faculty and SLU:

- The VH Faculty's strategy and action plan for equal opportunities
- The SLU strategy and action plan for equal opportunities
- Links to the Swedish Equality Ombudsman

Responsible: The information officer at the VH Faculty in cooperation with the secretary of the equal opportunities committee.

Action: Dissemination of information on equal opportunities issues to all teaching staff and students on degree programmes at the faculty.

Responsible: The programme boards and directors of study at the departments

Democratic working methods

Objective 1: Students must be given opportunity to be actively involved in developing working methods which fulfil equal opportunities requirements in teaching and in their studies.

Action: All degree programmes should strive to ensure that teaching takes place in accordance with the objectives for the equal opportunities efforts and that democratic working methods are used. The development within a students' specific programme, together with examples from other programmes and universities, should constitute

the basis for a good study environment and help prepare students for working life.

Responsible: The programme board and directors of study at the departments

Budget: SEK 15,000 per year for inviting guests to lead seminars or arrange courses for teaching staff who supervise effective group work with democratic working methods.

Objective 2: Create democratic working methods within the departments.

Action: Ongoing problem inventory and measures to promote equal opportunities in the work environment of staff. Include equal opportunities on the agenda of cooperation groups at the departments at least once a semester. Implement democratic working methods within the department's working groups, seminars and other meetings.

Responsible: Heads of department

Training and information³

Objective: Increase student and staff awareness of equal treatment issues.

Action: Start work to ensure that all students on degree programmes are given the opportunity to discuss value issues related to equal treatment.

Responsible: The faculties in cooperation with the Division of Educational Affairs.

Widening participation

Objective: Recruit students to degree programmes at the VH Faculty from a diversity perspective. Recruit students from all sectors of society by means of targeted information. In the long term, increase the percentage of men on degree programmes at the faculty to at least 40%.

Action: Adapt recruitment and related actions to the faculty's recruitment objectives.

Responsible: The faculties in cooperation with the Division of Educational Affairs.

³ Assignment from the vice-chancellor as part of the action plan for equal opportunities at SLU 2013.

JIHU: Overview of the gender and gender equality perspective in student recruitment. Quality review of marketing from a gender and intersectional perspective. SLU develops a strategy and organisation for widening participation where unbalanced distribution of gender is included together with other relevant aspects such as socio-economic background, ethnicity, age and place of residence.

Responsible: Division of Communication, programme boards

Recruitment targets for staff categories

Objective: Achieve at least 40% of the underrepresented gender in the categories senior lecturer and professor, as well as in management positions.

Action: Active knowledge development in the field of recruitment to give men and women the same career opportunities.

Action: During recruitment and in job ads, clearly encourage those of the underrepresented gender to apply.

Responsible: The Academic Appointments Board

Welcoming foreign staff and international students

Objective: The faculty must include staff with a foreign background and international students in the work and teaching environment respectively, as well as in social life on campus.

Action: Create opportunities and meeting places for students and staff of different nationalities.

Responsible: Head of department (responsible for HR issues), the chair of the programme board and the directors of studies for programmes with foreign students (for students).

Budget: SEK 10,000 per year

Access to information in English⁴

Objective: SLU must be an attractive employer at an international level and make it easy for staff with a native language other than Swedish to access information.

Action: Continued efforts to ensure that all documents relating to recruitment, working conditions and harassment are translated into English and published on the web.

⁴ Assignment from the vice-chancellor via the action plan for equal opportunities work at SLU 2013.

Responsible: HR managers and deans.

Policy concerning religion and other beliefs⁵

Objective: People with different religions and beliefs must feel welcome at SLU.

Action: Look into the possibility to draw up a policy for students in respect of time off and other special considerations in connection with various religious festivals.

Responsible: The head of the Division of Educational Affairs and deans.

Development funds

Objective: Staff and students must be able to implement creative and innovative ideas in respect of equal opportunities, e.g. by holding events of various kinds, recruitment efforts or other initiatives.

Action: Advertise development funds. Staff and students will be given the opportunity to apply for funding from the faculty's budget for this purpose.

