



Stockholms  
universitet

2017-03-23

Dnr SU FV-2.12.1-0865-17

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## Stockholm University's Plan for Equal Rights and Opportunities 2017

## Table of Contents

1.	Introduction.....	3
2.	Policy concerning equal rights and opportunities .....	3
3.	Obligations and responsibilities .....	4
3.1	Laws and regulations.....	4
3.1.1	Changes in the Discrimination Act from 2017.....	5
3.2	Distribution of responsibility for equality work.....	6
3.2.1	Vice-Chancellor .....	6
3.2.2	Director of Administration.....	6
3.2.3	Academic area boards .....	6
3.2.4	Departments/equivalent.....	6
3.2.5	Coordinator for Equal Treatment .....	6
4.	Follow-up review .....	7
5.	The departments/equivalent's work on equal rights and opportunities.....	7
6.	University-wide work on equal rights and opportunities .....	9
6.1	Promote equal rights and opportunities.....	9
6.2	Disability .....	9
6.3	Widening participation.....	10
6.4	Combine parental responsibilities with studies.....	10
6.5	Sexual orientation and transgender identity or expression.....	10

## 1. Introduction

The Plan for Equal Rights and Opportunities includes the University's plans for equal treatment, widening participation and accessibility. In addition, the plan aims to clarify the responsibilities of departments/equivalent concerning the work being done on equal rights and opportunities at the local level.

The current plan primarily includes measures relating to equal rights and opportunities for students and prospective students. For measures relating to equal rights and opportunities for employees, please refer to the University's Gender Equality Plan. The work on gender equality for employees is coordinated by the Human Resources Office.

The work on equal rights and opportunities is based on the demands made on the University by laws and ordinances. See Chapter 3 below and Chapter 2 of the Appendix to the Plan for Equal Rights and Opportunities<sup>1</sup> for a brief introduction to the legislation.

## 2. Policy concerning equal rights and opportunities

Stockholm University should be an open, innovative and trans-boundary university that promotes equality and equal treatment. Work on equal rights and opportunities creates and fosters the conditions for the implementation of the University's strategies.

The University should be a work and study environment that utilises the resources that employees and students with different backgrounds, life situations and skills bring to the table. Employees and students should be treated equally and with respect, and not be faced with prejudice and stereotypes. A healthy work and study environment will provide opportunities to increase creativity and achieve good work and study results.

Discrimination, harassment and sexual harassment are unacceptable and must not occur at Stockholm University.

The University should work actively to ensure that the student body at all levels of education reflects the surrounding community in order to, for example, allow for the expression of more perspectives in the University's education and research. Stockholm University should aim to remove obstacles so that the University becomes a place of work and study that is not only perceived to be, but actually is, open and accessible to everyone.

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<sup>1</sup> Available on the University's website: [www.su.se/jamlikhet](http://www.su.se/jamlikhet) under Handlingsplaner

Employees and students' knowledge of equality issues and the University's work on equal rights and opportunities should continuously be improved. This includes being familiar with discrimination laws as well as the work to increase accessibility and widening participation.

### **3. Obligations and responsibilities**

#### **3.1 Laws and regulations**

According to the Higher Education Act (1992:1434), the University is obligated to observe and promote equality between women and men at all times, as well as actively promote widening participation (Chapter 1, Section 5, paragraphs 2 and 4).

The Discrimination Act (2008:567) regulates the University's responsibility as a provider of education<sup>2</sup> concerning issues associated with equal rights and opportunities and grounds for discrimination. The law stipulates that the University is obligated to implement active measures to provide students and applicants<sup>3</sup> with equal opportunities to higher education regardless of ethnicity, disability, gender, transgender identity or expression, religion or other belief, sexual orientation or age.

As a provider of education, the University must aim to prevent discrimination, harassment and sexual harassment, and, upon learning that someone is believed to have been subjected to such an offence, investigate the circumstances surrounding the allegations.

The actions taken by the University to achieve the above must be documented on an annual basis. Stockholm University has previously decided to combine the former plan for equal treatment with the description of the work to promote accessibility and widening participation in the Plan for Equal Rights and Opportunities. The University will maintain the same structure of documentation in 2017.

In addition to the Higher Education Ordinance and the Discrimination Act, the University's work on equal treatment should observe the Parental Leave Act (1995:584), the ordinance concerning the responsibility of government agencies to implement the national disability policy (2001:526), the appropriation directions, as well as any relevant government regulations and internal policy documents and guidelines.

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<sup>2</sup> In addition, the law includes rules regarding the University's responsibility as an employer, as well as its responsibility for people who are covered by the Public Employment Act (1994:260).

<sup>3</sup> Students and applicants to courses and programmes at all levels are covered by the law.

