

# Guidelines for Gender Mainstreaming Academia

## About this material

The Swedish Secretariat for Gender Research at the University of Gothenburg has been commissioned to support the government initiative Gender Mainstreaming in Academia (GMA) during the period 2016–2019.

The purpose of this material is to serve as an introduction for the universities\* partaking in the GMA-programme. The material presents a general model for the assessment of gendered inequalities, focusing on a set of operational processes complemented by guiding questions. The guiding questions target different parts of the organisation and aim to point out ways to implement, or continue, the work of gender mainstreaming within the organisation. Note that several questions require statistical material and in-depth analysis in order to achieve relevant strategies for change.

The guidelines presented are based on the Secretariat's experiences from the related project Gender Mainstreaming in Government Agencies (GMGA), as well as the latest research on and evaluation of gender mainstreaming in public administration.

\*) Throughout the material, the term 'university' will refer to all higher education institutions in Sweden, i.e. including providers of higher education that technically are not considered universities, such as university colleges.

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## About the assignment

Since 1994, all Swedish public authorities, including state-funded universities, are required to undertake gender mainstreaming work as a primary strategy to implement the national gender equality policy. The national government has commissioned all state-funded universities, as well as Chalmers University of Technology and Jönköping University, to develop their gender mainstreaming further during 2016-2019. The government points out gender-unequal career paths in academia, the need to work against gender-based educational choices and improvement of student completion rates among both women and men as areas of particular priority.

Within the framework of the government assignment, the universities are to establish a plan defining development needs, goals and activities. The plan must include a description of how the objective of gender mainstreaming all core processes will be achieved. The universities must present the plan by 15 May 2017 and are also expected to report results and implemented measures continuously to the government throughout the programme period.

The Swedish Secretariat for Gender Research at the University of Gothenburg has been commissioned to offer support in the planning and implementation of the universities' assignment, coordinate training measures, arrange network meetings for sharing of experiences between the universities and with other authorities, and disseminate best practices. The support must be tailored to and designed in consultation with the universities.

### **About the Secretariat**

The Swedish Secretariat for Gender Research has been placed at the University of Gothenburg since 1998. Its central aim is to strengthen the impact of research and knowledge related to gender and gender equality in academia and the rest of society. The Secretariat has carried out several assignments on behalf of for example the Swedish government and the Nordic Council of Ministers. For more information, see [www.genus.se](http://www.genus.se)

The Secretariat is currently also involved in an assignment on gender mainstreaming titled Gender Mainstreaming in Government Agencies (GMGA). It targets 59 government agencies and one organisation, including the Swedish Higher Education Authority, the Swedish Council for Higher Education and the Swedish Research Council. The Secretariat will as far as possible coordinate the support to universities and other public authorities connected to the higher education sector.

## Core concepts

Women and men shall have equal power to shape society and their own lives. This is the overall objective of the Swedish government's gender equality policy, ratified by the Swedish Parliament. The term *gender equality* was introduced in the 1960s in Sweden in order to differentiate between (in)equality based on gender and other inequalities. Gender equality can be said to occur when women and men have the same opportunities, rights and responsibilities in all areas of life.

### National gender equality objectives

The overall objective of the Swedish government's gender equality policy is equal power for women and men to shape society and their own lives. Four sub-goals have also been formulated:

- 1. Equal distribution of power and influence.**  
Women and men shall have the same rights and opportunities to be active citizens and be able to form the terms for decision-making.
- 2. Economic equality between the sexes.**  
Women and men shall have the same opportunities and conditions with regard to education and paid work that provide them with the means to achieve lifelong economic independence.
- 3. Equal distribution of unpaid care and household work.**  
Women and men shall take the same responsibility for household work and shall have the same opportunities to give and receive care on equal terms.
- 4. Men's violence against women must stop.**  
Women and men, girls and boys shall have the same rights and opportunities in terms of physical integrity.

