

Action plan for gender equality and equal opportunities at the VH Faculty 2021

1. Collaboration

The plan has been prepared by the VH Faculty's equal opportunities committee in which students and employees are represented.

2. Summary of the faculty's action plan

The faculty's action plan is an important component for anchoring and driving the work with gender equality and equal opportunities at the faculty forward. It supports structured work with proactive measures (described below under Section 3, Starting points and definitions).

The faculty's action plan divides measures into fundamental and recurring actions that will always be in place at the faculty. It also includes measures for the current planning period (some of these may transition into recurring measures should the need arise). The action plan must be reviewed and updated each year. The review of the action plan should preferably take place in December and updates be in place by January/February of the following year.¹

A member of staff and a support function must be to be delegated responsibility for each measure.

3. Starting points and definitions

The concept of equal opportunities includes gender equality, diversity and the equal treatment of employees and students at the university. The term equal opportunities means that all employees, students and applicants have the same conditions and are treated fairly. The faculty's action plan is based on the latest government remits and legislation as well as SLU's governing documents and strategic targets that include: Action plan for gender mainstreaming and both the SLU and VH Faculty strategies.

¹ This might be adjusted to follow the overall work with gender equality and equal opportunities at SLU.

The faculty's action plan also draws on the importance of critical thinking within academia – an area that involves questioning norms.² Norms can create barriers and therefore they need to be highlighted, discussed and criticised in both research and education as well as the supporting organisation. This is one way of respecting equal rights and responsibilities.

Active measures following the Discrimination Act

Active measures involve systematic preventive work against discrimination that addresses all of the seven grounds of discrimination. This work must be continuous, documented, and follow the four-step model below. The Swedish Discrimination Act defines the grounds of discrimination as follows: sex, transgender identity or expression, ethnicity, religion or other belief, disability and age. Measures and documentation are to be formulated at all faculty levels and adapted to each organisation. Templates are available on the staff web.³

Aktiva åtgärder



Within the following areas:

Employer

- Working conditions
- Salaries and other terms of employment
- Recruitment and promotion
- Training and other continuing professional development

Education

- Admission and recruitment
- Examinations and assessments
- Study environment
- Combining studies and parenthood
- Teaching forms and organisation

IMAGE TEXT: ACTIVE MEASURES, INVESTIGATE, ANALYSE, ACTIVE MEASURES, FOLLOW UP AND EVALUATE

²Norms are often described as the unwritten social rules we adhere to that both shape us as individuals and influence the way we behave around others. Norms facilitate social interaction, but they can also create barriers.

The preparatory work for the changes to the Discrimination Act, 1 January 2017 outlines that work with active measures involves increasing awareness of the norms and attitudes that influence employers and education providers' everyday work as well as acting in a way that promotes equal rights and opportunities (Government Bill: 2015/2016:135, p. 42)

³ <https://internt.slu.se/en/organisation--styrning/gender-equality-and-equal-opportunities-at-slu/working-preventively-against-discrimination/>

4. Responsibility

The SLU Board and vice-chancellor have overall responsibility for the work with equal opportunities. The dean and head of faculty administration must ensure that equal opportunities work is conducted at their faculty. This work must include planning, implementation and follow-up in both day-to-day activities and strategic planning. The faculty's heads of department/equivalent are responsible for managing and integrating equal opportunities issues into their activities. They must also demonstrate the importance of this area through their words and actions. The annual follow-up and documentation must include information about how the measures have been implemented.

All SLU staff and students must play their part in achieving a healthy work and study environment from an equal opportunities perspective.

4.1 Support functions

The following functions are tasked with supporting the faculty's organisations:

Faculty-wide level: The equal opportunities committee is tasked with supporting faculty management in the work with active measures.

The faculty office: The equal opportunities officer is tasked with supporting faculty management and the departments/equivalent in the work with active measures.

Division of Human Resources: The local HR officer is tasked with supporting managers and coordination groups with systematic work environment management.

Local level: department/equivalent coordination group for systematic work environment management, safety and equal opportunities supports heads of department/equivalent in the work to implement active measures at the department/equivalent.

