Policy, rules and plans
Dnr GU 2026/1539

Policy for Gender Equality and Equal Opportunities

Decision-maker	Vice-Chancellor
Responsible unit	Human Resources Office
Decision date	Decided 29/04/2026
Period of validity	To be reviewed by 2029
Summary	This policy sets out the goals and overarching principles for the University of Gothenburg's work on gender equality and equal opportunities. It brings together the University's legal obligations and strategic commitments in a common structure and replaces previous separate governing documents in this area. Implementation and follow-up are regulated in the Administrative Procedure for Gender Equality and Equal Opportunities (GU 2026/1540).

This policy constitutes the University's common governing framework for work on gender equality and equal opportunities. It is designed to be sustainable over time and applicable regardless of organisational changes and enables new assignments and requirements to be integrated into the existing structure.

The work is based on applicable legislation, national mandates and international commitments. It is an integrated part of the University's systematic quality assurance processes and contributes to quality and development capacity in education, research and collaboration. In *Vision 2021–2030: A University for the World,* this is emphasised through the ambition that *the University shall actively counteract unequal conditions at a structural level and promote norms that lead to staff and students treating each other with mutual respect.*

The process for this work is specified in the *Administrative Procedure for Gender Equality and Equal Opportunities* (GU 2026/1540) and includes inventory, analysis, prioritisation, planning, decision-making, implementation and follow-up. Documentation of these steps forms part of the statutory work.

All staff and students are responsible for complying with applicable laws and internal regulations in order to contribute to a safe, inclusive and professional work and study environment free from discrimination and harassment. At the University of Gothenburg, we treat each other with respect, professionalism and responsiveness, regardless of role, background or position, and we all actively contribute to achieving the goals set out in this policy.

The Vice-Chancellor holds ultimate responsibility for ensuring compliance with laws and regulations, and thus also with this policy. Managers, supervisors and individuals in leadership or representative roles have a particular responsibility to lead by example, ensure that regulations are followed and act on indications of vulnerability or exposure. Managers and leaders are also responsible for ensuring that the content of this policy is known within their operations, and that new staff and students are informed of it as part of their introduction.

Definitions

Equality refers to equal conditions for all individuals regardless of background, while gender equality specifically concerns equality between women and men. At the University of Gothenburg, equal opportunities is used as an umbrella term for all work and assignments relating to equality and gender equality in any form. Gender equality is nevertheless highlighted specifically because several requirements, mandates and commitments relate particularly to gender.

The concept of equal opportunities encompasses all grounds of discrimination: sex, transgender identity or expression, ethnicity, religion or other belief, disability, sexual orientation and age. It also includes other aspects relevant to widening participation, such as parental education level, socio-economic background and geographical origin.

Aspirational goals for gender equality and equal opportunities and conditions

The goals are organised into five areas and consist of nine aspirational goals, each followed by an explanatory principle. These goals describe a desired future state and what the University strives to achieve. In this way, they serve as guidance in identifying what needs to be done and changed. Further guidance on the Employee Portal explains the University's mandate in more detail and how the goals relate to this.

Two process goals clarify the structural conditions and approaches required to achieve the aspirational goals:

1. A gender equality and equal opportunities perspective is integrated into regular work, decision-making and follow-up processes.
2. All staff have the competence and knowledge in gender equality and equal opportunities required for their work.

The terms *staff, students, etc*., encompass a diversity of individuals who must always be considered and included in this work—regardless of sex, transgender identity or expression, ethnicity, religion or other belief, disability, sexual orientation or age. Doctoral students are included in goals relating to both staff and students.

Work and study environment

1. The University of Gothenburg has a work and study environment that is safe, inclusive, healthy and accessible for all staff and students.

This is achieved by jointly contributing to an environment characterised by gender equality, accessibility and equal opportunities, free from discrimination, harassment, sexual harassment and exclusion, and by working preventively against work- and study-related ill health, counteracting inaccessibility and maintaining effective support and procedures if and when someone is nevertheless affected or becomes ill.

Recruitment, working conditions and leadership

2. The University of Gothenburg attracts, recruits and promotes competent staff on gender-equal and equitable terms.

This is achieved by designing transparent and objective processes in which competence is assessed equally and unjustified differences and bias are actively counteracted, and by working to increase the proportion of applicants from the underrepresented sex.

3. The University of Gothenburg works to ensure equivalent and transparent working conditions and that all staff can maintain a healthy balance between work, parenthood and private life.

This is achieved by allocating tasks in a transparent and objective manner, applying gender-equal and objective salary setting, offering equal opportunities for professional development regardless of staff category, and safeguarding employees' ability to combine work with parenthood and private life.

4. The University of Gothenburg is characterised by inclusive leadership and representation on gender-equal and equitable terms.

This is achieved by ensuring that managers and leaders have the conditions required to operate on gender-equal and equitable terms, reflect the diversity of the organisation, actively promote gender equality and equal opportunities, and lead by example in both decisions and actions.

Research and teaching

5. The University of Gothenburg has research and teaching environments based on inclusive structures and processes that promote gender-equal and equitable conditions for research and teaching staff.

This is achieved by providing staff with equal opportunities to develop their qualifications, conduct research, teach and supervise, and to apply for and obtain research funding.

Education

6. The University of Gothenburg is an attractive, open and accessible higher education institution for all students.

This is achieved by actively working to attract a diverse student population, with particular focus on groups that are underrepresented in the University's programmes.

7. The University of Gothenburg works to ensure that all students can complete their studies on gender-equal and equitable terms and can maintain a healthy balance between studies, parenthood and private life.

This is achieved by designing and organising education in an inclusive and equitable manner, with clear and transparent assessment and examination, by counteracting unhealthy study demands that may arise from the design of education, and by providing necessary pedagogical and accessibility-related support that meets students' different conditions.

8. The University of Gothenburg provides its students with knowledge of gender equality and equality that is relevant to their future professional practice.

This is achieved by integrating appropriate and up-to-date knowledge on gender equality and equality into education in accordance with degree objectives and the requirements of each profession.

Societal engagement and collaboration

9. The University of Gothenburg actively contributes to a gender-equal and equitable societal development.

This is achieved by making visible and disseminating research and knowledge relevant to gender equality and equality, and by promoting equal opportunities in collaboration with relevant actors locally, regionally, nationally and internationally in accordance with the university's core values.