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Plan for gender mainstreaming

Introduction

The Swedish Government has tasked all public sector higher education institutions, as well as Chalmers University of Technology and Jönköping University, to undertake development of their work on gender mainstreaming over the period 2016-2019. The purpose is for them to contribute to achieving the Swedish gender equality objective that was adopted by the Riksdag on 16 May 2006¹.

Gender equality policy objective

The objective of gender equality policy is that women and men have the same power to shape society and their own lives. There are four sub-targets in the gender equality policy objective:

- 1. Equal division of power and influence.** Women and men are to have the same rights and opportunities to be active citizens and to shape the conditions for decision-making.
- 2. Financial gender equality.** Women and men must have the same opportunities and conditions as regards paid work which give economic independence throughout life
- 3. An even division of unpaid housework and care work.** Women and men must have the same responsibility for housework and have the opportunity to give and receive care on equal terms.
- 4. Men's violence against women must end.** Women and men, girls and boys, must have the same right and access to physical integrity.

As part of this task from the government, higher education institutions must establish a plan with identified needs for development, targets and activities. This plan must state how the objective of integrating gender equality in normal activities will be achieved. The idea behind integrating gender equality is that activities will be part of normal routines.

On 20 September 2016, the vice-chancellor decided to appoint a working group to make an inventory of problem areas in the university's activities and to establish a plan. The group includes Mats Bergman (convenor), Linda Aalto, Hans E.

Andersson, Carin Bohlin (from January 2017), Peter Dobers, Eva Karlberg, Beatriz Lindqvist, Katarina Mattsson, Christian Widholm and, for the students' union, Moa Bergström, Eleonor Nakunzi and Adam Söderberg.

¹ In a statement to the Riksdag, submitted on 21 November 2016, the government describes its gender equality policy, which appends two more targets to the four national targets: gender-equitable education and gender-equal health.

Approach

To identify problem areas and ones with potential for development, the working group has held discussions and workshops with the management boards of the academic schools, the Faculty Board, Management Council, Health and Safety Committee, students' union, recruitment committees and Student Support Services, Communication and Public Relations, Human Resources, the library and some of the schools' administrative units. In some cases, the entire school has participated in workshops on the theme of gender mainstreaming; unions have also been invited to discussions.

The working group has also gathered information such as statistics on sick leave, the proportion of male and female students on various courses and programmes, the number of days between receiving a doctorate and receiving an associate professorship for men and women, etc. On discussing and analysing the information that had been gathered, the working group identified five problem areas, as well as a number of activities.

The five problem areas are:

- Recruitment
- Career paths
- Gendered study choices and the content of courses and programmes
- Sick leave and stress-related ill-health
- Profiling, knowledge & intersectionality

As a second step, in order to obtain wider support, additional suggestions and check facts, the working group has asked the Faculty Board, management boards of the academic schools, Health and Safety Committee, recruitment committees, Doctoral Students' Committee and the students' union for opinions on the five areas and the associated activities and objectives. It soon became apparent to the working group that it was important to be bold and only prioritise a few areas to make the actions as effective as possible, which corresponded with the recommendations of the Swedish Secretariat for Gender Research, which is tasked with coordinating the work of the higher education institutions. The referral bodies were therefore asked to rank the five areas on the basis of urgency.

According to their overall opinions and the working group's analysis of these, it was clear that recruitment and career paths should be regarded as a problem area and that the area of "profiling, knowledge and intersectionality" could be spread across the other problem areas. However, the working group has chosen to highlight "profiling, knowledge and intersectionality" in work with equal opportunities, so this problem area is not covered in this plan.

It also became clear that the referral bodies wanted to take a broad approach that includes both gender equality and equal opportunities. Gender equality is about equality between men and women, while equal opportunities is for any group.

Regarding the latter, this plan also includes the concept of diversity. On the basis of the referral bodies' priorities it was also clear that the problem areas of "Sick leave and stress-related ill-health" and "Recruitment and career paths" were the most urgent areas for the university to work with. However, objectives and activities in these areas only indirectly affect the students, so the working group has chosen to include the problem area of "Gendered study choices and the content of courses and programmes" in the plan, but with only a few activities.

