

Section 8.

Equal Opportunity Plan

Table of Contents

Preamble	3
§ 1 Guiding equality principles and policies	3
§ 2 Terminology	4
§ 3 Principles for action	5
§ 4 Structure and Organization	5
§ 5 Conceptual Framework	7
§ 6 Guiding Principles of the University	8
§ 7 Goals of the Equality Plan	8
§ 8 Specific Areas of Action	9
§ 9 Monitoring	11
§ 10 Communication	11
§ 11 Entry into Force	12

List of Figures

Figure 1: Structure and interaction of GDM work at the FH Upper Austria	6
Figure 2: Conceptual framework for GDM work at the FH Upper Austria	7
Figure 3: Guiding Principles at the FH Upper Austria	8
Figure 4: Areas of Action at the FH Upper Austria	9

Preamble

The present Equal Opportunity Plan was initiated by the University Presidential Board and the University Council and developed on the basis of a broad dialogue within our institution. It is established and implemented as a joint guideline of the President and the University Council.

The Gender & Diversity Management Conference (GDM-K), permanently established since 2008, has been tasked with defining the principles and goals as well as the corresponding measures in the area of gender and diversity management in culture, structure and processes (cf. §5). At the same time, all members of the university (staff and students) are required to comply with and support the principles and goals of gender equality.

The Equality Plan applies to all members of the University of Applied Sciences Upper Austria (FH Upper Austria), but also to applicants for employment or admission to degree pro-grammes or university courses at the FH Upper Austria.

§ 1 Guiding equality principles and policies

Gender equality is a fundamental value of the European Union and an important Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) of the United Nations, for the Republic of Austria and thus also for FH Upper Austria.

Gender equality enables educational institutions and research and innovation systems to support the development and maintenance of democratic and equal societies. This equality at our university should contribute to representing the entire organization in all our service areas, namely studies, teaching and research, further education, management, and administration, and to improving the quality of our joint work.

Equality and the associated elimination of under-representation serve as the framework conditions for a good working and study environment. This fosters talent and builds motivation. Hence, equality also aims to position our university as an attractive employer and a place of shared learning and innovation.

Through the development of an appreciative culture and corresponding structures and processes in all areas of the university (studies, teaching and research, further education, management, and administration), all employees and students can rely on the fact that their abilities are valued and recognized equally and appropriately. These principles, together with the focus on plurality, participation, and inclusion form the cornerstones of our university's culture. A further central pillar can be found in mutual respect, freedom of expression, academic freedom, independence, and autonomy. These values are anchored in the mission, the guiding principles of action and the strategy of the FH Upper Austria: <https://www.fh-ooe.at/ueber-uns/vision-leitbild/strategie/>.

All members of the FH Upper Austria stand for the following five core values:

- living a culture of diversity,
- internalizing respect and appreciation as principles of interaction,
- creating the best possible conditions for staff, students, and stakeholders,
- offering excellent quality in teaching and research on a sustainable basis, and
- contributing to the ongoing development of society.

§ 2 Terminology

To be able to live equality in everyday life, it is necessary to clarify basic terms in this context. The following definitions have been developed and introduced on the basis of current knowledge and literature.

Discrimination refers to unequal treatment or disadvantage of people based on certain characteristics such as gender, social origin, religion or world view, age, ethnicity or appearance and the associated social power relations (also in combination of the attributes in the sense of intersectionality). Discrimination can/must be differentiated between structural, institutional, and individual discrimination. Both social minorities and groups of people as well as entire societies can be target groups of discrimination.

Diversity is an organizational and socio-political concept that focuses on an appreciative, conscious, and respectful approach to diversity in society.

Diversity management is seen as a multidimensional approach to the conscious perception, use and promotion of diversity in social systems. Diversity management serves to promote equal opportunities that allow for the best use of competences, resources and innovations in organizations.

Gender is defined as social sex - it is created through the attribution of gender-specific abilities and expectations to people, regardless of their gender identity. Social gender is based on social dynamics and is changeable and variable within and between cultures and therefore not limited to two expressions. It defines roles, duties, constraints, opportunities, and privileges.

