



Action Plan for Equal Treatment of Students at SLU, 2009

**Adopted by the Rector on 16 March 2009
Reg. no. SLU 30-500/09**

BACKGROUND:

According to the Discrimination Act (SFS 2008:567), an education provider must draw up a plan each year containing an overview of measures needed to combat discrimination and promote equal rights and opportunities regardless of gender, ethnicity, religion or other belief, disability or sexual orientation. The Act protects both students and applicants to institutions of higher education. The new Discrimination Act also covers discrimination based on age and transgender identity or expression. SLU has chosen to include these grounds of discrimination in its action plan for equal treatment.*

This action plan is valid for the period 1 January - 31 December 2009.

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*General definitions and explanations of various terms are found at the end of this document.

For more in-depth definitions, refer to the Discrimination Act at <http://www.regeringen.se/content/1/c6/11/59/03/b463d1e1.pdf>

Overall objectives

- SLU shall be characterised by an open attitude and respect for people's differences and equal value. All students shall have the same rights, obligations and opportunities at SLU, regardless of gender, transgender identity or expression, ethnic affiliation, religion or other belief, disability, sexual orientation or age.
- Anyone who studies or applies for a course at SLU shall not be discriminated against or harassed because of gender, transgender identity or expression, ethnic affiliation, religion or other belief, disability, sexual orientation or age. All students shall be treated with respect and dignity by employees and other students at SLU.
- Employees and students at SLU shall have good knowledge of the Discrimination Act and its application, SLU's action plan for equal treatment and the processing routines that apply when any discrimination or harassment is reported.
- SLU shall adopt a long-term approach to promote the equal treatment of students. In collaboration with the students' unions, SLU will act to ensure that the objectives in this action plan permeate the entire student environment. SLU shall continually work to actively promote the equal treatment of students, regardless of gender, transgender identity or expression, ethnic affiliation, relation or other belief, disability, sexual orientation or age.

Responsibility

The ultimate responsibility for ensuring that SLU observes the Discrimination Act, as well as all other regulations, lies with the Rector. The Student/Work Council (STRÅ) has the task of promoting the issue of equal treatment. At all of SLU's instruction sites there are student/work groups that deal with equal treatment issues at a local level. Operational responsibility for implementing the measures identified in the plan, however, lies with the faculty or administrative unit in question. Everyone who works within SLU has an obligation to observe the Discrimination Act and to work towards the objectives in the plan.

The responsibility for providing students with information about the Discrimination Act lies with the Division of Student Affairs and Learning Development (SUS). SUS is also responsible for drawing up the actual action plan. Follow-up with an evaluation of the measures described in the action plan will take place when the action plan for 2010 is drawn up. The Student/Work Council is responsible for follow-up in collaboration with the parties stated in the plan as being responsible for each respective measure. Each unit's contact persons are listed at the end of the document. There is also continuous follow-up through student/work questionnaire surveys directed at the students.

Continuous tasks

Work to promote equal treatment is to be integrated into all SLU activities. This means that such work is not primarily concerned with temporary measures and efforts but instead involves activities that are continuously and routinely performed within the various parts of the organisation. Such activities are presented below, formulated as continuous tasks for the various units within the university.

Faculties

Areas of responsibility:

1. Information about students' rights and to whom students should turn for support on equal treatment matters is available in the student handbooks produced for basic and advanced levels and research studies. These handbooks are available on each faculty's website and/or a printed version is given to students.
2. Scheduling of instruction shall as far as possible be undertaken with due consideration to students with parental responsibilities.
3. Instruction and examination forms shall be adapted to increase accessibility to students with disabilities.
4. Teachers and other faculty personnel shall have good knowledge of SLU's action plan for equal treatment and the processing routines that apply when any discrimination or harassment is reported.

Division of Communication

Areas of responsibility:

1. SLU's website has links to information on SLU's equal treatment work, including the action plan for equal treatment.
2. The content of SLU's programme catalogues and other information materials reflects ethnic diversity and does not reinforce the heterosexual norm or gender stereotypes.
3. SLU's websites, both internal and external, are made accessible and user-friendly.
4. SLU's information material is non-discriminatory and non-exclusive.

Division of Facility Management

Areas of responsibility:

1. The premises where SLU's activities are held are gradually being adapted for people with disabilities in accordance with the guidelines established by the Swedish Equality Ombudsman (DO).
2. External areas which directly affect students' means of moving between buildings used for instruction and student life shall successively be adapted for greater accessibility.
3. The provision and maintenance of computers with relevant software programs (resource computers) for students with reading and writing disabilities or other functional impairment.

Division of Strategy and Planning

Areas of responsibility:

1. New union officials must be made aware of the Discrimination Act and its application and the content of SLU's action plan for equal treatment.

Human Resources Office

Areas of responsibility:

1. Newly appointed staff must be made aware of the Discrimination Act and its application and the content of SLU's action plan for equal treatment.
2. Newly appointed staff must be made aware of the processing routines that apply when any discrimination or harassment is reported.

