

## Action plan for equality, diversity and inclusion at Western Norway University of Applied Sciences

Adjusted as of May 2024. The plan is valid until a new action plan is adopted.

The strategic plan for Western Norway University of Applied Sciences 2023–2030 states that one of the values that will characterise Western Norway University of Applied Sciences (HVL) is: "We treat everyone with respect and consideration. By being inclusive, we value diversity and promote professional development, safety and well-being." HVL will also have "a stimulating and accessible learning environment that is diverse, international and inclusive".

*The overall goals of the action plan for equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI) are to promote equality and prevent discrimination among staff and students. Everyone should feel respected regardless of gender, ethnicity, national origin, language, religion and belief, disability, sexual orientation, gender identity and age.*

The action plan shall contribute towards ensuring that HVL achieves the goals of the strategic plan and fulfils the requirements of section 1 of the Act relating to Equality and Prohibition of Discrimination (the Equality and Anti-Discrimination Act), and it shall help the university college meet the future as an institution based on key human rights and values and the UN's Sustainable Development Goals, particularly: no. 4) Quality education, no. 5) Gender equality, no. 10) Reduced inequalities, and no. 16) Peace, justice and strong institutions.

To emphasise good examples and encourage efforts to achieve the goals in the action plan, the Rector will present an annual award to divisions, departments, environments, groups or individuals who have made a particularly strong effort: The "LIM Award". This award is presented by the Rector based on nominations by the staff and students. The Council for Equality, Diversity and Inclusion submits proposals for ranking the nominees to the Rector, who makes the decision and presents the award.

The plan is structured as a table with goals, measures to achieve the goals, and responsibilities<sup>1</sup>. Part 1 covers the area of equality, which is traditionally understood as gender equality. Part 2 covers inclusion and part 3 with diversity. There are commonalities between different forms of discrimination, yet there are still many factors that make it appropriate to categorise gender equality, diversity and inclusion as separate focus areas. There are different factors that have an impact, and therefore different measures that will have an effect on the different areas. It is also important to be aware that it is only in the area of gender equality that the effects of the measures can actually be quantified. The action plan itself does not contain statistics and overviews. However, it does state that statistics on gender balance should be prepared and made available by HR each year in November. The person responsible for

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<sup>1</sup>. Note that the responsibility is assigned to the highest organisational unit in this field. The manager is free to determine who in the unit will be delegated the responsibility to perform/follow up.

the measures in the action plan has assigned this responsibility to the senior manager of the unit, so that this manager can delegate the operational tasks in their unit.

The plan will be rolled out simultaneously with the strategic plan for HVL every four years. The Council for Equality, Diversity and Inclusion prepares proposals for an action plan.

<b>1) EQUALITY</b>			
The goal is to		To achieve this goal, HVL shall	Person responsible
<b>Recruitment</b>			
Staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• appointments shall ensure an even gender balance in all academic departments, defined as a 60/40 distribution</li> <li>• Appointments for achieving gender balance in the administration</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• incorporate a practice where an assessment of gender equality becomes part of the recruitment procedures in the management handbook</li> <li>• When designing job advertisements, gender equality considerations must be assessed. The wording and text should be designed such that it speaks to the underrepresented gender as much as possible.</li> <li>• Elected representatives who are to comment on job advertisements should, as far as possible, be from or have knowledge of the part of the organisation where the position is located.</li> <li>• use "search and find committees" to attract applicants from the underrepresented gender</li> <li>• In decisions on the preferred candidate, where only one gender has been preferred for the position(s), this must be specifically justified</li> </ul>	Dean Division of Human Resources/faculty administration  Division of Human Resources