Gender competence includes the basic recognition of the relevance of gender ascriptions in one's own work and impact context ("knowledge"). This recognition is linked to the willingness ("willingness") and the ability to deal with it in everyday work and study - if necessary, supported by gender experts and with the knowledge of gender theories - and to take action derived from this ("ability"). Both recognition, confrontation and action are subject to a constant process of reflection ("reflection").

Equality refers to the legal and formal equal treatment of individuals or groups who are disadvantaged or even excluded based on religion or belief, skin colour, gender, sexual orientation, or social origin.

Equal treatment and anti-discrimination are the prevention and avoidance of direct or indirect discrimination against persons irrespective of gender, ethnicity, religion or belief, age or sexual orientation in all areas of life. In terms of intersectionality, this also applies to a combination of the above-mentioned attributes.

Equity refers to the equal treatment of all people with regard to their gender, ethnic and social origin or sexual orientation, religion or belief and to the efforts to actually create equal opportunities for them. In this context, measures often need to be taken that are not limited to formal equal treatment. To achieve equity, positive discrimination in the form of preferential treatment for disadvantaged groups of the population is often necessary on a temporary basis. Only then can we move on to equal treatment.

Intersectionality is given special attention in our equality work in order to prevent discrimination through the accumulation of several dimensions (e.g., gender, social milieu, origin, religion or belief, sexual orientation, disability and/or age).

Sexual harassment describes any unwanted sexual advance, request for sexual favours, verbal or physical act, gesture or other conduct of a sexual nature that may be reasonably understood or perceived as offensive or humiliating to the victim. Sexual harassment is extremely serious because it can interfere with work, be made a condition of employment, or create an intimidating, hostile or negative atmosphere.

§ 3 Principles for action

(1) Promotion of diversity

All measures and instruments intended to promote equality (e.g., development and implementation of further education measures as well as special support programmes, management development, awarding of scholarships and performance bonuses) shall be applied in the sense of an anti-discriminatory, diversity-promoting and equality-promoting university policy.

(2) Prohibition of discrimination

In connection with a service and/or employment contract or a training contract for students, no one may be discriminated against directly or indirectly based on a difference in birth, gender, social origin, ethnicity, religion or world view, age, sexual orientation and/or citizenship. This also applies to the employees of the FH Upper Austria, in particular with regard to classification and thus the determination of remuneration and other benefits in kind (allowances, contributions), as well as to commitments with regard to resources or infrastructure. For applicants and students, this applies from application to graduation.

(3) Dealing with misconduct

All members of the university are required to refrain from and proactively prevent any discrimination, e.g., based on gender, origin or ethnicity, religion or world view, age, or sexual orientation as well as appearance. Any behaviour that constitutes bullying, (sexual) harassment or violence must be prevented. In this regard, the offices and functions listed under paragraph 5 ("contact points") function internally at the university to provide remedial action. Furthermore, persons affected by discrimination receive support in asserting their rights.

(4) Sexual harassment, bullying and discrimination

All members of the FH Upper Austria have the right to be treated respectfully and without discrimination by all other members of the FH Upper Austria. All members of the FH Upper Austria, especially those in management positions, are responsible for preventing any discrimination, (sexual) harassment and bullying.

(5) Contact points

Persons who are affected by discriminatory behaviour, bullying or (sexual) harassment or have observed such behaviour, have the possibility to contact the following offices of the FH Upper Austria:

- Works Council,
- Student Union,
- GDM-K (cf. § 5) or individual members thereof, as well as
- deans, heads of degree programmes or superiors.

The above-mentioned bodies will only become active after consultation with the persons concerned, whose anonymity - as far as possible - must be ensured.

(6) Monitoring, reflection, and evaluation

All gender equality measures are reviewed through ongoing monitoring and documented at different times in an institutionalized manner, both internally and externally (cf. §§ 7 and 10).