The work to achieve gender equality should be based on an in-depth understanding of which gendered inequalities need to be counteracted. Thoroughly defined problems help facilitate the implementation of proper measures and the achievement of results by means of a gender mainstreaming strategy.

However, women and men do not comprise two homogenous groups. Class in terms of socioeconomic background and level of education, as well as ethnicity and/or race, contribute to differences both within and between the categories of women and men. Sexual orientation, age and functional ability are other power structures that create heterogeneity in a corresponding manner. Moreover, not all people can or want to define themselves as women or men. When an analysis is too one-dimensionally linked to the categories 'women' and 'men', simplified assumptions are often recreated instead of challenged.

In order for gender mainstreaming to contribute to change, it is therefore necessary to expand the understanding of how gender co-varies with other power regimes. In this document, the concepts of *equal treatment* and *inequality* encompass all of these power regimes. The concept of *gender* is used to point to the need for a critical analysis of how gender is 'made' in relation to other power regimes.

### Useful tip!

Download the tutorial [Gender Mainstreaming with an Intersectional Perspective](#) from [includegender.org](http://includegender.org).

## What does gender mainstreaming mean?

Gender mainstreaming is Sweden's principal strategy for achieving the national gender equality objectives. According to the Council of Europe, gender mainstreaming:

is the (re)organisation, improvement, development and evaluation of policy processes, so that a gender equality perspective is incorporated in all policies at all levels and at all stages, by the actors normally involved in policy-making.

Concretely, gender mainstreaming can involve development of management systems and core activities so that they promote gender equality and a fair distribution of resources; routines and processes that do not discriminate any person based on sex/gender; and educational opportunities that are equally available to everybody regardless of sex/gender and other power regimes.

Historically, universities' gender equality work has focused on targeted training measures and human resource management, often in the form of projects and without the inclusion of a power analysis. Clear ties to the development of management governance systems and core activities have often been lacking. Thus, the new focus on gender mainstreaming implies a higher ambition and a strategically important reformulation of existing practices.

In order to ensure that gender mainstreaming is not reduced to an administrative exercise, there is a need for continuous analysis of the organisation's routines and documentation processes in combination with a critical assessment of existing inequalities. Limiting norms and informal power structures need to be problematised and challenged in a fundamental way. The organisation and its operations must be analysed in a way that reveals where, how and why inequalities emerge and how they are expressed. Problems must be properly identified before any interventions to solve them can be formulated. This part of the work often requires various types of support: education, supervision, opportunities for dialogue and reflection, research-based methods for change etc.

## Gender mainstreaming and equality work

Swedish universities' existing gender equality and equal treatment work has many similarities with, but also differ in many ways from, gender mainstreaming as a strategy. Gender mainstreaming is goal oriented and ultimately aims to strengthen the power of women and men to shape society and their own lives. The gender equality and equal treatment work, on the other hand, is regulated by the Swedish Discrimination Act's ban on discrimination and requirement to implement active anti-discrimination measures. The gender equality and equal treatment work

primarily aims to prevent discrimination of individuals in the workplace, whereas the purpose of gender mainstreaming is to change the power structures that have discriminating effects on women and men as groups.

In practice, this distinction means that gender mainstreaming is organised as one of an organisation's central change processes, while gender equality and equal treatment work often is planned and implemented as limited activities rooted in an HR perspective. Regardless of this, the existing gender equality and equal treatment work forms an important basis for analysis of which priorities should be made also in the context of gender mainstreaming.

The assignment to implement gender mainstreaming in academia implies a focus on (re)organisation of the universities' present control governance and management processes, but can also lead to a strengthening reinforcement of the existing equality work by making it more strategic and comprehensive.