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Annual statistics on gender balance throughout HVL are prepared by the Division of Human Resources in November (DBH data)</li> </ul>	
Students	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Recruit and retain more female/male students in male-dominated/female-dominated professions</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>active use of female/male students as role models to inspire and motivate students to choose study programmes in which their own gender is underrepresented.</li> <li>obtain and analyse documentation on gender distribution in the various study programmes in order to implement targeted measures where they are actually needed</li> <li>further develop the national project to encourage more men and people with immigrant backgrounds to choose the teaching profession<sup>2</sup> for more subjects and professions</li> <li>discuss nationally in the sector whether it is appropriate to apply to the Ministry of Education and Research to introduce gender points in study programmes that have a skewed gender distribution, cf. the Admission Regulations</li> </ul>	<p>Division of Academic Affairs / Division of Communications and External Relations / Vice-Rector for Education</p> <p>Division of Academic Affairs</p>
<b>Careers</b>			
Staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Increase the proportion of women/men with expertise in divisions and departments where they are underrepresented with the long-term goal of a 40/60 distribution</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>use earmarked qualification grants for associate professors/senior lecturers for the underrepresented gender in the department/subject</li> <li>offer mentoring/supervision to support promotion to top competencies</li> </ul>	<p>Dean</p> <p>Vice-Rector for Research</p>

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.hvl.no/samarbeid/samarbeid-lararutdanning-og-kreative-fag/menn-i-glu/>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure a good facilitation of skills-based promotions for the underrepresented group</li> <li>• provide equal opportunities for career development for all staff members</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• develop career plans for academic, research and administrative staff</li> <li>• facilitate networking that promotes career development</li> <li>• Annual statistics on gender balance throughout HVL are prepared by the Division of Human Resources in November (DBH data)</li> </ul>	<p>Vice-Rector for Research Dean and Director of Organisation</p>
Students	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• retain students with the underrepresented gender in education programmes</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• establish a career counselling body</li> <li>• establish networks for students of the underrepresented gender (include alumni)</li> <li>• stimulate gender balance in councils and committees in student democracy</li> </ul>	<p>Vice-Rector for Education  Student parliament</p>
<b>Research and education</b>			
Staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• strengthen gender perspectives in research and artistic development work and education</li> <li>• promote the underrepresented gender in disciplines</li> <li>• increase the frequency of publishing by the underrepresented gender in various disciplines</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• incorporate the EDI perspective in all strategic plans/documents for research</li> <li>• increase media visibility for staff members of the underrepresented gender in the discipline</li> <li>• strive for gender balance (among speakers, lecturers, panels, but not participants) at major conferences organised by HVL</li> <li>• offer courses in media training</li> <li>• map the genders cited in research articles</li> <li>• incorporate the EDI perspective in the strategy for dissemination of research</li> </ul>	<p>Rector Organisational Director  Organiser Division of Communications and External Relations Vice-Dean of Research</p>

Students	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>encourage more students with care responsibilities to choose master's/PhD programmes</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>by organising flexible arrangements for taking courses or conducting research</li> <li>emphasise gender equality as a value orientation in the programmes</li> <li>facilitate schemes to help international full-degree students find accommodation and childcare while studying at HVL</li> <li>investigate whether there is a need for special gender perspectives and measures in individual study programmes</li> <li>ensure that students interact with professionals of all genders during their study programmes</li> </ul>	<p>Vice-Rector for Education</p> <p>Vice-Rector for Research</p>
<b>Management</b>			
Staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>ensure gender balance in management teams</li> <li>update the knowledge base of EDI</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>ensure targeted recruitment</li> <li>provide management training in EDI</li> <li>train managers in diversity management</li> </ul>	<p>Appointment authority/HR recruitment</p> <p>Division of Organisational Development and Digitalisation</p>
Students	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>have a student democracy with diversity that reflects the diversity of the student body</li> <li>conduct training in equality, diversity and inclusion</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>prepare guidelines for how EDI in student democracy can be safeguarded</li> <li>offer courses/theme days/training in EDI</li> </ul>	Student parliament
<b>Salaries</b>			
Staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Equal pay for equal work. All genders should have the same salary assessments.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>map wage differences</li> <li>obtain and analyse documentation of gender distribution in all job categories and groups</li> </ul>	Organisational Director