§ 4 Structure and Organization

All activities related to gender and diversity at the FH Upper Austria are structurally anchored and responsibilities for them are defined. Gender and Diversity Management is managed by a member of the University President's Office responsible for a specific department in consultation with the management of the institution.

In addition, a permanently established working group, the Gender & Diversity Management Conference (GDM-K), has been in place since 2008 and is chaired by a scientific director. This committee consists of representatives from all organizational units of the FH Upper Austria and is made up of members from all curiae.

The organization, goals, and tasks as well as the activities of the GDM-K are available online at <https://www.fh-ooe.at/gender-diversity/>.

Thus, the scientific director together with an assistant and the GDM-K are responsible for the implementation of the relevant goals, tasks and measures.

The tasks and objectives as well as competences of the GDM-K are clearly defined and cover the conception, support and realization of measures, counselling as well as support, sensitization and awareness-raising of all university members in the areas of gender, equality and diversity. In addition, the work of the GDM-K is regarded as a cross-sectional task by all service areas (study, teaching and research, further education, management, and administration) of the university, so that cooperation with the units of university research and development, quality development and management, university didactics as well as personnel and crisis management is ensured.

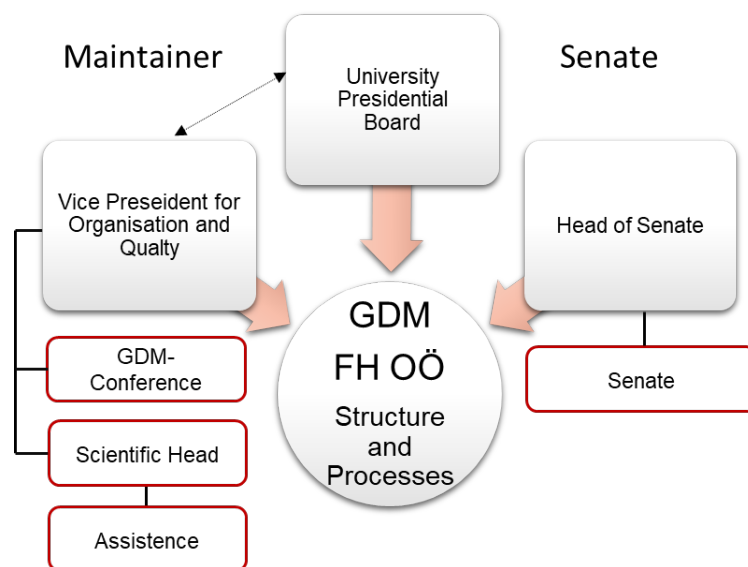


Figure 1: Structure and interaction of GDM work at the FH Upper Austria

§ 5 Conceptual Framework

The Higher Education Awareness for Diversity (HEAD) Wheel of the FH Upper Austria was developed based on scientific findings and draws on five diversity segments: demographic, cognitive, disciplinary, functional, and institutional diversity. Thus, FH Upper Austria wants to encourage a holistic diversity culture for the higher education sector that encompasses all the aspects mentioned by adopting an intersectional approach. Therefore, equality work at the FH Upper Austria goes hand in hand with legal provisions but at the same time expands these to include considerations of fairness and anti-discrimination, competitiveness, sustainability, effectiveness as well as a learning orientation. Further details on the HEAD Wheel can be found at <https://www.fh-ooe.at/gender-diversity/wissenschaftlicher-hintergrund/>.