5. Objectives/action plan for VH Faculty 2021

5.1 Basic and recurring activities:

Comprehensive perspective

a) The faculty and its departments/equivalents conduct annual follow-ups (of investigations, analysis, measures) that are documented⁴ in accordance with the active measures in the Discrimination Act.

⁴ <https://internt.slu.se/en/organisation--styrning/gender-equality-and-equal-opportunities-at-slu/working-preventively-against-discrimination/>

- Heads of department/equivalent and management groups are offered annual meetings with the equal opportunities officer to exchange information and review the department/equivalent's work and conditions. Questions addressed include: What is already being done? What needs to be done? How do we implement active measures at a local level? How do we promote a culture/climate where staff can speak out about risks to equal opportunities they see, and how can we do this practically?
- Management groups and local coordination groups can use the SFAD game.⁵
- Heads of department/equivalent are offered activities for the department's staff, as well as workshops about norms/values and interaction. Preferably including interactive components for discussion and joint reflection.
- Work environment issues and equal opportunities are discussed during staff development reviews.
- Both the SLU and faculty equal opportunities action plans must be a natural component of everyday activities and be adapted to each organisation. Heads of department/equivalent must review this at department/equivalent level and make equal opportunities a permanent item on the agenda for local coordination groups and management groups.

Responsible: heads of department/equivalent

Support function: Equal opportunities administrative officer and HR officer

b) Use the staff survey, doctoral student survey and student welfare survey in the work with active measures.

Responsible: Dean, vice-dean equal opportunities, heads of department/equivalent

Support function: Equal opportunities administrative officer and HR officer

c) Faculty and departments/equivalent equal opportunities work based on the faculty's action plan is followed up and evaluated, as well as compiled in a report.

- Establish procedures for an annual compilation of activities at the faculty and departments/equivalent.

Responsible party: Vice-dean, Equal opportunities

Support function: Equal opportunities administrative officer

⁵SFAD, systematic preventive work with discrimination, or the equal opportunities game are methods for investigating risks and obstacles. Contact the equal opportunities administrative officer or local HR officer to use the game.

d) Ensure that the faculty's departments/equivalent are given the support they need for work with active measures.

- Establish routines for annual check-ups that preferably are included in the procedures for follow-up and evaluation of the faculty's action plan, see point (c) above.

Responsible party: Dean, head of faculty administration

Support function: Equal opportunities administrative officer

Employer perspective

e) Provide staff with information about the content of the Discrimination Act and the university's equal opportunities work; emphasise the zero-tolerance approach to discrimination, harassment, sexual harassment and other forms of victimisation.

- Equal opportunities are an integrated element of introductions for new employees.
- All faculty staff must take equal opportunities into consideration when they work. They must also know where to find the procedures that apply for suspected harassment or sexual harassment and information about local contacts.
- Make it easier for staff to speak out about risks linked to equal opportunities that they have noted at the organisation.⁶

Responsible party: Heads of department/equivalent

Support functions: Equal opportunities administrative officer and HR officer

The education provider perspective

f) Provide students with information about the content of the Discrimination Act and the university's equal opportunities work; emphasise the zero-tolerance approach to discrimination, harassment, sexual harassment and other forms of victimisation.

- Establish a checklist to give course coordinators and teachers the information they need to distribute, such as notifying students about where to find the procedures that apply for suspected harassment or sexual harassment and information about local contacts.

⁶ Harassment and victimisation may be difficult to notice as a result of under-reporting (those exposed don't submit a complaint) and normalisation (if certain type of "banter" becomes standard).

- Plan and conduct lectures on equal opportunities for new students; the rights, responsibilities and duties based on the Discrimination Act and the Act's link to norms and awareness of norms, as well as SLU procedures.

Responsible party: Heads of department/equivalent, programme directors of studies

Support functions: Equal opportunities administrative officer

- g) Offer lectures and workshops to students about norms/values and interaction with others, preferably including interactive components for discussion and joint reflection.

Responsible party: Vice-dean equal opportunities, programme directors of studies

Support function: Equal opportunities administrative officer

5.2 Measures for the current planning period

Comprehensive perspective

- h) Local coordination groups implement, as far as possible, the university-wide systematic work environment management training and active measures based on the Discrimination Act.⁷

Responsible party: Heads of department/equivalent

Support function: Equal opportunities administrative officer and HR officer

- i) Begin the work to establish focus group models for students, doctoral students and staff.

