

Action Plan for Gender Mainstreaming 2023–2025

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Description:

In its appropriation directions for 2022, Stockholm University was instructed to prepare a strategy for gender mainstreaming for the period until 2025. This strategy was established by the President in September 2022 and is now being supplemented by an action plan. The point of departure for the action plan is the three priority areas *career paths and invisible power structures*, *the study and work environment for doctoral students*, and *student's gendered study choices*.

1 Introduction

In its appropriation directions for the budget year 2022, the Swedish Government instructed Stockholm University to submit a report on the University's gender mainstreaming strategy for the coming year by September 2022. On 8 September 2022, the President established Stockholm University's Strategy for Gender Mainstreaming 2023–2025 (ref. no. SU FV-3040-22).

The main purpose of the strategy is to contribute to solving gender equality problems in the University's core operations. To achieve the overarching objectives of gender mainstreaming, the strategy is broken down into six overall activities and a number of sub-activities detailed in the Action Plan for Gender Mainstreaming 2023–2025. Overall responsibility for the implementation of the action plan rests with the Office of the President. Responsibility for specific activities is divided between the Office of the President, Office of Science and Office of Human Sciences, the Human Resources Office and the Centre for the Advancement of University Teaching.

The Strategy for Gender Mainstreaming 2023–2025 highlights three gender equality problems on which the University need to concentrate its efforts over the next three years:

- Career paths and invisible power structures,
- The study and work environment for doctoral students, and
- Student's gendered study choices.

The first of these problems is rooted in the underrepresentation of women in senior academic positions at Stockholm University. The objective is therefore to continue working to ensure that women and men have the same opportunities to have an academic career and that the percentage of female professors continues to increase at the University.

Surveys have also revealed that wellbeing of female doctoral students in general is worse than that of their male counterparts. The targets are to reduce the level of sick leave among doctoral students to the same level as other staff at the University and to increase the percentage of doctoral students who complete their third-cycle programmes.

Finally, admission statistics show that the University finds it difficult to recruit men to female-dominated vocational programmes and to retain those that are recruited. This has consequences not only for the programmes in question but also for the long-term gender

balance of the labour market. To rectify this problem, that target is to encourage more men to choose and graduate from female-dominated vocational programmes in order to eventually redress the gender imbalance in the labour market.

Within the framework of gender mainstreaming, the Management Secretariat will also investigate the conditions for integrating the follow-up and documentation of various assignments linked to gender equality policy goals, gender equality and equal opportunities with existing quality-assurance and monitoring processes pursuant to, for example, Chapters 2 and 3 of the Swedish Discrimination Act (SFS 2008:567), Swedish Work Environment Authority provisions on the organisational and social work environment (AFS 2015:4), and the Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area. This is intended to strengthen ties to the University's day-to-day operations.

The University was first tasked with gender mainstreaming its operations to achieve gender equality policy sub-goals in its appropriation directions for 2016. The present action plan is the third to be established and represents a continuation of the gender mainstreaming work described in previous plans.

2. Career paths and invisible power structures

2.1 A strong, well-developed gender equality perspective on recruitment and career development

The University has been working to achieve gender equality in career paths for teachers and researchers for some time, including by ensuring transparent and unambiguous processes for preparing and making decisions, and by training management and staff in matters related to gender equality and discrimination. Over the next few years, the University will continue to strengthen the gender equality perspective on recruitment and career development through the following sub-activities:

- Based on our earlier work, we will continue to map how faculties and departments go about attracting and recruiting applicants from the underrepresented sex. In the Science Academic Area, search committees are employed in the recruitment of researchers and teachers, reaching out to potential applicants with targeted offers to seek appointment. An evaluation will be undertaken of whether search committees contribute to gender balance among applicants. We will also investigate other potential methods for attracting applicants from a gender equality perspective. In the Human Science Academic Area (Faculty of Social Sciences), we are evaluating how gender equality aspects are considered in governance documents related to promotion and the appointment of docents and how the rules are applied.

Responsibility: Office of Science and Office of Human Sciences

- Trials of observers on academic appointment boards, initially in the Science Academic Area. To further strengthen recruitment processes, and to assess the risk of discrimination, trials will be held in selected recruitment processes. This sub-project will be implemented in stages. Firstly, we will investigate what form the observers' assignment should take. A number of observers will then be trained in how objective assessment can be ensured in recruitment processes and a selection of recruitments will be observed. Finally, the results of the trial and the mapping and evaluation described above will provide the basis for recommendations on a more detailed working method for ensuring gender equality in recruitment and promotion.