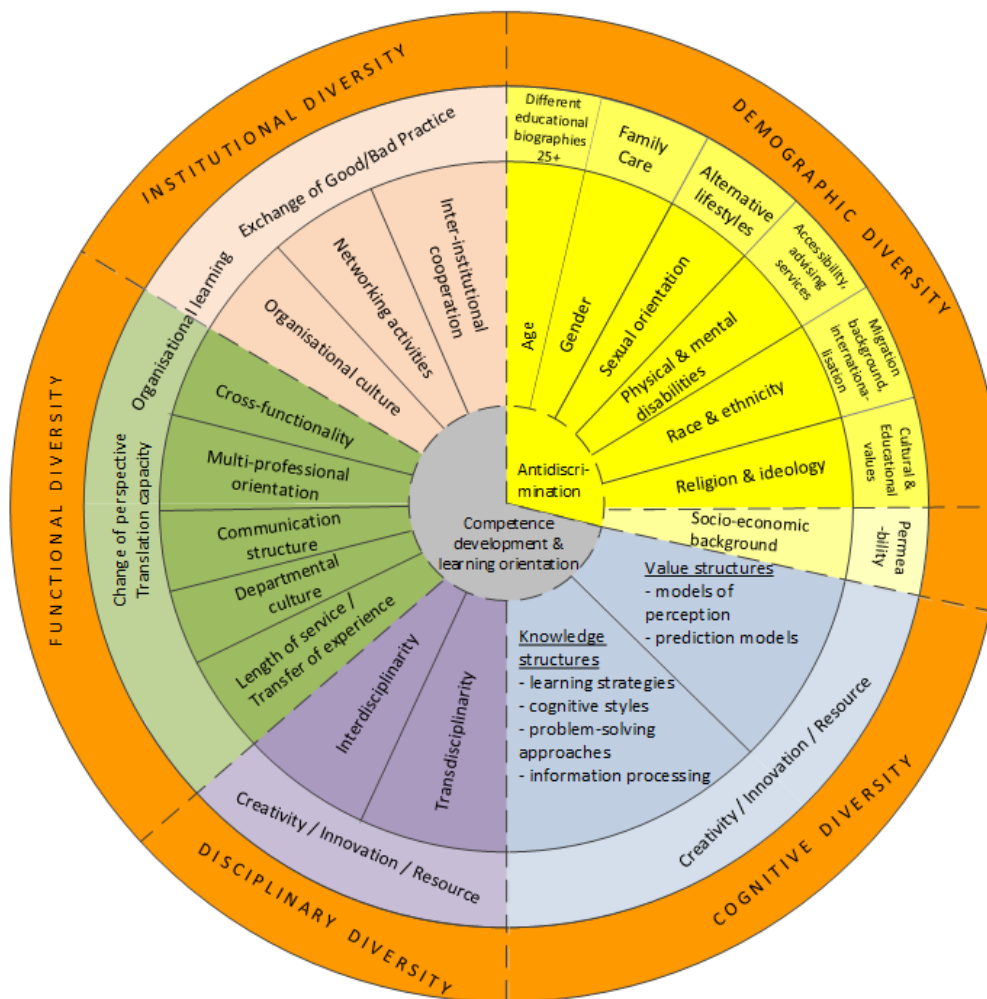


Figure 1: Conceptual framework for GDM work at the FH Upper Austria (Quelle: Gaisch & Aichinger (2017))

§ 6 Guiding Principles of the University

Quality awareness is firmly anchored at the FH Upper Austria both in terms of structure and process organization. All stakeholders at the FH Upper Austria regard quality as an indispensable cultural prerequisite for shaping the profile, positioning and branding of our university in the long term. This is expressed, on the one hand, by the Mission 2030, which follows the guiding principle "We stand for quality - success through performance! Secondly, FH Upper Austria has set itself the goal of acting in accordance with the following five design principles by 2030: "... on the way to a new dimension ...":

