

LAB University of Applied Sciences **EQUALITY AND NON-DISCRIMINATION PLAN**

Valid from 1 January 2025 to 31 December 2026

**Discussed in the LUT University dialogue meeting on 27 September 2024
Approved on 12 November 2024 by Rector Juha-Matti Saksa**

**Discussed in the LAB University of Applied Sciences dialogue meeting on 18 September
2024
Approved on 13 November 2024 by Rector Turo Kilpeläinen**

LUT University and the LAB University of Applied Sciences compose the high-level, curious and dynamic university group LUT Universities. LUT is an international science university that conducts strong academic research and provides higher education based on that research. LAB provides education driven by the needs of the working world and carries out applied research, development and innovation activities and artistic activities.

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1. Introduction and terminology

This plan combines the LUT Universities' human resources policy equality plan and non-discrimination plan. It is appropriate to combine the equality plan and non-discrimination plan, because both apply to the prevention of discrimination and the development of an equal, diverse and inclusive work community.

The LUT Universities personnel consists of the employees of LUT University and the LAB University of Applied Sciences.

Promoting equality is in everyone's interest. Equal treatment improves the work atmosphere, trust and motivation. Performance and commitment to work will improve.

Equality means non-discrimination on the basis of gender, gender experience, gender expression, or being non-binary. Equality refers to equality between women, men and other genders or people who do not define themselves based on gender.

Whereas the Act on Equality between Women and Men (609/1986, hereinafter equality act) refers to the concept of equality particularly from the perspective of gender/non-binary equality, the Non-discrimination Act expands the concept of equality.

Non-discrimination refers to a person not encountering discrimination based on personal characteristics or belonging to a certain group. Under the Non-discrimination Act (1325/2014, section 8), no person may be discriminated against on the basis of age, origin, nationality, language, religion, belief, opinion, political activities, trade union activities, family relationships, health, disability, sexual orientation or other reasons related to the person.

The realisation of effective equality may require taking into account the special needs of a disadvantaged population group. This may involve affirmative action and reasonable accommodation for disabilities. Affirmative action means that representatives of the minority gender may, in some cases, be given priority.

Promoting diversity at work advances equality, equity, inclusion, and non-discrimination. When discussing diversity, the acronym DEIB (Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Belonging) is used. In the new HR strategy, these aspects have been highlighted.

Diversity among staff refers to the differences among employees, including age, nationality, gender, health status, values, or personality. Inclusion means equal opportunities for participation and influence, as well as a sense of belonging, regardless of people's backgrounds or characteristics.

LUT's strategic policy is to treat all members of our higher education community equally. The UN's Universal Declaration of Human Rights serves as the guiding principle for operation on the university group's campuses.

2. Objective of the plan

The Equality and Non-Discrimination Plan supports the development of LUT Universities into a work community where all are treated with respect. The LUT Universities' community does not accept inappropriate treatment, discrimination or harassment. Equal treatment is actualised in interactive situations and in personnel management, recruitment, working conditions, salaries, and career development. The plan aims in a goal-oriented manner to attain the commitment of all LUT Universities personnel to promoting equality, diversity, inclusion and non-discrimination.

Communications

In terms of achieving objectives, it is important that the personnel are aware of the Equality Plan. The plan will be discussed in dialogue meetings, management groups, units, joint forums, and training programmes of LUT and LAB. The plan can be read on the universities' intranets and webpages.

Monitoring of the plan

The principles of equality and non-discrimination are implemented in everyday work and are part of supervisory work, community interaction and activities in accordance with values. The implementation of these principles will be assessed by means of personnel reporting, with the help of existing feedback systems (mood tracker, workplace well-being surveys), with separate surveys and interviews as well as during regular development and target discussions.

3. An equal LUT Universities

Attitudes

LUT Universities are an equal working community that respects and values people. Equality is based on our values and attitudes. Attitudes may sometimes be subconscious. Therefore, the foundation for the development of equality is awareness of attitudes, as this can reduce discriminatory behaviour. Directors and supervisors play an important role in the implementation and development of equality. In addition to this, everyone can examine their attitudes and adjust them to make LUT Universities a more equal workplace with stronger sense of community.

Recruitment

According to the equality act (section 6), the employer must act in a way that motivates both women, men and, in the spirit of current legislation, non-binary persons to apply for open positions. If possible, the requirements for positions must be as suitable for both men and women. The Non-discrimination Act will be applied in recruitment and in the terms and conditions of employment.

LUT has undertaken to implement the European Commission's HR Strategy for Researchers (HRS4R) to develop the role and career of researchers. One aspect of the process is commitment to an equal and non-discriminatory recruitment policy (Open, Transparent and Merit-based Recruitment Policy, OTM-R). LUT received the HR Excellence in Research quality label in 2013, and it was renewed in 2019.