Finding work models conducive to change and synergies between these two logics will pose a challenge to the universities. Regardless of how this is accomplished, it is always relevant and desirable that gender mainstreaming as a strategy be operationalised in order to respond to real needs in the organisation and in society at large. Concretely, this means to expand the understanding and meaning of the concept per se – the challenges faced in academia in relation to gender equality always depend on how age, class, ethnicity and/or skin colour and other power structures interact with gender.

## Problem assessment

Gender mainstreaming work should be preceded by a problem assessment where each university identifies which challenges and problems the work is intended to solve. In the first step of the assessment procedure, the university should gain a comprehensive understanding of all previous and current gender equality work carried out at the university. Such work may take the form of legally required activities to promote gender equality and equal treatment, other relevant initiatives and projects or previously implemented gender-mainstreaming measures.

The surveying of past and present work should identify gender equality work that is not directly linked to the special gender-mainstreaming assignment, but from which competence and analyses can be utilised.

#### **Guiding questions: previous gender equality work**

- What type of gender equality work is carried out at the university today and what type of gender equality work has been carried out in the past? What is/was the purpose of the work? What parts of the organisation are/have been involved in the work?
- What analyses and problem descriptions have been accomplished?
- What results have been generated and what results are wanted in the future?
- Have the implemented measures resulted in sustainable methods, procedures and work models?

Once the previous and present work has been identified, the next step is to define what further challenges and problems need to be solved. In this text, a ‘house’ model<sup>1</sup> illustrates which general processes and types of operations should be assessed, but there are of course also other ways to describe challenges in the organisation. What matters is that the gender mainstreaming work includes the organisation’s core activities and regular control, support and management processes. A basic premise should be that a gender-equal organisation and its operations are best developed in regularly occurring processes and with the existing work organisation, or when needed in new processes and through new organisational forms.

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<sup>1</sup> Original model developed by the Swedish Association of Local Authorities and Regions: <http://webbutik.skl.se/sv/artiklar/program-for-hallbar-jamstalldhet-resultatrapport-2008-2010.html>

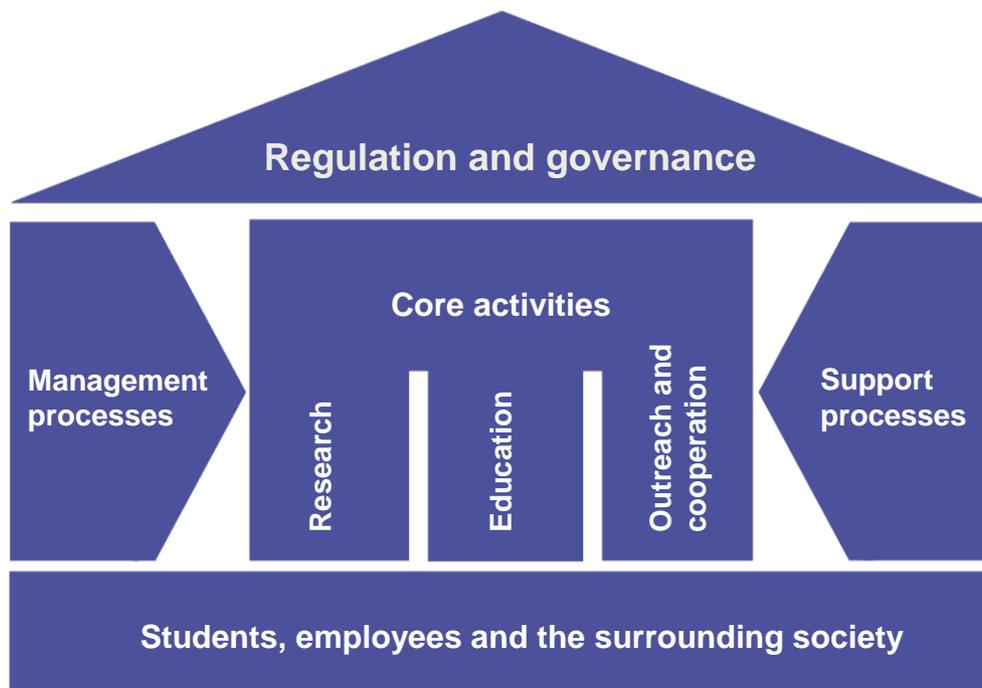
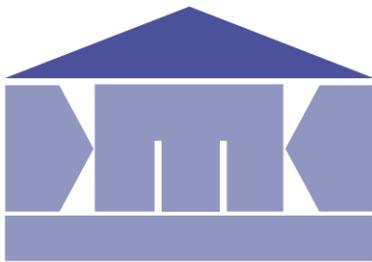