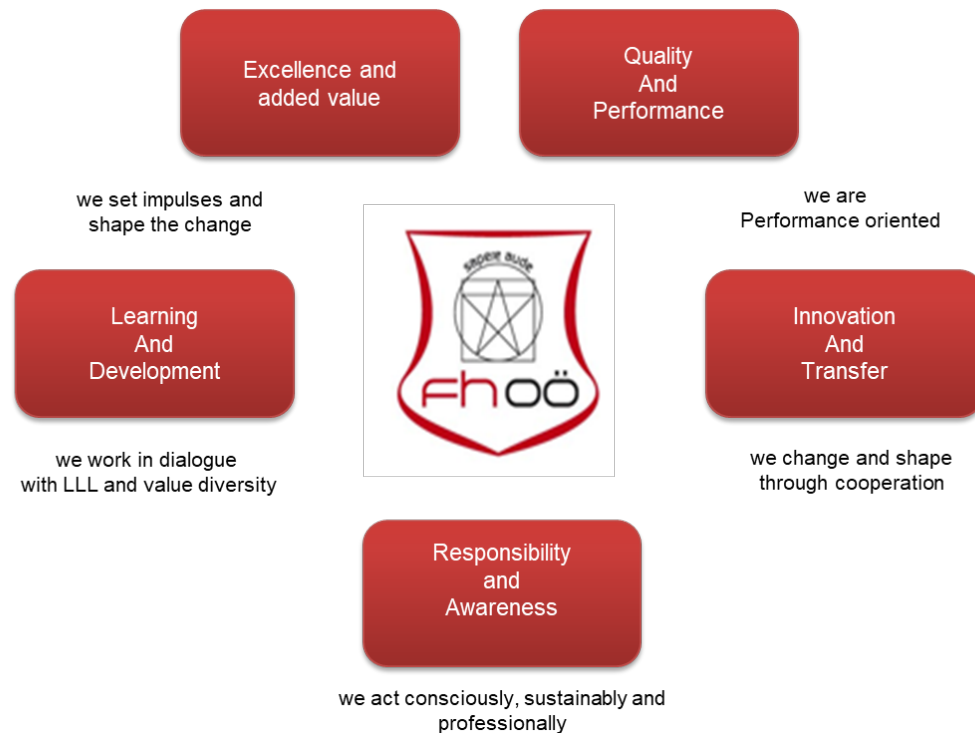


Figure 3: Guiding Principles at the FH Upper Austria

Accordingly, we align our gender equality work with these five design principles. The detailed statements on the individual design principles are set out in the policy document. Communication to all university stakeholders takes place through the distribution of this document as well as publication on the homepage of the FH Upper Austria (<https://www.fh-ooe.at/ueber-uns/vision-leitbild/strategie/>). Furthermore, the design principles are anchored in the individual service areas of the university (from teaching and studies to research and development and university services), are implemented during the defined processes and are put into practice through concrete action.

§ 7 Goals of the Equality Plan

Through its work in gender mainstreaming, the FH Upper Austria pursues the (re)organization, improvement, development, and evaluation of decision-making processes with the aim of ensuring that the actors involved in shaping these processes naturally adopt the perspective of equality between women and men in all areas and at all levels, and that this has a positive impact on the reality of work and study. To this end, we use the FE/MALE concept developed at the Upper Austrian University of Applied Sciences, which stands for "Fördern-Entwickeln-Managen-Leisten-Evaluieren" (Promotion-Development-Manage-Perform-Evaluate) and is anchored as a performance area in our Strategy 2030. Furthermore, in our gender equality work we rely on the dimensions of the HEAD Wheel developed at

the Upper Austrian University of Applied Sciences, which focuses on an intersectional approach, especially in the area of the demographic dimension.

