

University of Iceland Equality Action Plan 2018-2020

Introduction

Equality is one of the three central tenets of University of Iceland policy, a guiding principle in the University's work and the basis of diversity and respect in the University community (HÍ21, the Strategy of the University of Iceland 2016-2021).

The University of Iceland Equality Action Plan 2018-2020 is based on the Strategy of the University of Iceland 2016-2021, the equality principle of Article 65 of the [Constitution of Iceland no. 33/1944](#), cf. the [Constitutional Act no. 97/1995](#), and the [Act on Equal Status and Equal Rights of Women and Men no. 10/2008](#), taking into account the provisions of the [Act on the Affairs of Disabled People no. 59/1992](#), with subsequent amendments.

The action plan sets out goals and defines measures intended to guarantee that staff are afforded their statutory rights in accordance with Articles 19-22 of the [Act on Equal Status and Equal Rights of Women and Men no. 10/2008](#). The action plan also identifies the ways in which the University of Iceland as an educational institution complies with Articles 22 and 23 regarding students and Articles 15 and 17 as a public service institute. Finally, the Equality Action Plan is also based on the results of the report *The Status and Development of Equal Opportunities at the University of Iceland 2012-2016*, which evaluated the status of equality matters at the University of Iceland and current knowledge in the field of equality.

The first University of Iceland Equality Action Plan was approved by the University Council in 2000, with the current action plan being the fifth of its kind.

Discrimination on the basis of sex, gender, origin, skin colour, disability, sexual orientation, gender identity, age, health, religion, views, residence status, financial means or culture is forbidden at the University of Iceland.

The action plan is founded on the integration of gender and equality dimensions. Gender mainstreaming must be ensured in all policy-making and strategic planning (Article 17) and considerations of equality must be incorporated into all University operations. All members of the University of Iceland community are jointly responsible for ensuring equality, but the ultimate responsibility lies with the highest authorities at the University, i.e. the rector and the University Council.

Emphasis is placed on gender equality, but efforts are also made to incorporate other dimensions of equality as far as possible.

Each of the five schools, as well as central administration, shall establish an equality action plan, based on this Equality Action Plan. School deans and the managing director and division heads of central administration are responsible for ensuring that individual provisions of the Equality Action Plan are implemented within the relevant organisational unit.

Particular attention is drawn to the [University Professional Council on responding to gender-related and sexual harassment and gender-related and sexual violence](#) and the [procedure on the response to gender-related and sexual harassment and gender-related and sexual violence](#), which can be found on equality.hi.is. This includes people's obligation to report offences of which they have reasoned suspicion or knowledge. Anyone receiving a complaint

or report of such an offence shall immediately refer the matter to the Professional Council for processing.

The Equality Action Plan is valid for three years and shall be reviewed at the end of this period, or before 1 January 2021. A report on the status and development of equal opportunities shall be written every four years; the last report was written in the autumn of 2017. The Equal Rights Committee shall administer matters of equality under the authority of the rector and the University Council. The Council for the Affairs of Disabled People shall oversee the affairs of students at the University of Iceland with disabilities or learning difficulties, under the authority of the rector and the University Council. The equality officer shall, under the auspices of University of Iceland administration, ultimately supervise matters of equality in collaboration with the Equal Rights Committee and the Council for the Affairs of Disabled People. The equality officer shall follow up the University of Iceland Equality Action Plan, encourage the natural integration of equality into all University operations and provide advice to anyone feeling that they have experienced inequality or discrimination.

The action plan applies to all students and staff, who are jointly responsible for preventing discrimination and striving to create a University community characterised by respect, understanding and tolerance.

The following goals and measures are intended to encourage successful implementation of the Equality Action Plan over the next three years.

The Equality Action Plan was written by the Equal Rights Committee under the leadership of the Committee chair and in collaboration with the equality officer and other experts at the University of Iceland.