Responsibility: Office of Science

2.2 Counteract a skewed distribution of social and administrative duties

In addition to strengthening and developing a gender equality perspective on the assessment of qualifications and recruitment, gender mainstreaming activities will also be undertaken to illuminate informal power structures that prevent women from acquiring further qualifications on the same terms as their male colleagues. The following activities are intended to reveal the gender division of duties that, while they are necessary to the running of the University, are not always considered to provide a useful qualification for teachers and researchers:

- Conduct a review of previous studies and surveys at other higher education institutions dealing with the division of social and administrative duties within academia, and an inventory of good examples of how a skewed distribution of such tasks can be avoided.

Responsibility: Office of the President

- Hold workshops to present and discuss the results of the review. It is anticipated that this sub-activity will lead to good examples of active measures implemented by departments to ensure a gender balanced division of social and administrative duties being disseminated throughout the University, as well as to recommendations on how any existing skewed distribution of such duties can be rectified.

Responsibility: Office of the President

2.3 Training activities concerning a gender equality perspective on leadership

Since the first gender mainstreaming action plan was established in 2017, the University has implemented a number of activities to enhance knowledge of gender equality and discrimination, especially among various types of decision-making functions. Over the coming years, this work will continue as part of gender mainstreaming:

- Follow up and, where necessary, improve existing training courses and develop new training initiatives related to gender mainstreaming. For example: training in gender and gender equality perspectives for project managers and supervisors; training in gender and gender equality perspectives on assessment processes for academic appointment boards; and tools for gender and gender equality, diversity and equal opportunities in education (see below). We will also investigate whether some of these initiatives can be undertaken within the framework of the Stockholm Trio university alliance.

Responsibility: Office of the President or, alternatively, the function holding each training course.

2.4 Indicators

The following indicators will be used to assess whether we achieve our goals of equal opportunities for women and men to have a successful academic career, a higher percentage of female professors and women constituting 48 percent of newly recruited professors at Stockholm University:

- Professors (women/men)
- Professors recruited over the most recent five-year period (women/men)
- Promotions to professor (women/men) in relation to the recruitment pool

The indicators in the action plan were decided in the Strategy for Gender Mainstreaming 2023–2025.

3. The study and work environment for doctoral students

3.1 Improving the study and work environment for doctoral students

National surveys conducted over recent years have demonstrated that women are more likely than men to perceive deficiencies in the third-cycle study and work environment.¹ Moreover, a survey conducted at Stockholm University shows that female doctoral students have a higher level of sick leave than both their male counterparts and women employed at the

University in general. In order to improve the study and work environment for doctoral students, the University will therefore implement the following sub-activities:

- Compile results from the university-wide Staff Survey for the period 2021–2023, which is conducted as three sub-surveys: a survey of the work situation of doctoral students (supervision, individual study plan, onboarding, situation during the COVID-19 pandemic, etc.) conducted in autumn 2021; a survey of the workplace climate, leadership and performance reviews circulated to all staff during autumn 2022; and a survey of harassment, sexual harassment and victimisation, which will be conducted in autumn 2023. Results from all three sub-surveys related to the study and work environment for doctoral students will be compiled in order to disseminate the results and develop recommendations on how deficiencies within third-cycle studies can be rectified.

Responsibility: Human Resources Office

3.2 Development programme for doctoral students

Over recent years, the Human Resources Office and Board of Human Science have created a development programme for doctoral students, the Stockholm University PhD Programme, to improve the study and work environment for third-cycle courses and programmes. During autumn 2022, this programme was further developed through the pilot project *Forum for Doctoral Students in the Human Science Academic Area*. The project has three components: a mentor programme; weekly writing meetings; and other activities related to core operations, such as postgraduate career choices and social activities. There is also a related third-cycle course intended to help doctoral students to finish their studies on time and maintain their wellbeing along the way. The pilot project involves creating ties with the Gender Academy, primarily through the existing network for doctoral students. In order to strengthen the study and work environment for doctoral students, the following sub-activities will be implemented:

- Monitor the implementation of the pilot project *Forum for Doctoral Students in the Human Science Academic Area*, which is expected to improve working conditions and the study and work environment for doctoral students. The results of the pilot project may form the basis for investigating a possible permanent development programme for doctoral students at the University.

Responsibility: The Board of Human Science and the Human Resources Office

3.3 Indicators

The following indicators will be used to assess whether we achieve our targets of reducing the level of sick leave among doctoral students to the same level as other staff at the University

and increasing the percentage of doctoral students who complete their third-cycle programmes:

- Sick leave among doctoral students (women/men)
- The number of doctoral students (women/men) who complete their third-cycle programme in the allotted period of study.