The work to promote equal rights and opportunities should be carried out in close cooperation with the students. The Stockholm University Student Union appoints representatives to work on equality issues in both local and central project groups. At the departments/equivalent, the local student council – given there is one – should be given the opportunity to participate in the work on equal rights and opportunities. If there is no student council, the relevant student union can be contacted. Students are invited to suggest improvements to be implemented at the departments/equivalent, as well as at the University as a whole, for example via the Coordinator for Equal Treatment at Student Services.

### 3.1.1 Changes in the Discrimination Act from 2017

On 1 January 2017, the chapter in the Discrimination Act that addresses active measures (chapter 3) was revised. This chapter regulates what the legislator means by active measures, how the work should be implemented, and what areas the University should focus on. After revision, it now explains that the work on active measures involves the implementation of preventive and promotional work, which is accomplished by:

- investigating whether there is a risk of discrimination or retaliation, or if there are any other obstacles to the equal rights and opportunities of individuals in the University's operations;
- analysing the causes of identified risks and obstacles;
- implementing the necessary preventive and promotional measures;
- reviewing and evaluating the work described in the points above.

The work on active measures should be carried out continuously. The measures should be scheduled and implemented as soon as possible. As a provider of education, the University should implement active measures in the following areas:

- admission and recruitment procedures;
- forms of instruction and organisation of training;
- examinations and assessment of student performance;
- study environment;
- opportunities to combine studies with parenthood.

Another change in the work on active measure is that all grounds for discrimination are covered. The changes will be integrated into the University's work on active measures in 2017. A more detailed description of the changes is available on the University's website: [www.su.se/jamlikhet](http://www.su.se/jamlikhet).

## **3.2 Distribution of responsibility for equality work**

Each employee and student is responsible for ensuring, in day-to-day activities, that the University is a place of work and study that is open to everyone.

### **3.2.1 Vice-Chancellor**

The Vice-Chancellor has the ultimately responsibility for the University's equality work. The Council for Work Environment and Equal Rights should be advisory to the Vice-Chancellor on equality issues and disseminate information on these issues within the University.

### **3.2.2 Director of Administration**

The Director of Administration has overall responsibility for the handling of equality issues within the University Administration. This responsibility entails pushing, coordinating and reviewing the work against discrimination and for equal rights and opportunities at the University. The Director of Administration has, through a general delegation to the unit managers within the University Administration, delegated the responsibility for ensuring that the equality work is carried out within the University Administration and integrated into the daily operations of each unit.

### **3.2.3 Academic area boards**

The academic area boards are responsible for integrating equality issues in the planning, review and evaluation of education and research, as well as in internal and external collaboration. In addition, the academic area boards are responsible for coordinating the equality work in interfaculty education and research. This responsibility includes ensuring that local councils/groups responsible for issues relating to work environment and equal rights are established at the department/equivalent level.

### **3.2.4 Departments/equivalent**

Departments/equivalent should promote equality at the local level based on the requirements of the Discrimination Act and the University-wide objectives. Those departments/equivalent that have contact with students at any level of education should continuously take action to achieve equal rights and opportunities and prevent harassment.

According the University's decision-making and delegation policy, the head of department/equivalent is responsible for the equality work at the department/equivalent.

### **3.2.5 Coordinator for Equal Treatment**

In order to provide support and advice to departments/equivalent in their work on equal rights and opportunities, Student Services has a coordinator for equal treatment, an administrator for widening participation and a coordinator for special pedagogical support for students with disabilities. The Human Resources Office has a coordinator for equal



treatment and an administrator responsible for accessibility issues relating to employees. Contact details for these individuals can be found in the Appendix to the Plan for Equal Rights and Opportunities, Chapter 1.

The responsibility for investigations into possible discrimination against students has not been delegated to the head of department/equivalent. Such matters should always be reported to the University's coordinator for equal treatment and handled by Student Services. Decisions in discrimination cases are typically made by the head of Student Services, but in matters of principle, the decisions are made by the Vice-Chancellor in accordance with the University's decision-making and delegation policy.

#### **4. Follow-up review**

Student Services reviews the University's work on equality issues relating to students and applicants, both centrally and within the departments/equivalent, on an annual basis. The review of the departments/equivalent's work is conducted by means of a web survey addressed to the heads of department/equivalent. The Vice-Chancellor will decide if any measures need to be taken based on the result of the review. The review will be available on the University's website, [www.su.se/jamlikhet](http://www.su.se/jamlikhet), once it has been added to the Plan for Equal Rights and Opportunities.

#### **5. The departments/equivalent's work on equal rights and opportunities**

Each department/equivalent should have a contact person for equality issues that is appointed by the head/equivalent. The departments/equivalent should establish local councils for issues relating to work environment and equal rights.