Responsible: Equal opportunities committee

Budget: SEK 25,000 per year

Prevention of discrimination and harassment

Objective: Sexual harassment and other harassment must be reported immediately⁶ and dealt with in a professional manner by SLU.

Action: The departments must actively work to ensure a good work and study environment and actively prevent harassment and sexual harassment. Staff and students must be informed of equal opportunities issues during welcome events. Information on equal opportunities issues must be posted on the department's notice boards and web pages.

Responsible: The head of department and director of studies bear the primary responsibility, but all staff and students at SLU must actively work to counteract harassment.

⁵ Assignment from the vice-chancellor as part of the action plan for equal opportunities at SLU 2013.

⁶ Students will report in the first instance to the director of studies (see Procedures for dealing with suspected harassment of students pursuant to Sections 4 and 6 of the Equal Treatment of Students at Universities Act (2001:1286), reg. no. SLU ua.11.13-3973/04), and staff will report in the first instance to their line manager (see Guidelines in the event of victimisation, reg. no. SLU.ua.Fe.2012.1.0-47).

Prevention of discrimination on the grounds of sexual orientation⁷

Objective: Discrimination and harassment on the grounds of sexual orientation must be reported immediately⁶ and dealt with in a professional manner by SLU.

Action: The faculty must actively prevent discrimination and harassment on the grounds of sexual orientation. Staff and students must be notified of LGBTQ issues in the form of seminars and by means of information bulletins in cooperation with the students' unions.

Responsible: The equal opportunities committee in cooperation with the unions and the equal opportunities officer at SLU.

Budget: SEK 10,000 per year

Physical and social study and work environment

Objective: Staff and students must feel secure in their social and physical work environment.

Action: SLU must deal quickly with reports of harassment or sexual harassment, as well as discrimination of any kind. Reporting and handling procedures must be easy to understand and be available in an appropriate manner.

Responsible: The head of department and the faculty's representative on the Student Welfare Council at SLU.

Accessibility of the outdoor environment⁸

Objective: Increase the accessibility of the outdoor environment to those with physical disabilities.

Action: Plan to fix differences in surface level in order increase accessibility for people with reduced mobility in the outdoor environment at Campus Ultuna.

Responsible: The head of the Division of Facility Management, possibly in cooperation with the Landscape Architecture programme in Uppsala.

Gender mainstreaming action plan

⁷ Assignment from the vice-chancellor as part of the action plan for equal opportunities at SLU 2013.

⁸ Assignment from the vice-chancellor as part of the action plan for equal opportunities at SLU 2013.

In addition to the items listed above, the gender mainstreaming action plan highlights six areas that SLU needs to focus on during the 2018–2019 period. Below, we present three of those areas that affect the VH Faculty.

Recruitment

Review of guidelines etc. for supervision, recruitment and assessment

Action: When revising guidelines etc., a gender equality perspective must be applied.

Responsible: Faculty office, Division of Human Resources, vice-chancellor

Review of the recruitment procedures for higher academic appointments

Action: Inventory of procedures and working methods within the academic appointments board (LFN) from a gender equality perspective.

Develop methodological tools for how the application and selection process can be quality-assured from a gender perspective.

Responsible: Faculty office (for LFN work), Division of Planning

Resource allocation

Develop a system for mapping and analysis of SLU's resource allocation system from a gender equality perspective

Action: Analyse the outcome of current distribution principles from a gender equality perspective (mapping the distribution of research funding, both external and internal, at central, faculty and department level).

Action: Propose guidelines and methods for how planning and budget processes should be mainstreamed.

Responsible: Faculty office, heads of department, Division of Planning, vice-chancellor

Prerequisites for change

Examine gender-disaggregated statistics and prerequisites for gender-sensitive analyses

Action: Develop guidelines for the use of gender-disaggregated statistics and analyses before decisions are made.

Responsible: Faculty office, Division of Planning

Overview of prerequisites for teaching staff

Action: Develop procedures that ensure that programme and course coordinators, examiners and teachers are trained in gender equality and that they have access to a forum as well as time for discussions on how to integrate a gender equality perspective in programme syllabuses and teaching.

Responsible: Heads of department, Division of Educational Affairs, Board of Education