In LUT Universities a diverse recruitment strategy is implemented to attract a wide range of talents. It all starts with defining the actual needs. It is also important that each job advertisement specifically encourages applicants to apply for positions they are interested in, regardless of their background or personal characteristics.

Placement in various tasks and career plans

According to the equality act (section 6), the employer must promote the equitable recruitment of women and men in various jobs and create for them equal opportunities in education and career advancement at all levels of the organisation.

Strategic choices made by LUT University and the LAB University of Applied Sciences and the needs for personnel development are taken into account in personnel training. Career advancement can refer to the possibility of job rotation in different positions internally or between LUT and LAB, to the development of competence in different organisations or in one's current position, and to development in supervisory tasks. Supervisors must take into account the equitable placement of personnel in various and different levels of tasks when organizing work and career advancement. For example, the use of parental leave should not hinder career development.

During development and target discussions, the staff member's wishes will be reviewed, and staff will be encouraged to advance in their career, their development needs will be reviewed, and long-term personal development plans will be drawn up. Open positions at LUT Universities are always published in internal information channels.

The staff of LUT University can spend two hours of their weekly working time on independent studies if agreed with the supervisor. At LAB, the teaching, administration and support service personnel have the opportunity to use working time (teaching staff) or paid leave (administration and support service staff) in accordance with the principles set out in the staff development plan for independent study leading to a degree or for professional pedagogical studies. Hours for self-development in targeted training are agreed on with the supervisor. The training must support the development of the person's skills in accordance with the objectives of LAB and the unit.

Working conditions

According to the equality act (section 6), working conditions must be developed so that they are suitable for both women and men. The Occupational Safety and Health Act obligates employers to ensure healthy and safe working conditions and working environment. The employer must pay particular attention to personnel groups whose occupational safety requires measures that are more demanding than generally. Working conditions and working environments must be adjusted to make them suitable for women, men and gender diversity.

LUT Universities have guidelines for handling harassment situations. The guidelines are intended for the staff and students of LUT University and LAB universities of applied sciences, for everyone who may be subjected to harassment or who may need to handle harassment cases. Harassment or inappropriate treatment is reported to the supervisor in writing using a notification form. When supervisor becomes aware of the issue, they must start investigating the case without delay.

Reconciling work and family life

According to the equality act (section 6), the employer must facilitate the reconciliation of working life and family life by paying special attention to working arrangements. Both men and women may take family leave. Different work arrangements and substitutions ensure that absences due to family leave will not overburden the personnel at work.

The reconciliation of work and family life will be facilitated with flexible working hours, flexi-leave, and the possibility of remote work, part-time work or unpaid leave. The integration of spouses of international personnel members will be promoted by enabling them to participate in Finnish language training for staff and by organising special events for them. If necessary, special induction training and further training will be arranged for persons returning from family leave or another long-term leave of absence or holiday.

Prevention of discrimination and prohibition of discrimination

According to the equality act (section 6), the employer must prevent discrimination based on gender identity or gender expression in a purposeful and systematic manner. Discrimination is prohibited regardless of whether it is based on a fact or presumption concerning a person. The means of prevention is to promote gender-conscious communication by dismantling harmful norms and assumptions related to gender. It is important to promote gender-neutral language and ensure that communication is inclusive for all genders

LUT Universities does not accept discrimination, harassment or bullying. The employer is obligated to intervene in such matters, for example, under their right to direct. Responsibility is transferred to the employer when the harassed person has brought the matter to the employer's attention. The Guidelines for addressing harassment provide more detailed instructions for investigating and handling harassment.

Consideration of equality in decision-making

According to the equality act (section 8), discrimination is prohibited in working life, including all situations that arise in working life from recruitment to the termination of employment. The weightings and impacts of changes to the organisation and tasks, the hiring of fixed-term or part-time employees, lay-offs, redundancies and employee benefits must be considered from the perspective of different employee groups before making decisions.

Women and men must be ensured equal opportunities to participate in and influence preparation work and decision-making at all levels of the organisation. Obtaining a sufficient level of expertise will be the criterion when selecting members for different working, project and steering groups. As far as possible, both men and women are to be appointed to the groups. In addition, the groups should include sufficiently extensive representation from each personnel group and units.

Pay and other terms of employment

According to the equality act (section 6), the employer must promote equality between women and men in their terms of employment – especially in pay. This means that the employer must pay the same job-specific salary for the same work or work of equal value to female and male employees. Work of equal value means that the job requirements, competences, workload and working conditions are essentially equal. The requirement of equal pay applies separately to all the

components that constitute a salary, meaning that, for instance, the grounds for personal bonuses must not discriminate against the other gender.