The coordinator for gender mainstreaming will, in dialogue with the person responsible for each activity, specify and calculate the resources for each activity. According to the public service agreement, actions and results must be presented in the annual reports for 2017-2019. Human Resources is responsible for following up the plan's activities.

Recruitment and internal career paths

Recruiting new staff is decisive for a higher education institution's chances of maintaining high quality; not least from the perspective of gender equality. To recruit and retain the right staff, Södertörn University must continually work on its recruitment strategies and ensure we have processes that do not create inequalities. This applies to academic, technical and administrative staff. The issue of career paths is often discussed in association with recruitment, and a well-considered strategy for staff career opportunities can facilitate recruitment of the most competent men and women. A well-considered career strategy for all staff categories also has the advantage that existing staff are given the opportunity to develop their skills, allowing competence to be used where it provides the most benefit.

Overarching problems

Figures from Statistics Sweden (SCB) in 2016 show that, on the Swedish labour market, only four of the 30 occupations with the most employees can be regarded as gender balanced, i.e. occupations in which the proportion of women or men is 40 to 60 per cent.

Segregation on the labour market and traditional ideas about what men and women can do and are suitable for are a waste of resources. "Normal" recruitment methods can mean that women get traditional women's jobs and men end up in their usual positions.

Nationally, there is a good balance of teaching and research staff, apart from among professors. The proportion of women among Sweden's senior lecturers, in career-development positions and other lecturers with doctorates is about 45 per cent (2015). The proportion among adjunct lecturers is approaching 60 per cent.

The proportion of women is also increasing among professors, but slowly. Currently, around 25 per cent of Sweden's professors are women and, in recent years, the proportion of women has been about 35 per cent among newly-employed professors who have not previously held a professorship. This means that the proportion of women among the professors is increasing by just 0.8 percentage points per year

and that, if this continues at the same rate, it will take until around 2035 for 40 per cent of professors to be women.

Both national and international studies indicate that the proportion of women reduces along the academic career path. For example, while the number of men and women in Sweden who have recently received doctorates is fairly equal, only about 6 per cent of the women who earned doctorates in the early 2000s had become professors after 12 years, while for men it is 7–8 per cent.

Local problems

At national level, in 2015 the proportion of women professors was 31 and 37 per cent in social science and the humanities, respectively, but only 16 per cent in natural science. Given that the university is relatively newly established and given the significance of the humanities, the proportion of women professors “should” statistically be around 35 per cent at Södertörn University, if we follow the national pattern, but we are hardly at that level. For recruited professors, i.e. the university’s professors funded by the Foundation for Baltic and East European Studies, the proportion of women is considerably lower, around just 10 per cent. The proportion of women is around 45 per cent among promoted professors who are not senior professors.

The five professorships that were advertised in 2013–2015 attracted significantly more male applicants (76 per cent). Among the eleven applicants that were ranked by the committees, only one was a woman.

At Södertörn University, the proportion of employees in each of the employment categories of doctoral student, lecturer, senior lecturer (with or without an associate professorship) and the career positions of associate senior lecturer and postdoc are evenly distributed between men and women, i.e. the proportion is 40-60 per cent.

This applies to both fixed-term positions and those until further notice.

A retrospective analysis has shown that the time between receiving a doctoral degree and becoming an associate professor is an average of 1.5 years longer for female associate professors employed at the university than it is for male associate professors. However, the time from an associate professorship to a professorship

has been generally the same for the women and men who are employed as professors.