1. Teaching, learning and research

Goal	Measure	Responsibility	End date
1.1. Include (knowledge and understanding of) equality in a broad sense in studies at UI (cf. Article 23 of Act no. 10/2008 and the Act on the Affairs of Disabled People no. 59/1992).	Create proposals on how to ensure that (knowledge of) equality in a broad sense will be part of all study programmes at the University, especially in those where such knowledge is particularly important.	Rector, pro-rector of academic affairs and development, University Council, Academic Affairs Committee, Division of Academic Affairs.	Proposals will be submitted by the end of 2018.
1.2. Academic service and support services for students of foreign origin will be improved (cf. HÍ21, Human Resources).	Support in studies and support services for students of foreign origin resident in Iceland will be improved in all schools, e.g. with mentoring systems and writing centres. This group will be provided with more information, e.g. regarding which languages they can use for assignments. The position of an international representative at the Student Rights Office will be secured. The international representative will provide special assistance to students of foreign origin regarding equality and their rights.	School deans, in collaboration with the Student Counselling and Career Centre, the International Office and the UI Student Council.	Proposals will be made by the end of the autumn semester 2018.
1.3. Accessible teaching methods will meet the needs of a diverse student population. Teaching staff will acquire the basic pedagogical knowledge required to meet diverse student needs (cf. HÍ21, Teaching and Learning).	A working group will be appointed to address accessible and flexible teaching methods, course assessment and learning environments for all students. The pre-existing equality checklist for teaching will be revised, published and made accessible online.	Pro-rector of academic affairs and development in consultation with the Division of Academic Affairs, Centre for Teaching and Learning and Centre for Disability Studies.	Proposals will be made by the end of the spring semester 2019.
1.4. Close the student gender gap (cf. Article 23 of Act	Measures will be undertaken to close the student gender gap in	School deans in consultation with the Equal Rights	Measures defined by

no. 10/2008 and HÍ21, Human Resources).	subjects where the proportion of one gender is 20% or lower.	Committee and the Centre for Teaching and Learning.	February 2019.
1.5. Integrating the equality dimension into all aspects of teaching (cf. Articles 17 and 23 of Act no. 10/2008 and HÍ21, Human Resources).	Provide training for teaching staff on integration of the equality dimension in teaching, as well as creating a learning environment conducive to collaboration among a diverse student population.	Centre for Teaching and Learning, Academic Affairs Committee, school teaching committees and the Equal Rights Committee.	Annual training for teaching staff and information communicated at regular meetings and through online material.
1.6. Increasing collaboration among postgraduate students writing about equality in their projects (cf. HÍ21, Teaching and Learning).	Create a forum for collaboration between postgraduate students at different schools whose projects relate to equality.	Society of Doctoral Students and the Graduate School.	Proposals will be made by February 2019.
1.7. That the UI Evaluation System will not discriminate based on job component or subject (cf. Article 19 of Act no. 10/2008 and HÍ21, Research).	Analyses and proposals will be made to ensure that the University Evaluation System does not discriminate based on fields of study and their gendered impact. Ensure that all groups are equal in this respect.	Pro-rector for science, pro-rector for academic affairs and development in collaboration with the Division of Science and Innovation and the Evaluation System Committee.	Ongoing work. To be completed in the autumn semester of 2019.
1.8. That UI will be a family-friendly workplace facilitating a balance between family and working life (cf. Article 21 of Act no. 10/2008 and HÍ21, Human Resources and Research).	Requirements regarding the productivity of new staff members will be reviewed and family responsibilities taken into account when evaluating academics at the end of temporary contracts.	School deans and the Division of Human Resources.	Autumn semester 2019.