Division of Student Affairs and Learning Development

Areas of responsibility:

1. The pedagogic training for instructors includes information and elements concerned with the equal treatment of students and applicants to the university, as well as educational support for students with disabilities.
2. New students shall be informed where to find information on the Discrimination Act and its application at SLU and be aware that there is a special action plan for work concerning the equal treatment of university students and applicants.
3. New students must be made aware of where to find information on the processing routines that apply when any discrimination or harassment is reported.
4. The provision of a coordinator who imparts information and provides educational support to students with disabilities.
5. The provision of advice and support to students and instructors regarding equal treatment issues.

Student/Work Council (STRÅ)

Areas of responsibility:

1. The annual updating of SLU's action plan for equal treatment.
2. The printing of the action plan for equal treatment and its distribution within the organisation.
3. Follow-up and evaluation of student introductory ("inspark") activities.

Procedure in the event of suspected harassment

Harassment in this context means behaviour that violates a student's or an applicant's dignity in university studies, if the behaviour is associated with gender, transgender identity or expression, ethnic affiliation, religion or other belief, disability, sexual orientation or age.

If a student has any questions concerning discrimination and harassment as defined above, he/she can turn to the director of studies or to the equal treatment case officer at the Division of Student Affairs and Learning Development (SUS). If SLU becomes aware that a student believes that he/she has been subjected to harassment, SLU shall investigate the circumstances surrounding the alleged harassment and, if appropriate, take any reasonable

action that might be required to prevent any further harassment. SLU has drawn up special processing routines for handling suspected harassment of a student.

Specific measures for 2009

General

Education and information

Objective: To improve continuity regarding Equal Terms (Lika villkor) efforts.

Measure: Draw up a proposal for an annual theme day on Equal Terms (Lika villkor) for all instructors and students at SLU. Held for the first time in academic year 2009/2010.

Responsibility: Division of Student Affairs and Learning Development (SUS) in collaboration with the Human Resources Office and the faculties.

Examination

Objective: To reduce the risk of discrimination during examinations.

Measure: Special treatment of general skills, examination and marking from an equal treatment perspective within the pedagogic training of instructors and researchers.

Responsibility: Division of Student Affairs and Learning Development (SUS).

Information to new students

Objective: All new SLU students at the basic and advanced level must be aware of where to find information on the Discrimination Act and its application at SLU.

Measure: Informational material on the Discrimination Act and how it is applied at SLU must be drawn up in English and distributed to those responsible for new student orientation (equivalent material already exists in Swedish).

Responsibility: Division of Student Affairs and Learning Development (SUS).

Information to contact person for work placements and external supervisors

Objective: All contact persons for work placements and external supervisors must be familiar with the Discrimination Act and be aware that it also applies to work placements.

Measure: A review of the information given to contact persons for work placements and external supervisors will be done for all study programmes at SLU.

Responsibility: The faculties.

Religion and other belief

Quiet rooms

Objective: Students shall have access to a secluded, religion-neutral room where they can pray or meditate

Measure: Examine possibilities. If it is possible, establish quiet rooms at SLU's main campuses.

Responsibility: SLU Estate Office

Disability

Recording of compendiums in the form of talking books

Objective: To make course literature more accessible to students with disabilities.

Measure: Record the compendiums that serve as course literature for mandatory courses during the first year of SLU's basic-level study programmes.

Responsibility: SLU Libraries and the Division of Student Affairs and Learning Development (SUS).

Course literature and schedule

Objective: All students shall have access to course literature in the available format no later than the date of course start and be able to plan out upcoming courses for their studies.

Measure: Issue reminders and ensure that course literature lists are available on the course web pages at least eight weeks prior to course start and that the schedule is available at least four weeks prior to course start.

Responsibility: The faculties.

Resource computers and specially tailored computer programs

Objective: Students with reading and writing disabilities at SLU's instruction sites shall have access to specially tailored computer programs.

Measure 1: Investigate the possibilities and, if possible, install resource computers in Flyinge and Strömsholm.

Responsibility: Division of Student Affairs and Learning Development (SUS) and the IT department.

Measure 2: Resource computers in Umeå shall be made available after office hours.

Responsibility: SLU Libraries and the IT department.

Measure 3: Examine the possibility of giving students with documented reading and writing disabilities access to personal licences of special programs.

Responsibility: Division of Student Affairs and Learning Development (SUS) in collaboration with the IT department.

Reception/Treatment

Objective: Increase the competence of SLU staff regarding the treatment of persons with disabilities.

Measure: Arrange a seminar on accessibility and how to treat persons with disabilities at the university. Implemented in 2009 and thereafter included in a recurring Equal Terms Day (see specified measure under Education and information).

Responsibility: Human Resources Office in collaboration with Division of Student Affairs and Learning Development (SUS) and the faculties.

Follow-up on measures in 2008

Responsibility for implementation of the measures adopted in the action plan for 2008 lies both with units within administration and with the four faculties at SLU. At the end of 2008, the Student/Work Council (STRÅ) has contacted responsible parties to follow up on the measures in the action plan.

General

Education and information

Measure:

* Draw up a proposal for an annual theme day on Equal Terms (Lika villkor) for all teachers and students at SLU.