The departments/equivalent should develop an action plan with objectives, as well as implement measures relating to the areas specified in the Discrimination Act and in this plan. The action plan can be made for one year at a time. The work of the departments/equivalent should aim to achieve the University-wide goals and implement measures that have been adapted to the specific circumstances of the relevant department/equivalent. The combined measures should cover more than one area, e.g. widening participation and discrimination on the basis of gender, as well as multiple target groups, e.g. students and presumptive students.

The action plan should be documented in a way that is appropriate for the department/equivalent. Examples of how the work can be documented are available in the Appendix to the Plan for Equal Rights and Opportunities, Chapter 8.

Additional support concerning the development of measures, or advice concerning their implementation, can be obtained from the coordinators for equal treatment. For contact details, please refer to the Appendix to the Plan for Equal Rights and Opportunities.

Departments/equivalent should work to promote equal rights and opportunities at the local level. This includes the following:

- basing the work on the rules concerning active measures in the Discrimination Act;
- taking responsibility for widening participation;
- ensuring accessibility to the department/equivalent's facilities, activities or access to information, and thus preventing to the greatest extent possible any experience of barriers.

Only those departments/equivalent that have contact with students, including the training of doctoral students, are required to take measures to promote the equal rights and opportunities of students. The head of department/equivalent is responsible for ensuring that the measures are implemented.

The following measures should be given priority if they have not already been implemented:

### **Rules of procedure in cases of discrimination**

Clear information must be available on how the department/equivalent will handle cases where an employee or student feels that they are the subject of harassment under the Discrimination Act. The rules of procedure must include the following:

- information about who to contact;
- description of the process and how cases are documented.

### **Contact details for questions concerning equal rights and opportunities**

Each department/equivalent should provide clear and accessible information on whom to contact with questions concerning equal rights and opportunities.

### **Enable students to combine parenthood with studies**

As of 1 January 2017, the work on active measures under the Discrimination Act should also include opportunities to combine studies with parenthood. This may involve appointing a contact person for students with parental responsibilities, as well as reviewing how the teaching is organised, when it is scheduled, and whether there are any special needs when it comes to the facilities.



## 6. University-wide work on equal rights and opportunities

This chapter describes the promotional measures to be implemented within the University Administration. The table below includes the intended target group for each measure (students or prospective students are always the ultimate target group for the effects of the measures) that is responsible for the implementation, including in what time period the measure should be implemented. The responsibility for appointing people with operational responsibility for the measures lies with the relevant administrative units.

### 6.1 Promote equal rights and opportunities

**Objective:** Provide support to the departments/equivalent in their work to prevent discrimination, harassment, sexual harassment and victimisation.

Measure	Target group	Responsible for implementation	Time period
Investigation concerning the introduction of University-wide administration and coordination of a norm-critical review of textbooks	Departments	Student Services	2017
Increasing the knowledge about equality issues	Employees	Human Resources Office, Student	2017
Support for the departments' work on equal rights and opportunities through the local councils for work environment and equal rights	Departments	Human Resources Office Student Services	2017

### 6.2 Disability

**Objective:** Ensure that the University's facilities, information and activities are accessible to people with disabilities.

Increase knowledge throughout the University that the lack of accessibility may constitute a form of discrimination under the Discrimination Act.

Measure	Target group	Responsible for implementation	Time period
Survey of the extent to which video-based teaching materials are used, as well as to what extent the material is subtitled or otherwise made accessible	Departments	Student Services	2017
University-wide policy/recommendation concerning the subtitling of video-based teaching materials	Students/ Employees	Student Services	2017

University-wide policy/recommendation concerning the recording of lectures/seminars	Students/ Employees	Student Services	2017
Seminars on accessibility	Employees/ Directors of	Student Services	2017

In 2017, the External Relations and Communications Office will launch “Web 2021”, a project aiming to improve the flow of information and increase the visibility of the University’s education and research through new, modern and accessible templates.

### 6.3 Widening participation

**Objective:** Increase the representation of underrepresented groups and widen participation in studies at Stockholm University.

Measure	Target group	Responsible for implementation	Time period
University-wide strategy for the work on widening participation	Employees	Student Services	2017

### 6.4 Combine parental responsibilities with studies

**Objective:** Make it easier for students to combine studies with parental responsibilities

Measure	Target group	Responsible for implementation	Time period
Ensure that the departments’ management teams have access to information on the responsibility to enable students to combine parental responsibilities with studies	Head of Department/ Director of Studies	Student Services	2017

### 6.5 Sexual orientation and transgender identity or expression

In order to organise the University’s participation in Stockholm Pride, the External Relations and Communications Office has been instructed to do the following: convene a planning group for the participation in Stockholm Pride; schedule and plan activities in connection with Stockholm Pride – in close collaboration with the work group for equal rights; maintain contacts with Stockholm Pride; and handle external and internal communication concerning the University’s participation.