2. Human resources

Goal	Measure	Responsibility	End date
2.1. That issues of equality at UI will be recognised and made more visible through establishment of an Equality Office.	A UI Equality Office will be established and work with the Icelandic Centre for Gender Equality.	Rector.	Spring semester 2019.
2.2. Make jobs at UI available to people regardless of background, sex, gender or disability (cf. HÍ21, Research).	Seek to increase diversity amongst teaching, research and administrative staff, e.g. by ensuring that job advertisements encourage all groups to apply.	Division of Human Resources and the International Office in collaboration with schools.	Ongoing project.
2.3. Make the University campus accessible for all groups and teaching spaces suitable for a diverse student population and diverse teaching and learning methods (e.g. in consideration of the Act on the Affairs of Disabled People no. 59/1992, the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and HÍ21, Human Resources).	Accessibility on the University campus will be prioritised with improvements made in accordance with accessibility evaluations. During this period work will continue in evaluating building accessibility.	Division of Operations and Resources in consultation with the planning committee and the Council for the Affairs of Disabled People.	Annual consultation meeting of responsible parties to evaluate success.
2.4. Issues of equality in the broadest sense will be regularly publicised at UI using regular methods (cf. Article 23 of Act no. 10/2008 and HÍ21, Human Resources).	Organise and hold Equality Days at UI, based on interdisciplinary collaboration and input from experts in the field of equal rights.	The equality officer, in collaboration with interested parties.	Annually.
2.5. All staff, regardless of sex, receive the same salary for the same or equivalent work (cf. Article 19 of Act no. 10/2008 and HÍ21, Human Resources) and that	Complete writing of the Equal Pay Policy and Equal Pay Certification.	Pro-rector of science and the supervisory committee on equal pay certification. Working group on gendered finances. Division of Human Resources.	Work is already underway. Completed by the end of 2018 and regularly reviewed thereafter in

gender budgeting will be introduced.			accordance with the law.
2.6. Gender gaps are as small as possible and that representation of either sex is not lower than 40% where more than three members are appointed to committees, councils and boards at the University of Iceland (cf. Article 15 of Act no. 10/2008).	It shall be ensured that representation of either sex is not lower than 40% on committees, councils and boards at UI.	School deans and faculty heads.	Ongoing project.
2.7. To increase the number of gender-neutral toilets at UI (cf. HÍ21, Human Resources).	The number of gender-neutral toilets shall be increased with the aim of providing such toilets in as many buildings as possible.	Division of Operations and Resources.	In the autumn semester of 2018 where it is possible to simply change the signs, but on a case-by-case basis where further structural changes are required.
2.8. Students will be encouraged to complete projects related to applied gender studies (cf. HÍ21, Human Resources).	Encourage students in the course in applied gender studies to complete projects on the operations of schools, faculties and central administration.	The equality officer and programme coordinator for gender studies.	Every spring.
2.9. Students and staff receive education on microaggressions.	Education, e.g. online material, for students and staff on microaggressions targeted at disabled people, people of foreign origin and LGBTQ+ people.	School deans in collaboration with the Equal Rights Committee and the Council for the Affairs of Disabled People.	Every autumn.
2.10. Reform frameworks and application processes for UI funds with regards to grant allocations and gender gaps (cf. Article 20 of Act no. 10/2008 and HÍ21, Human Resources).	The frameworks of University of Iceland funds shall be improved in accordance with the results of the report <i>University of Iceland Funds 2010-2014. Overview and gender analysis of data</i>	Boards of the Research Fund and the University of Iceland Eimskip Fund / Research Fund doctoral grants.	Spring semester 2019.