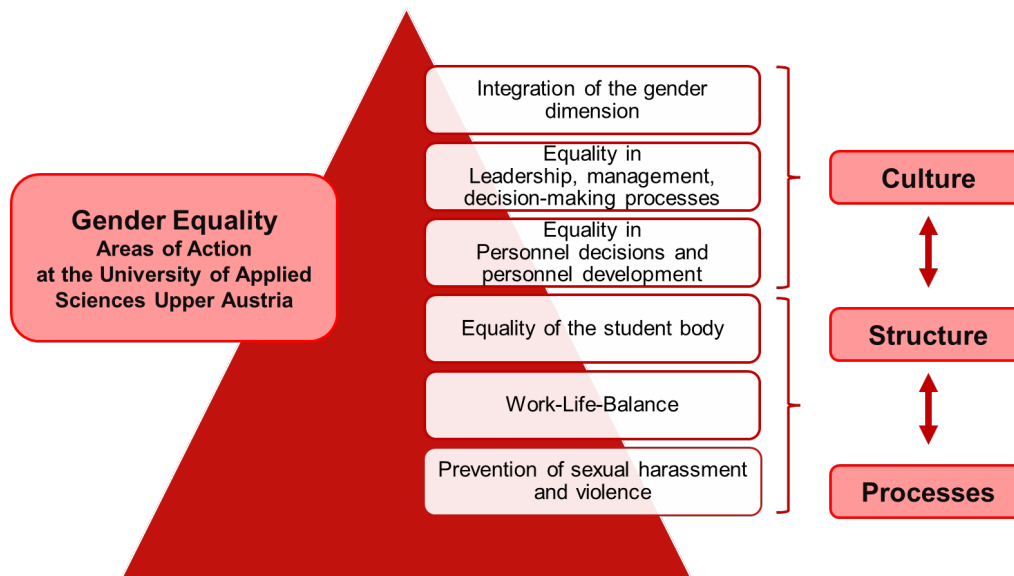


Figure 4: Areas of Action at the FH Upper Austria

§ 8 Specific Areas of Action

(1) Integration of the gender dimension into the FH Upper Austria

- a) We work on gender equality in all areas of management, academic teaching and re-search staff as well as employees in the area of technology and administration, in teaching and study operations as well as students and are guided by the recommendations of the Austrian Higher Education Conference on broadening gender competence in higher education processes.; all measures are coordinated between the university management, the GDM-K as well as the respective responsible units and areas and are handled in a closed circle from planning to realization to the control of results.
- b) We focus on transparency in the processes and evaluate the results of the measures regularly, in a structured and institutionalized manner.
- c) The GDM-K advises and supports the academic teaching and research staff in the conception and realization of applications on the gender dimension for concrete re-search and development projects as well as in teaching (a special online training tool has been developed and offered for this purpose: <https://idmtoolbox.eu/about-idm-toolbox-2/about-idm/>).
- d) We actively take measures to prevent discrimination and have structures and pro-cesses in place to deal with discrimination.
- e) We anchor equality as a basic attitude through continuous sensitization and critical reflection by means of information, and specific further training offers.

(2) Equality in leadership, management. and decision-making processes

- a) We work towards a balanced gender distribution at the level of university management - both individual management functions and in the balanced representation of the genders in the university bodies.

- b) We work to prevent and remove all obstacles to gender equality and equal representation in decision-making and leadership positions, including structural, institutional or individual obstacles.
- c) We promote the achievement of gender balance in leadership and decision-making positions within the university.

(3) Equality in personnel decisions and personnel development

- a) We have a clear definition and shared vision of the importance of equality and the elimination of all forms of under-representation. We have a mission, strategy, code of conduct, language guidelines and process steps that support these equality goals.
- b) We involve members of the GDM-K in consultation around recruitment of staff in all service areas of the university. The language used in job advertisements is regularly reviewed; we observe the principle of transparency through objective selection procedures of advertised positions at the university and through regular reflection on the results.
- c) We focus on increasing the number of potential female applicants by broadening the range of subjects of staff advertisements in areas where women are underrepresented.
- d) We provide training, education, and development for managers on unconscious bias, stereotypes, and conflict management.
- e) We offer a variety of opportunities for information and counselling as well as orientation in the subject area.
- f) We conduct regular gender analyses, e.g., within the framework of the biennial income report, which is further developed as an HR controlling instrument, or in various topic-specific reports and on the basis of the Diversity Yearbooks.

(4) Equality of the student body

- a) We observe the principle of permeability with a focus on gender equality and the elimination of underrepresentation, e.g., with regard to socio-economic status, educational background or ethnic origin, while adhering to objective principles and higher education requirements.
- b) We focus on offering specific forms of courses that serve the sensitization and personal development of students.
- c) We offer students the opportunity to deal with the subject area critically and reflectively, e.g., in the form of seminar papers or theses.
- d) We offer students appropriate structures for participation and involvement.
- e) We offer a wide range of support options for those seeking help (e.g., the brochure "Need Some Help", an email address, specific helplines such as the Care Line and regular feedback meetings).