Pay systems will be developed in a manner that promotes equality: pay will be determined on the basis of the job's requirement level, personal competence, and the results achieved in the work. The employee's characteristics, such as gender, age or family relationships, must not affect the assessment of the job's requirement level. The personnel's pay and pay trends will be monitored by gender in the context of financial reporting and at dialogue meetings. Possible differences in pay received by women and men for the same work or work of equal value will be examined and corrected as needed. The university's YPJ requirement charts and assessment criteria are openly available on LUT's intranet.

4. Measures for the development of equality at LUT Universities

Measures taken

- Equality and non-discrimination issues have been discussed, for example, in personnel forums and supervisor training has been arranged.
- Equality and non-discrimination training (FI&EN) was conducted in Moodle on 04/2023. The training is part of the orientation of a new employee and its completion is mandatory
- Open positions at LUT Universities are published on the intranet on the Recruitment site.
- Information on pay system has been arranged for LUT supervisors before the evaluation period.
- Upcoming trainings
 - o The early support model will be updated, and training will be organised during autumn 2024.
 - o Training on the prevention of discrimination will be organised during autumn 2024.

Goal	Action	Responsibility of	Schedule
Awareness of equality and non-discrimination issues in recruitment groups.	Develop a checklist of equality and non-discrimination measures for recruitment teams. Remember positive discrimination.	HR	2025
Work rotation	Identifying and building the need for a work rotation approach	HR/KKP	2025-2026

5. An equal LUT Universities

Age

People of different ages may encounter discrimination based on age, and discrimination may affect any age group. Due to their extensive work experience, aging employees possess tacit knowledge – both technical know-how and cognitive knowledge and understanding. Therefore, older employees should be seen as a significant resource, as the more extensive and creative use of work experience can produce added value for the entire organisation. On the other hand, the enthusiasm and new knowledge, skills and innovations of young people and recent graduates enrich the work community. Taking care of young children or one's own or one's spouse's elderly parents poses challenges to employees at both ends of the personnel's age spectrum. The challenge of a management approach that is based on employees' situation in life is to ensure that different types of people are able to work in the work community. The age structure must be taken into account proactively in the planning of activities, and lifelong learning must be supported at all stages of a person's career.

Age may not be a decisive criterion when selecting employees, nor may age recommendations be published in advertisements for vacancies. Age must not be an obstacle to a researcher's career. Age criteria should be avoided when selecting members of a research group, as they may particularly discriminate against women, whose career development may slow down due to maternity and childcare leaves.

World views, beliefs and opinions

This section covers a number of different value systems, which may also conflict with one another. Work at LUT Universities is carried out in accordance with a mutually agreed set of values. Every person's world view, beliefs and opinions will be respected.

Ethnic background, nationality and language

Internationalisation is an important focus area in the operation of LUT Universities. The students, teachers, researchers, RDI personnel, and other personnel on our campuses are increasingly diverse in their ethnic background, nationality, and language. Ethnic issues emerge when different people and groups encounter each other. Multiculturalism and multilingualism are a part of day-to-day life at LUT Universities. Efforts are made to take the characteristics of each international employee's culture into account. For example, a silence room has been designated on the Lahti (room A150) and Lappeenranta (room 8206) campus.

Campus restaurants accommodate special diets based on convictions.

In addition to Finnish, LUT Universities also offers teaching in English. Materials and information related to studies and work are also increasingly offered in English. For example, LUT organises monthly orientation events also in English for new international employees, and the new personnel handbook is available in both Finnish and English. LUT University's intranet is bilingual. Work on the LAB intranet in English will start in 2024. Finnish language courses are offered to international students and employees of LUT University and the LAB University of Applied Sciences. The equality of Finnish citizens (foreign-born Finnish citizens and Finland's minorities, such as Sami speakers and the Roma) must also be taken into account.

Diversity of gender

The perception that there are only two opposite genders excludes those whose gender identity is not exclusively male or female. Everyone has the right to their own gender identity and to express their gender in the manner they wish – they can be very feminine, very masculine, non-binary or express characteristics of different genders. No one is obliged to share personal matters if they do not directly affect their work.

Everyone will be treated equally and respectfully. No discrimination, derogation or sexual harassment based on gender, gender identity or gender expression will be accepted.

Disability and state of health

Disability refers to characteristics that are congenital or have been caused later by an illness or accident. A person with a disability is not necessarily ill. For example, a person may have learning difficulties that manifest as reading and writing difficulties. These difficulties are not necessarily due to an illness or injury but may simply be personal characteristics. A person with a disability may have reduced mobility which requires aids that enable full participation and equal interaction with others. People with disabilities have the right to decide whether they want assistance or special arrangements.