<b>2) INCLUSION</b>			
The goal is to		To achieve this goal, HVL shall	Person responsible
<b>Buildings and environment</b>			
Staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>ensure universal design in all physical spaces</li> <li>ensure universal design in all digital spaces</li> <li>increase the proportion of trainees and employees with disabilities</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>assess whether there are suitable special rooms in all buildings</li> <li>fulfil requirements for physical design</li> <li>fulfil digital design requirements on all platforms</li> <li>develop accessibility expertise among all those who design digital environments</li> <li>recruit more employees with disabilities</li> <li>be proactive and solution-oriented when there is a need to adapt workplaces<sup>3</sup></li> </ul>	<p>Director of Finance and Land Management</p> <p>Vice-Rector for Education</p>
Students	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>ensure universal design in all areas</li> <li>ensure universal design in all digital spaces</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>assess the need for facilitating a breastfeeding room, a changing room in connection with practical training, fitness training and similar</li> <li>improve measures and identify opportunities to adapt teaching and learning activities</li> <li>improve the digital arena and learning tools we use</li> </ul>	Director of Finance and Land Management
<b>Information</b>			
Staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>provide good information</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>develop signage that ensures universal design, a good use of symbols, as well as clear and inclusive language</li> <li>use digital information channels in an effective and appropriate way</li> </ul>	Director of Finance and Land Management

<sup>3</sup> See the Regulations on the design of workplaces and work premises

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• further develop and display HSE regulations</li> </ul>	Division of Communications and External Relations Organisational Director
Students	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• provide good information</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• develop signage that ensures universal design, a good use of symbols, as well as clear and inclusive language</li> <li>• use digital media in an effective and appropriate way</li> <li>• further develop and display whistleblowing procedures</li> </ul>	Director of Finance and Land Management Division of Communications and External Relations Organisational Director
<b>Knowledge building</b>			
Staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Facilitate skills development for employees recruited from abroad</li> <li>• Develop staff competence in intercultural understanding</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• provide good training in the Norwegian language and culture (academic and administrative)</li> <li>• increase the proportion of staff members who have international research stays/exchanges</li> </ul>	Organisational Director Dean
Students	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop students' intercultural understanding</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• organise activities that highlight inclusion</li> <li>• encourage students to participate in exchange programmes</li> <li>• strengthen internationalisation at home</li> </ul>	Student parliament Academic and professional environments, Division of Research, Internationalisation and Innovation (AFII) and the professional environments

<b>3) DIVERSITY</b>			
The goal is to		To achieve this, HVL shall	Person responsible
<b>Information, participation and important days</b>			
Staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>develop competence in diversity at both individual and organisational levels</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>provide training for managers and staff members in e.g. diversity management and knowledge of gender and sexual diversity: "Pink skills" adapted to working life and school</li> <li>make strategic plans and action plans available in English</li> <li>have HVL participate in Pride festivals (which is a celebration of sexual diversity) in all regions and on all campuses</li> <li>celebrate International Women's Day on 8 March in all regions and on all campuses</li> <li>collaborate with organisations such as IMDI and NAV to recruit refugees with academic backgrounds</li> </ul>	Division of Organisational Development and Digitalisation Organisational Director  Pro-rector for Collaboration
Students	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>develop competence in diversity at both individual and organisational levels</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>facilitate training in diversity management for the student parliament and other student organisations, and help to identify competence schemes that are already in use</li> <li>make strategic plans and action plans available in English</li> </ul>	Vice-Rector for Education