(5) Strengthening the work-life balance

- a) As a family-friendly university, we focus on creating suitable framework conditions that enable both staff and students to find a suitable living, working and studying environment at our university.
- b) GDM-K is committed to organizational development measures.
- c) We open up various possibilities for staff to take time off (this includes, above all, maternity leave or sabbaticals).
- d) We offer flexible options in teaching and study operations with regard to the organization of specific timetables and the arrangement of examination opportunities.
- e) We pay particular attention to the care obligations of staff and students.
- f) We offer further training opportunities to strengthen personal resilience.

- g) We offer support opportunities through the Care Line, the Dual Career Service and counselling/information materials for employees.

(6) Prevention of sexual harassment and violence

- a) We have a clear positioning through the mission and the guiding principles as well as the anchoring of gender and diversity management as a separate strategic field of action: <https://www.fh-ooe.at/ueber-uns/visionleitbild/strategie/>.
- b) We focus on sensitization and awareness raising through internal and external communication (e.g., through the Diversity Yearbooks and the measures in the area of "Need Some Help") as well as through educational offers for staff and students.
- c) We enable victims to turn to internal contact points and contact persons for support.

§ 9 Monitoring

We use targeted monitoring to check the effectiveness of the goals and measures we have set. This consists of regular analyses of all areas of performance and the situation of staff and students at the university. To this end, the following measures have been introduced or are being (further) developed on an ongoing basis:

- a) Information and communication to staff and students (if relevant), other important stakeholders and the public about the university's commitment to gender equality and the progress made (since 2014 through the annual Diversity Yearbook):
- b) Refined establishment of a separate reporting area of the Gender and Diversity Management Conference (GDM-K) on key figures relevant to control, decision-making, and measures at the FH Upper Austria (cf. Annex). The status analysis and target dimensions are updated annually.
- c) Every two years through the preparation of an income report, which has been expanded to include numerous dimensions relating to gender equality at the university (in use since 2011), with which multi-year comparisons can be made, and which is made available both internally and externally to the university (start with winter semester 2022/23).
- d) Screening of recruiting processes and their results with regard to the realized gender equality goals (start with winter semester 2022/23).
- e) Introduction of a gender equality analysis and indicator system to identify areas of relative strength and weakness, which will enable better targeting of actions and priorities within the gender equality plan and ensure that it is evidence-based (start with WS 2022/23).

§ 10 Communication

The communication of goals, measures, and initiatives about equality and diversity management is carried out within the framework of the communication concept "VielWertMaLeN" (Diversity - Appreciation - Measures - Learning - Sustainability) created by FH Upper Austria.

This pursues the following goals:

- a) Regular and comprehensive information, prepared for all stakeholders, about the cultural approach and the measures in the area of gender and diversity management, especially gender equality work.
- b) Consideration of the respective needs and interests of the addressed internal and external stakeholders through targeted approach and information.
- c) Use of the intersectional approach and issue- and context-specific communication of action requirements and success.
- d) Annual reflection as well as regular feedback loops ensure specificity, measurability, attractiveness, relevance and timely realization - reporting and setting of further goals is done across the entire university.

- e) Communication takes place via the homepage, individual guidelines, directives and events, the intranet and the annually published Diversity Yearbook, which is available in both print and online versions.: <https://www.fh-ooe.at/gender-diversity/diversity-yearbooks/>.

§ 11 Entry into Force

- (1) Section 8 “Equal Opportunity Plan“ enters into force on 06.04.2022 based on a resolution passed by the Academic Board on 30.03.2022 and approved by the FH OÖ Studienbetriebs GmbH (represented by the University President) on 31.03.2022.
- (2) The Equal Opportunity Plan is binding for all members of the university from its entry into force on 06.04.2022.