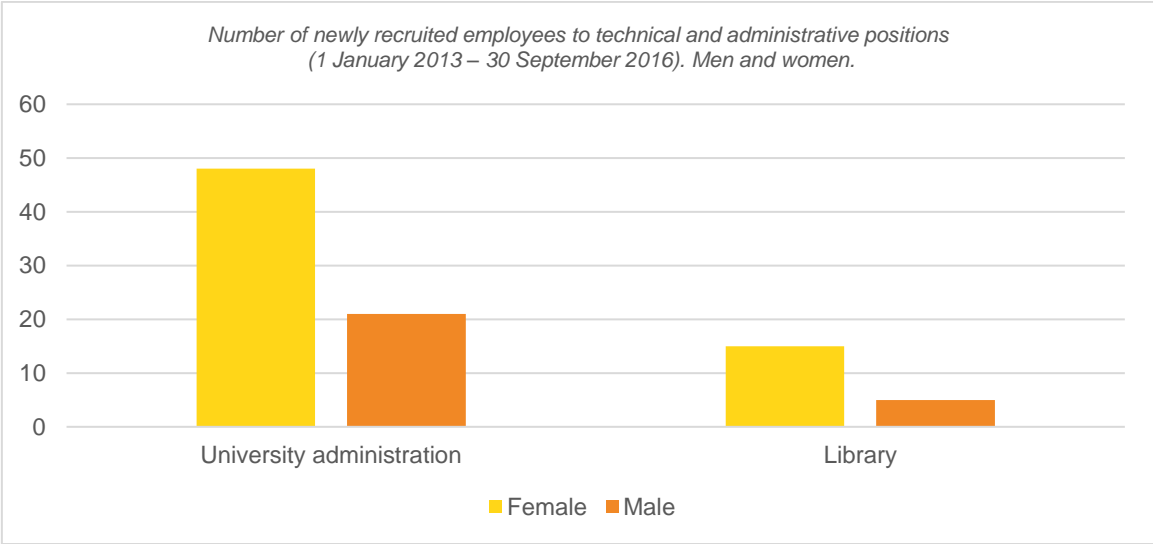
In the period 2013-2015, 41 senior lecturer positions have been advertised (sometimes more than one person has been appointed for each). Of these, a total of 52 per cent were male applicants. However, among those ranked first, the proportion of men dropped to 44 per cent. There is also an interesting difference between the two recruitment committees; while both had the same proportion of male applicants (52 per cent) the recruitment committee for humanities ranked a man first in just 26 per cent of all appointments, while the recruitment committee for social sciences, natural sciences and technology ranked a man first in 58 per cent of the cases. Even if the distribution of male and female senior lecturers is even across the university, there are subjects and groups of subjects where the distribution is uneven and where current recruitment patterns do not counteract this unevenness.

Recruitment of academic staff to the university has a strong element of collegiality, with the recruitment committees' work being particularly important, but the recruitment process has many stages, is complicated and takes a long time. It typically begins with the identification of a need and the capacity for a new appointment among a subject's or department's staff. An employment profile and advertisement must then be produced, which is done in cooperation between the "line", the collegium and the HR unit; the advertising medium must be chosen, other information measures taken, external experts appointed, etc. After the external experts' statements have been received, the recruitment committee starts work on assessing and finally ranking the candidates, while the academic school decides on recruitment capacity and the vice-chancellor takes the final decision on employment. Decisions taken in several of these stages influence the outcome of the recruitment process, partly as regards expertise and general suitability, partly the time the process takes, but also decisions that affect gender equality. There is therefore reason to review the entire recruitment process, for the purpose of achieving a high level of expertise and suitability, gender-balanced recruitment and, more generally, good diversity among the staff.

The gender distribution among technical and administrative staff at Södertörn University in 2015 was 67 per cent women and 33 per cent men. There are many professions in this category where there are significant gender imbalances, such as administrators, secretaries, librarians, officers, caretakers and support technicians.

Among the technical and administrative staff working at the academic schools, the overwhelming majority are women (72 per cent) and the professional categories found there are academic secretaries and officers. Most of the university's administrative units have mainly female staff, except for Campus and ICT Services which is the opposite. The overall gender distribution for the university administration is 34 per cent men and 66 per cent women.

Looking at the number of new positions in university administration and the library during the period 1 January 2013 to 30 September 2016, almost three times as many women as men are recruited to technical and administrative jobs, see the below table.