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>celebrate Pride festivals in all regions and on all campuses</li> <li>celebrate International Women's Day on 8 March in all regions and on all campuses</li> </ul>	Student parliament
<b>Recruitment and retention</b>			
Staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>employ more people with minority backgrounds</li> <li>develop and retain diversity</li> <li>support Scholars at Risk</li> <li>include all employees in the work and professional environment</li> <li>Equal pay</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>incorporate EDI into the management handbook recruitment procedures</li> <li>take an active approach to the inclusion initiative and recruit employees with minority backgrounds, disabilities and gaps in their CVs</li> <li>give employees sufficient time upon their appointment to learn the Norwegian language and culture</li> <li>welcome researchers supported by Scholars at Risk</li> <li>Speak as much Norwegian as possible with foreign employees in the close working environment and among colleagues ("language bathing - i.e. maximum exposure to the language")</li> <li>At HVL, there shall be equal pay for equal work</li> </ul>	Appointment authority/HR recruitment  Manager with personnel responsibility  Managers and colleagues  Manager and HR
Students	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>bring more people from minority backgrounds into our programmes</li> <li>develop and retain diversity</li> <li>support Students at Risk</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>conduct active recruitment work in upper secondary schools and arenas where we can reach students with minority language backgrounds</li> <li>conduct an information meeting for counsellors at upper secondary schools yearly</li> <li>provide support programmes for students whose Norwegian language skills are insufficient for success as a student</li> <li>work to ensure heterogeneous groups in professional collaboration</li> </ul>	Division of Academic Affairs  Division of Communications and External Relations  Vice-Dean for Education  Academic administrator

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• have a contact person (employee) for each faculty who is available for students with special needs (e.g. minorities)</li> <li>• welcome students supported by Students at Risk</li> </ul>	Dean
<b>Life phase policy</b>			
Staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• safeguard all ages in working life</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• assess the extent to which HVL has an active life phase policy and how this can be facilitated</li> <li>• facilitate temporary adaptations for teaching obligations depending on the life situation</li> </ul>	Organisational Director
Students	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ensure equal training and education opportunities for students with care responsibilities</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• inform students about adaptations for care responsibilities</li> <li>• be solution-oriented in learning and practical training situations</li> </ul>	Study programme administration  Vice-Dean for Education
<b>Diversity in academic and professional environments</b>			
Staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• utilise the potential of diversity</li> <li>• strengthen the diversity perspective in research and artistic development work and education</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• work to strengthen and highlight the diversity perspective in education and research</li> <li>• highlight diversity in academic environments on important dates such as International Day, International Women's Day on 8 March, International Men's Day on 19 November, Pride festivals (which celebrate sexuality diversity), etc.</li> <li>• increase the proportion of academic literature that promotes diversity, and the curriculum should reflect a breadth of perspectives and backgrounds</li> </ul>	Vice-Rector for Education  Staff responsible for the syllabus

Students	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>utilise the potential of diversity</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>increase the proportion of academic and professional literature that reflects diversity</li> <li>highlight diversity in academic environments on important dates such as International Day, International Women's Day on 8 March, International Men's Day on 19 November, Pride festivals (which celebrate sexuality diversity), etc.</li> </ul>	Vice-Rector for Education
<b>Integrity and dignity</b>			
Staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>have zero tolerance for discrimination</li> <li>have zero tolerance for harassment and bullying in all areas</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>work to promote a greater awareness of unconscious discrimination</li> <li>develop competence on how to behave respectfully and inclusively towards others and especially towards minorities and vulnerable people and environments</li> <li>conduct and promote continuous preventive work against discrimination and harassment<sup>4</sup></li> <li>map the incidence of all bullying and harassment</li> </ul>	Managers at all levels  Organisational Director
Students	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>have zero tolerance for discrimination</li> <li>have zero tolerance for harassment and bullying in all areas</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>work to promote a greater awareness of unconscious discrimination</li> <li>build knowledge of diversity is and why diversity is an asset</li> <li>preventive work against discrimination and harassment</li> <li>map the incidence and management of all bullying and harassment</li> </ul>	Vice-Rector for Education  HVL Administration  Student representative

<sup>4</sup> See the guidelines for "Procedures for whistleblowing, section 4.2"