Responsible party: Vice-dean, Equal opportunities

Support function: Equal opportunities administrative officer together with other university-wide support functions

- j) Equal opportunities are an integrated element of the introduction of new doctoral students; establishing the conditions for how to carry out this work during the current planning period.

Responsible party: Vice-dean, R&D, vice-dean equal opportunities

- k) Follow up the results of the doctoral student survey,

⁷ Contact local HR officer or the equal opportunities administrative officer to book a training.

- Work together with the doctoral student ombudsman and PhD student council to arrange a workshop for doctoral students.

Responsible party: Vice-dean, Equal opportunities
Support function: Equal opportunities administrative officer

- l) Increase collaboration with the VH Faculty PhD student council and doctoral student ombudsman on matters of equal opportunities.

Responsible party: Vice-dean, Equal opportunities
Support function: Equal opportunities administrative officer

- m) Initiate creation of a compulsory equal opportunities online training course (using Canvas) for the faculty's heads of department, course coordinators and supervisors, similar to the one offered by S Faculty.⁸

Responsible party: Dean, vice-dean Equal opportunities
Support function: Equal opportunities administrative officer together with university-wide support functions.

- n) Improve the equal opportunities front page on the faculty website to make it easier for staff to find all information about gender equality and equal opportunities at the faculty.

Responsible party: Vice-dean, Equal opportunities
Support function: Equal opportunities administrative officer, supported by the Division of Communication

Employer perspective

- o) Continue to ensure that recruitment and skills provision is objective and that there is a continual awareness of discrimination and bias throughout the recruitment process.

- Conduct a review of recruitment procedures for higher academic positions by listing procedures and work methods from an equal opportunities perspective.

- Establish a checklist for how the quality of the preparatory process can be assured from an equal opportunities perspective.

Responsible party: Dean, head of faculty administration
Support function: Equal opportunities administrative officer, faculty administrative officer, HR officer

⁸ The activity will be replaced by work on University level investigating a joint training for SLU, mandatory for certain roles, such as course leaders, programme director of studies, and head supervisors (PhD-level).

The education provider perspective

p) Increase collaboration for equal opportunities work with the Veterinary Medicine Association, Ultuna Student Union and the Equine Science Student Union.

Responsible party: Vice-dean, equal opportunities

Support function: Equal opportunities administrative officer

q) Continuing professional development opportunity focusing on equal opportunities, adapted based on needs, for first-cycle and second-cycle level teaching staff. This opportunity will be available each semester and is a collaboration with the Unit for Educational Development.

Responsible party: Vice-dean, equal opportunities

Support function: Equal opportunities administrative officer, Unit for Educational Development

r) Explore the possibility for introducing a forum similar to the ethics workshop for students, which allows for regular reflection on matters of equal opportunities taking students as a starting point for matters of equal opportunities.

Responsible party: Vice-dean equal opportunities, Vice-dean first and second cycle education

Support function: Equal opportunities administrative officer

6.3 Gender mainstreaming

s) Work actively with gender mainstreaming at faculty and department level, in line with SLU's gender mainstreaming action plan.

Responsible party: Dean, heads of department/equivalent

Support function: Equal opportunities administrative officer together with coordination group Unit for Educational Development, Division of Planning, and Division of Human Resources

t) Examine in what way the faculty's researchers require support for integrating a gender perspective into their research, if and when relevant.⁹ Work to create the support begins with:

- Increase collaboration with the Grants Office for external research funding and gender perspectives in project applications.

⁹ It is becoming more common for research financiers to require that a gender perspective is included in the applications and, where relevant, the research being funded. For the faculty, it is not just a matter of meeting the requirements set by many research funding bodies, it is also a matter of quality. Research that impacts humans often involves an element of gender which risks being overlooked if the gender perspective is not included.

- Begin with mapping ongoing research at the faculty that integrates a gender perspective.

Responsible party: Dean, vice-dean equal opportunities

Support functions: Equal opportunities administrative officer, Grants Office