This reflects the general gender distribution among technical and administrative staff at the university. One circumstance that may contribute to difficulties in evening out existing imbalances is the lack of clearly formulated career paths for technical and administrative staff.

The recruitment process for technical and administrative staff is dealt with by the relevant manager. Compared to the recruitment process for lecturers, this process has relatively few formal stages. The manager has access to templates and guides, and can turn to the HR unit for support. This means that the recruitment process differs, depending on how the manager chooses to approach it. There is currently no uniform process which, in many cases, may lead to the issue of gender equality not being considered.

Objectives

- That, at the university as a whole, the proportion of men or women will be at least 40 per cent among the new professors and senior lecturers who are recruited.
- To achieve a proportion of 52 per cent women among newly recruited professors, including promoted professors and visiting professors, over 2017–2019.
- To reduce the gender imbalance in the professional groups and units/departments where the difference is greatest, particularly recruited professors and technical and administrative staff.

Activities

- Review the university's recruitment processes for all staff categories and take action where necessary. This involves systematising a number of elements in employment processes so that they take into account gender equality and equal rights, e.g. designing the employment profile, advertising, selecting candidates, conducting interviews/trial lectures and taking references, selecting the interview group, choice of external experts, instructions to external experts and general instructions to the relevant managers. Responsible: recruitment committees and HR
- Evaluate whether the external experts should select a leading group instead of ranking candidates. Personal suitability and teaching skills are abilities that can largely only be tested through trial lectures, interviews and references. Having a leading group could mean that the university can more openly weigh scholarly merits against educational merits. Responsible: recruitment committees
- Evaluate whether specific measures, in addition to those above, are necessary when recruiting professors. One example is to develop routines for calling professors. Responsible: recruitment committees
- Investigate conditions for improving career planning opportunities for technical-administrative staff. Responsible: HR unit
- Investigate and, where necessary, change the titles given to various positions, so that they attract well-qualified men and women. Responsible: HR unit

- Educate staff who work with recruitment on how to recruit without discriminating on the basis of gender, for example. (Responsible: HR unit)
- Investigate and perhaps propose additional career support for academic staff, including doctoral students, prior to transitions between career stages (for example mentor programmes or instruction on building up a qualifications portfolio). Responsible: Faculty Board
- Investigate conditions for increasing the number of new teaching staff employed as associate senior lecturer; this reduces the period in insecure teaching and research positions, creates a better age structure and may be an effective means of recruiting competent staff and implementing measures if the conditions are right. Responsible: university management

Gendered study choices and the content of courses and programmes

Overarching problems

Norms and structures that result in an unequal society.

Local problems

The majority of the university's courses and programmes are characterised by clearly gendered study choices. For example, in admissions for the autumn semester of 2016, the proportion of men on the Urban Social Work programme was 13 per cent, while on the Sport Management programme it was 73 per cent.

Södertörn University can potentially further mainstream gender equality and equal opportunities in its courses and programmes. This could include highlighting the gender balance among students and lecturers, as well as the groups of people who are represented in course literature, and could also include the scholarly content of courses and programmes. As students' gendered study choices are often made before they start higher education, it is important that the university tries to counteract them through its marketing and recruitment activities.

Objectives

- Courses and programmes at Södertörn University will be more equal.
- All courses and programmes must mainstream gender equality and equal opportunities in a relevant manner. The university will have an inclusive environment with an even gender distribution among role models and authors of course literature.