Responsibility: Division of Student Affairs and Learning Development (SUS) in collaboration with the Human Resources Office and the faculties.

Not implemented; measure postponed until 2009.

Communication plans

Measure:

* Draw up an individual communication plan for each undergraduate study programme, laying particular stress on broader recruitment and the identification of new target groups.

Responsibility: The Division of Communication in collaboration with the faculties.

Implemented or initiated for almost all programmes. Will be completed in 2009.

Graded marks

Measure:

* Arrange a lecture on marking, generic/general skills and equal treatment in conjunction with SLU's instructor training course on marking.

Responsibility: Division of Student Affairs and Learning Development (SUS).

The two first lectures in a planned series of three have been held. The third will be held in June 2009.

Information to new students

Measure:

* Information on the Discrimination Act and how it is applied at SLU will be produced in English and Swedish and distributed to those responsible for new student orientation.

Responsibility: Division of Student Affairs and Learning Development (SUS).

Information in Swedish has been produced.

Information to contact person for work placements and external supervisors

Measure:

* A review of the information given to contact persons for work placements and external supervisors will be done for all study programmes at SLU.

Responsibility: The faculties.

Performed for the Veterinary Nursing programme and the course Qualified agricultural work placement.

Faculty of Forest Sciences will provide information on this in spring 2009 in conjunction with the start of work placement periods and master thesis work.

Review of study plans

Measure:

* Review SLU's study plans based on an equal treatment perspective. SLU's study plans are to be characterised by flexibility and must not contain wording that is exclusive.

Responsibility: The faculties in collaboration with the Student/Work Council (STRÅ).

Implemented.

Gender equality

Measure:

* Strengthen the element of gender-conscious pedagogy on the basic pedagogy course by distributing a brochure with hints and advice to course participants.

Responsibility: The Human Resources Office and the Division of Student Affairs and Learning Development (SUS).

Implemented. In addition, the publication "Könsmedveten pedagogik" (Gender-conscious pedagogy) by Gunilla Carstensen was distributed to instructors and lecturers at SLU.

Disability

Measures

Review of syllabuses

* To form a working committee within SLU which, in collaboration with other universities in Sweden, will draw up a proposal for an accessibility check list which can be used when reviewing syllabuses.

Responsibility: Student/Work Council (STRÅ) and the faculties.

Not implemented

Recording of compendiums in the form of talking books

* Record the compendiums that serve as course literature for mandatory courses in SLU's study programmes.

Responsibility: SLU Libraries and the Division of Student Affairs and Learning Development (SUS).

Implemented for a number of courses, but not all. The work continues in 2009.

Resource computers

* A resource computer will be installed at Skinnskatteberg.

Responsibility: SLU Libraries and the IT department.

Implemented

* The resource computers at the Forest Library and at the Veterinary Library are to be made accessible outside office hours.

Responsibility: SLU Libraries and the IT department.

Implemented at Veterinary Library but not at the Forestry Library.

Reception/Treatment

* Arrange a seminar on accessibility and how to treat persons with disabilities at the university.

Responsibility: The Human Resources Office.

Not implemented; measure postponed until 2009.

Brief definitions and explanations

Direct discrimination	When a person is treated differently in a situation where other people are treated the same.
Disability	A disability is a permanent physical, psychological or learning limitation of a person's functional ability. These limitations are the result of an injury or illness that existed at birth or occurred in later life.
Diversity	A mixture of differences in e.g. gender, age, sexual orientation, ethnic background, religion or other belief, disability or social background.
Equality	Equality means equal terms for all individuals and groups in society and that all people are of equal worth regardless of gender, religion, ethnic affiliation, sexual orientation, social background, etc.
Equal terms	The collective term used by SLU for statutory anti-discrimination work. Equal terms work applies to both students and employees.
Ethnic affiliation	Someone belongs to a group of people with the same skin colour or national or ethnic background.
Gender equality	Equality between the sexes means that women and men have equal rights, opportunities and obligations within all areas of society.
Heterosexual norm	Homosexuality, bisexuality and transsexuality are considered abnormal; or are not discussed at all.
Indirect discrimination	When a requirement or decision appearing to be neutral in practice limits opportunities for certain persons.

Offensive special treatment and harassment	Recurrent and unwelcome behaviour that insults personal integrity.
Sexual orientation	A person's homosexuality, bisexuality or heterosexuality.
Transgender	That someone does not identify himself or herself as a woman or a man or expresses that they belong to another sex in their manner of dressing or in some other way.
Widened recruitment	Increased recruitment of socially and ethnically under-represented groups and the under-represented gender.

Contact persons for work concerning SLU's action plan for equal treatment

Unit	Contact person
Faculty of Landscape Planning, Horticulture and Agricultural Science	Eva-Lou.Gustafsson@ltj.slu.se
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Faculty of Forest Sciences	Anders.Lindhagen@spm.slu.se
Faculty of Veterinary Medicine and Animal Science	Svante.Axelsson@adm.slu.se
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Division of Facility Management	Stefan.Edholm@adm.slu.se
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