People may experience visual and hearing difficulties or difficulties perceiving the environment. This will require attention to the design of lighting, colour schemes, contrasts and acoustics as well as material choices. The intranet has an advanced reading programme. Accessible access routes are depicted on campuses and in campus floor plans.

Equality between different personnel groups

LUT has two distinct personnel groups: teaching and research personnel and specialist and support personnel. The teaching and research personnel mainly consists of employees at different levels of the tenure track system. Other specialists and support service providers work in the laboratories of LUT schools and in University Services, which provides services not only to LUT University but also to the LAB University of Applied Sciences. Different provisions of the collective agreement apply to these two personnel groups in areas such as the pay system, working hours and annual leave.

LAB has different types of positions, such as teaching, RDI, laboratory, workshop, supervisory and management jobs. The work community also includes LUT University's University Services. There are also differences in employment terms that stem from the collective agreement, such as annual and total working hours, which set their own conditions. Different collective agreements must not be an obstacle to the implementation of equality. There are also different hierarchies between and within personnel groups and professional tasks that can affect how a person experiences the organisation.

6. Measures for the development of equality at LUT Universities

Measures taken

- LEAD - Leadership Excellence And Development will be launched in 2024, with a focus on leading a diverse and cultural workplace
- International employees and their families are assisted in applying for children's daycare and school places and, if necessary, in other matters related to integration. We also organize various events for them. During 2023, events include a ski school, outdoor activities, fishing, movie nights, discussion circles and lectures on Finnish working life
- Training courses organised
 - o Cultural diversity in the workplace training was organized in 2023
 - o Tools for receiving unjust feedback – training for teaching staff 2024
- Upcoming trainings
 - o Tools for receiving unjust feedback - training (November 2024)
 - o Language awareness in the workplace -training (spring 2025)

Goal	Action	Responsibility of	Schedule
DEI	HR visits LUT's management teams of Schools and LAB unit management teams to discuss about DEI issues	HR	once a year
DEIB	Identify best practices in DEIB matters and create an action plan	HR	2026
Mentoring model	HR will find out the Faculties' and units' wishes for mentoring and create an operating model	HR	2025-2026
Management of harassment and inappropriate treatment	Updated instructions for investigating harassment situations	HR	2025

7. Evaluation and monitoring of implementation

The implementation and effectiveness of the plan must be monitored and evaluated. The equality and non-discrimination plan is discussed in the LUT and LAB management groups. In addition, the plan is discussed in the management teams of the faculties and units. Personnel feedback is collected from personnel surveys and through the feedback channel. The development of salaries by gender is monitored annually in dialogue meetings. Regarding the implementation of the measures recorded in the previous equality and non-discrimination plan, it can be stated that some have been implemented or are ongoing activities.

LUT: Monitoring the implementation of equality and non-discrimination

The indicators for monitoring the implementation of equality and non-discrimination will in the future be based on the results of a biennial workplace well-being survey. The survey is conducted every two years. The benchmarks are the average scores from all respondents from all Finnish universities – the so-called university norm. The rating scale is 1–5; 5=best.

Indicator	2023
Equality between different age groups is implemented well at my university	4,15 (DEI-norm 3,88)
All personnel at my university are treated equally regardless of their ethnic background or origin	4,21 (DEI-norm 4,04)
All personnel at my university are treated equally regardless of their religion, beliefs, or political ideology	4,35 (DEI-norm 4,20)
All personnel at my university are treated equally regardless of their sex, gender, gender identity or sexual orientation	4,34 (DEI-norm 4,17)
All personnel at my university are treated equally regardless of various disabilities	4,36 (DEI-norm 4,08)
The accessibility of our university's facilities supports non-discrimination	4,01 (DEI-norm 3,74)
Our university takes different life situations into account in balancing work and personal life	4,07 (DEI-norm 3,76)
Our university encourages the use of parental leave equally regardless of gender	3,95 (DEI-norm 3,90)

LAB: Monitoring the implementation of equality and non-discrimination

The results of the well-being at work survey, conducted every two years, are used as indicators for monitoring the realization of equality and non-discrimination.

Indicator	2023
Equality of people of different ages is well realised in LAB	3,32
In LAB staff are treated equally regardless of their ethnic background or origin.	3,59
In LAB staff are treated equally regardless of religion, belief or political ideology	3,66
In LAB staff are treated equally regardless of gender, gender identity, or sexual orientation.	3,61

8. Background material of the plan

Acts guiding the Equality and Non-discrimination Plan:

[Act on Equality between Women and Men \(609/1986\)](#)

[Non-discrimination Act \(1325/2014\)](#)

Other sources:

[Tasa-arvo.fi](#)

[Yhdenvertaisuus.fi](#)