Activities

- Courses and programmes at Södertörn University are made more equal by the university's development of a unique niche, with the deliberate integration of shared modules on different courses and programmes. Dedicate resources for the development of inter-programme themes. Teachers or teaching teams can apply for these so that students who are on courses or programmes with opposite gender imbalances will study specific modules together, for example. Sharing modules/courses on parts of different programmes – particularly the university's more vocational programmes – influences how the different student groups understand perceive their future professional role. In the long run, this influence will also influence the society in which the students will work. Responsible: university management
- Courses and programmes at the university are encouraged to analyse, along with Communication & PR, how recruitment and marketing can be designed to counteract gendered study choices, as part of the university's work towards widening recruitment and participation. Resources are announced so that programmes that wish to work actively on counteracting gendered study choices can apply for them. Responsible: university management
- All programmes conduct a review of how issues of gender equality and equal opportunities can be integrated in the programme and take action where necessary. Responsible: programme and subject councils
- All programmes conduct a review of course literature authors and which role models are presented and take action where necessary. Responsible: programme and subject councils

Sick leave and stress-related ill-health

Overarching problems

Since 2010, the number of people in Sweden on sick leave for stress-related diagnoses has significantly increased, with women being significantly over-represented among those on sick leave for stress-related illness. As many as one in five women on sick leave have a diagnosis that is stress-related.

Stress-related illnesses often have complex causes, in which individual factors interact with workload, work environment, actual and perceived opportunities to influence working conditions, as well as other psycho-social factors such as enthusiasm and group dynamics at the workplace. In stress prevention, it is common to examine the links between the requirements and expectations that are placed on employees, the control they feel they have over their tasks and the support they receive from their surroundings. Sick leave and the measures and actions caused by long-term sick leave are also expensive for Södertörn University and leave the organisation vulnerable.

One factor that influences stress-related ill-health is a high workload; this may be having many different types of tasks, an uneven workload, few opportunities to plan ahead, planning and prioritising tasks, and how much space there is for dealing with unexpected tasks. Another factor is what opportunities there are for rest and recovery, which means that overall stress is influenced by overarching gender differences in the responsibility for family, children and other caring labour outside work. A disadvantageous psychosocial climate is also regarded as an important factor in stress-related ill-health and affects employee satisfaction and performance. Some warning signs to look out for in this context are: high staff turnover, a high proportion of insecure employment forms, high level of sick leave, conflicts and communication problems, bullying, victimisation, discrimination, the perception of few opportunities to influence the workplace and poor leadership.

Local problems

At Södertörn University, female employees have a higher rate of sick leave than male employees. In 2015, sick leave among female employees was 5.48 per cent and

among male employees it was 1.57 per cent. Since 2013, sick leave among female employees has increased by 1.6 percentage points, while it has decreased by 0.62 percentage points for male employees².

The 2016 employee survey for Södertörn University shows that the university has a high level of both work-related burnout and work tempo. To the question of whether there is enough time to complete tasks, the proportion that answered “rarely” or “never” is 22.1 per cent and 5.1 per cent respectively. This means that 141 people of the 523 who responded to the survey feel that they rarely or never have enough time to do their work, which must be regarded as a high level.

The 2016 employee survey also shows that about 30 per cent of the employees who responded to the survey state they feel worn out after work or tired when they think about work, several times a week or more often. As many as 8.8 per cent say that they feel worn out after work every day, which is the equivalent of 44 individuals; 22.1 per cent say that they feel emotionally empty after work a few times each week or more often.

Södertörn University also has a large proportion of temporary employees and there are units which have periodically had a high staff turnover. Among the academic staff, 297 people were employed until further notice in September 2016, while 251 people had some form of fixed-term contract³. Of these 251, 127 people were employed under Section 5 of the Swedish Employment Protection Act (primarily items 1 and 2, i.e. general fixed-term employment and temporary substitute employment). The gender distribution for these 127 people was 56 per cent women and 44 per cent men.

Among the technical and administrative staff, 254 people were employed until further notice in September 2016 and 45 people had some form of fixed-term contract

² The difference between male and female employees is partly explained by a higher number of women on the administrative staff and that administrative staff have a higher rate of sick leave than academic staff. However, even when this is considered, large differences remain between men and women.

³Includes all fixed-term contracts, including those which are limited according to the Higher Education Ordinance and collective agreements, e.g. doctoral studentships, postdocs, research assistants, lecturers, as well as employment under Section 5 of the Swedish Employment Protection Act

(Section 5 of the Employment Protection Act). The gender distribution among the fixed-term staff was 69 per cent women and 31 per cent men.