4. Student's gendered study choices

4.1 A stronger gender equality perspective on education

Ensuring that work on gender equality in education is relevant and fit for purpose is a vital aspect of the University's quality assurance processes. Gender equality is one of the assessment areas when establishing, developing or evaluating a course or programme. It is a valuable tool for making our courses and programmes more accessible to diverse students and, in the long term, making them more attractive to both women and men. In 2022, the University conducted a major survey of the student population. This revealed that men are underrepresented in the majority of vocational programmes offered at the University. In order to increase the percentage of men enrolling in and graduating from vocational programmes, the University intends to:

- hold workshops to exchange experiences of gender-balanced recruitment and student completion within vocational education and training. It is anticipated that this sub-activity, which will also be part of the University's efforts to widen recruitment, will highlight and disseminate good examples from departments of gender equality in recruitment and student completion.

Responsibility: Office of the President

- implement a graduation survey/programme survey for first- and second-cycle programmes, with questions on gender equality and equal opportunities. The introduction of this tool for following up students' perceptions of gender equality is intended to reveal gender inequality problems in education and develop gender equality and equal opportunities perspectives on the content, design and implementation of courses and programmes.

Responsibility: Office of the President

- follow up content related to gender and the gender equality perspective in training for directors of studies in order to reinforce the gender equality perspective on the content, design and implementation of courses and programmes.

Responsibility: Human Resources Office

- investigate the possibility of developing a resource website within the framework of the university alliance Stockholm Trio, with tools for gender equality, diversity and equal opportunities in education, inventory similar initiatives at other higher education institutions and, if necessary, develop other training initiatives for gender mainstreaming in education. This sub-activity is intended to increase knowledge and awareness of gender, gender equality, diversity and equal opportunities, so that more perspectives are gradually expressed in the content, design and implementation of courses and programmes and their quality is enhanced.

Responsibility: Centre for the Advancement of University Teaching

4.2 Indicators

The following indicators will be used to assess whether the University is meeting its target of increasing the percentage of men enrolling in and graduating from vocational programmes:

- The number/percentage of men enrolling in each vocational programme
- The number/percentage of men graduating from each vocational programme

5. Operational support and follow-up

The Office of the President has overall responsibility for the implementation of the action plan and will support other functions responsible for the measures in the plan.

Indicators for gender mainstreaming progress will be followed up on an annual basis in separate reports for education and research. The action plan will be continuously followed up through annual reports to the Interdisciplinary Council, as well as within the framework of the University's Annual Report. University Administration's offices and the Centre for the Advancement of University Teaching are expected to report on ongoing and implemented measures in accordance with the action plan.

6. Drafting

The Action Plan for Gender Mainstreaming 2023–2025 has been drafted by a working group consisting of Vice President Clas Hättestrand (chair), Lisa Käll and Magnus Nermo (Human Science Academic Area), Joakim Edsjö and Berit Olofsson (Science Academic Area), Simon Froster Delbom (Stockholm University Student Union) and Helen Eyice (Fackförbundet ST, the Union of Civil Servants), with office support from Malin Cederth Wahlström and Camilla Norrbin of the Office of the President. Saco-S, the union of state-employed academics, has been kept informed of the working groups activities on an ongoing basis.

The Office of Human Science, Office of Science, Human Resources Office, Centre for the Advancement of University Teaching and the project Forum for Doctoral Students have had

the opportunity to offer opinions on the Action Plan for Gender Mainstreaming 2023–2025. The working group's proposal was presented and discussed at a meeting of the Interdisciplinary Council on 30 January 2023.

Student influence and the support of trade unions have been obtained in the preparation and decision-making process through representation in the working group, as well as consultation prior to the President's decision.

¹See, for example: *Orsaker till att doktorander lämnar forskarutbildningen utan examen – en uppföljning av nybörjarna på forskarnivå läsåren 1999/2000 och 2000/01* [Reasons Why Doctoral Students Leave Third-cycle Studies Without a Degree: A Follow-up of New Entrants to Third-cycle Studies in the Academic Years 1999/2000 and 2000/01] (Swedish National Agency for Higher Education Report 2012:1 R); *Doktorandspegeln. En enkät om doktorandernas studiesituation* [The Doctoral Mirror: A Survey of Doctoral Students' Opinions About Their Studies] (UKÄ 2016:18); *Gender-Based Violence and Sexual Harassment in the Swedish Higher Education Sector*, a report from Karolinska Institutet, KTH Royal Institute Of Technology, Malmö University and the Swedish Secretariat for Gender Research at the University of Gothenburg, May 2022.