	<i>regarding application processes.</i>		
2.11. That staff and administrators receive training on issues of equality (cf. Article 17 of Act no. 10/2008 and HÍ21, Human Resources).	Education, e.g. online material, for staff and administrators on the equal rights strategy and equality issues, e.g. accessibility, integration of the equality dimension with regard to sex, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, culture, origins and disability.	School deans and the Division of Human Resources in collaboration with the University Equal Rights Committee and school equal rights committees.	Spring semester 2018 and regularly thereafter.
2.12. Provide improved support for Icelandic language studies for staff and postgraduate students of foreign origin (cf. HÍ21, Human Resources and Teaching and Learning).	Courses shall be available and costs subsidised for participants. Investigate the need for new Icelandic courses and other kinds of assistance for staff and postgraduate students of foreign origin.	Division of Human Resources, Student Counselling and Career Centre, Language Centre, Faculty of Icelandic and Comparative Cultural Studies and faculty heads.	Autumn 2019
2.13. Gender-based violence, gender-based harassment and sexual harassment are not tolerated at UI (cf. Article 22 of Act no. 10/2008 and HÍ21, Human Resources).	Systematic and efficient measures will be implemented against sexual and gender-based harassment and violence at UI.	Rector (cf. proposals from working group).	Proposals for rules of procedure made in the spring semester of 2018.
2.14. Provide more education and information on responses to sexual and gender-based harassment and violence at UI (cf. Article 22 of Act no. 10/2008 and HÍ21, Human Resources).	Rules of procedure and the Professional Council on gender-based and sexual violence and harassment, which can be found on e.g. jafnretti.hi.is, will be made more visible, e.g. in Ugly.	School deans, Division of Marketing and Public Relations, Equal Rights Committee and equality officer.	Spring semester 2018.
2.15. That UI will be a family-friendly workplace (cf. HÍ21, Human Resources).	The University of Iceland will establish an ambitious family policy, which will take account of diverse family structures and the balancing of work and family life.	Division of Human Resources.	Work in progress. Spring semester 2018.
2.16. Support new academic staff and acclimate them to	The mentoring system for new academic staff will be further	Faculty heads, human resources managers and the	A presentation on the

the work environment of UI (cf. HÍ21, Human Resources).	developed and better publicised to school deans and faculty heads.	Division of Human Resources.	mentoring system will take place in the autumn semester of 2018 and regularly thereafter.
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3. Active participation in society and industry

Goal	Measure	Responsibility	End date
3.1. Research on issues of equality will be visible and accessible (cf. HÍ21, Active Participation).	Highlight research on issues of equality using diverse and accessible methods, for example through a series of lectures or videos or by making results accessible on the UI website.	Division of Marketing and Public Relations in collaboration with the Division of Science and Innovation and UI research institutes in the field of equality matters.	Autumn semester 2019 and annually thereafter. Ongoing project.
3.2. Improve publicity work for a diverse upper secondary school student population (cf. HÍ21, Active Participation).	Publicity for upper secondary schools will emphasise student diversity and where to find information on student support at UI.	Division of Marketing and Public Relations in collaboration with schools and the Division of Academic Affairs.	Spring semester 2019.
3.3. Support science and education projects for a diverse group of children and young people (cf. HÍ21, Human Resources and Active Participation).	Projects aiming at getting students at all levels of education more interested in science will be supported. Emphasis will be placed on including the children of immigrants and children with disabilities through the University's scientific outreach and other educational work.	Division of Marketing and Public Relations.	Annually with the University of Youth and generally through promotional material for the University.
3.4. Coordination of and increased emphasis on equality and diversity.	The Equal Rights Committee and equality officer will hold an annual consultation and educational meeting with the Division of Marketing and Public Relations and school public relations managers.	Equal Rights Committee, equality officer and the Council for the Affairs of Disabled People.	Annual consultative meeting.

4. Follow up

Goal	Measure	Responsibility	End date
4.1. Successfully implement the Equality Action Plan.	Conduct opinion polls with staff regarding individual projects, which will be followed up by school equal rights committees.	Equal Rights Committee, Division of Human Resources and school human resources managers.	Autumn semester 2019.
4.2. That the Equality Action Plan is successfully implemented.	School equal rights committees and administration will follow up the Equality Action Plan within schools with meetings and practical support. School and administration equal rights committees/ groups will establish action plans in light of the Equality Action Plan.	School and administration equal rights committees/ groups.	Annual consultative meeting.