Recruiting and introducing new employees can create extra work. There is also often a gap, where information about routines and working methods does not have time to be communicated. One aspect of this is the tangible risk of a chain reaction; when a unit has had a period with a high workload that has entailed one or more employees being placed on sick leave, the solution is often that other employees take over tasks and “solve things”. There is then an obvious risk that, in turn, their workload becomes too great and there is an increased risk of more people taking sick leave.

One additional possible explanation why the workload is experienced as high among academic staff is that the university offers too many modules in relation to the funding allocated to first-cycle education. The university has around 70 programmes and 250 freestanding courses, so the number of modules is considerable. It is likely that a large course offering and thus low income per taught element is a contributing factor to an overly high work load and stress level. That the offering is too great in relation to the budget may be due to it being easier to add than remove a module in relation to ambitious teaching staff, that the university’s funding agreement targets have somewhat reduced in recent years and that the scale of support to students with special needs has increased.

One aspect related to the issue of workload is the allocation of different tasks among different groups of employees. An uneven allocation of tasks – both formally and informally – affects how the high workload is distributed. It is also linked to the issue of which tasks are high-value and considered important, and which tasks are low-value and considered unimportant.

One problem that is regularly highlighted is that there is an uneven distribution of tasks, both formal and informal, between male and female employees. Firstly, it is said to concern the allocation of roles, such as programme and subject coordinators, representation on working groups and committees. These roles are time-consuming, but are not equivalently rewarded in the academic career path nor in staff planning. In this context, it is important to mention that the distribution of tasks at the university

is relatively even between men and women, but that in some environments there is a significant imbalance.

Secondly, it seems to involve the allocation of more informal (“invisible”) tasks, such as responsibility for developing activities and courses, as well as uneven distribution of the shared responsibility for education/research environments and general workplace satisfaction.

The students report a similar problem, highlighting the female-dominated student representation on subject and programme committees, where women take more responsibility for monitoring student issues and the quality of education. The proportion of female students at the university is around 70%.

The psychosocial work environment involves, among other things, secure employment, opportunities for personal development and functioning cooperation at the workplace. The psychosocial work environment is affected by both organisational and social aspects. It is a compound term that captures many different aspects that cannot be completely covered in this text.

As overarching background, it should be noted that over the last five years Södertörn University has undertaken major organisational changes and changed systems for governance and decision-making, which have affected the overall work environment on an overarching level.

Objectives

- To reduce sick leave among employees.
- That the university’s rehabilitation work after long or stress-related sick leave is of the highest class.
- To reduce unhealthy workloads on the employees.
- For there to be a more even distribution of tasks, both formally and informally, in the organisation.

Activities

- More education and information about existing routines, as regards managerial responsibility for the work environment, increasing knowledge among the employees about the help they can receive, and investigating whether the rehabilitation process can be improved and existing routines can be generally developed to achieve reduced sick leave, particularly for the groups that currently have high rates of sick leave. Responsible: HR unit
- Provide more training for managers on issues such as gender, ill-health and the importance of the psychosocial environment. Responsible: HR unit
- Further investigation of long-term sick leave among doctoral students to understand the factors behind it. Responsible: HR unit
- Work on long-term staffing strategies that aim to reduce work-related stress and vulnerability in the organisation, observing the perspective of gender equality. Responsible: all managers
- Appoint a committee to analyse whether the number of modules is too high in relation to the funding for undergraduate education and, when necessary, in this context propose actions that reduce the workload for the university's teaching staff, such as increased module sharing and coordination between courses and programmes. Responsible: university management
- Appoint a committee to investigate the opportunities for backup, for both teaching and administrative staff, so there is a plan for how sick leave or other sudden absence will be managed. Responsible: university management
- Announce funding to highlight the distribution of formal and informal tasks to better design strategies to counteract imbalances. Responsible: university management
- Offer training and/or workshops in how we behave towards each other. Responsible: HR unit