Figure 1. House model for gender mainstreaming

*Regulation and governance* refers to the assignments, requirements and all the rules and regulations that the universities are obliged to comply with, as well as the aims and priorities that the respective university boards have laid down. Within the operational framework defined at the regulation and governance level, the university's core activities are controlled via *management processes*, where aims and objectives are concretised, resources allocated and goal fulfilment reported. The core activities comprise research, education and outreach activities. *Support processes*, in turn, encompass additional factors needed to make the organisation function effectively: HR, communication and administration linked to research, education and outreach activities.

It is in the core activities that the ultimate results of gender mainstreaming shall be achieved. If the development work does not make it past the policy level, no practical change will occur. There is also the opposite risk, namely that management and support processes are not strong enough to support the knowledge and results that are generated in the core activities, resulting in poor sustainability.

## Regulation and governance



The governance of universities is characterised by ideological and political currents that find their expression in national research and higher education reforms over time. Changing economic frameworks, a mix of tradition and development, a strong organisational culture, creativity and an overall critical and reflective stance are additional elements affecting the governance. Formal and informal power structures are developed at the same time as meritocracy, collegiality and objectivity are sometimes defended, sometimes challenged. The universities operate in a context where dissimilar mandates and assignments produce certain tensions, often enhanced by a complex mixture of more or less incompatible principles and organisational models.

Besides the gender-mainstreaming requirement, Swedish universities must comply with a number of other political and legal provisions with bearing on gender equality, such as the Swedish Higher Education Act and Higher Education Ordinance, the Swedish Discrimination Act and letters of regulations. To this list can be added for example professional provisions and ethical guidelines for various occupations, which necessitate that relevant knowledge about gender and gender equality be integrated into the courses and degree programmes offered. The higher education sector is also characterised by special assignments, such as broadened recruitment/participation and social sustainability, which also need to be integrated.

The steering documents describe the central aims and priorities determined by the respective university board and management. These are documents that the university can influence, in contrast to the laws and ordinances that constitute the external regulation described above. Examples include vision documents, general strategies with long-term aims for the university, and policies with respect to various issues.

Gender mainstreaming of steering documents aims to create the structural conditions required for effective development work. Ensuring the presence of a

gender equality perspective in all steering documents provides for practical integration also for example at faculty and department level. It is of critical importance that not only the documents per se are adjusted; instead the formulations must support the development work that is to be carried out.

Concretely, this implies that the steering documents are to be analysed in terms of their bearing on gender equality. Objectives and guidelines may need to be revised, reinforced, clarified or complemented. Specific gender equality objectives should be introduced where relevant, and activities contributing to increased gender equality need to be pointed out in the operational plan. It also implies that all measures in the university's gender mainstreaming plan shall be included in the regular operational plan and other relevant documents. A requirement to present gendered statistics and analyses from a gender/gender equality perspective in the reporting of the organisation's results and goal fulfilment is also necessary. To ensure that analyses of high quality are undertaken, both supervision and customised training for relevant staff may be necessary; see further under *management processes* below.

### **Guiding questions: regulation and governance**

#### REGULATION

- How does the university's existing assignments regarding gender equality and gender mainstreaming relate to other central regulations and requirements, such as laws, instructions, letters of regulation and national objectives?

#### GOVERNANCE

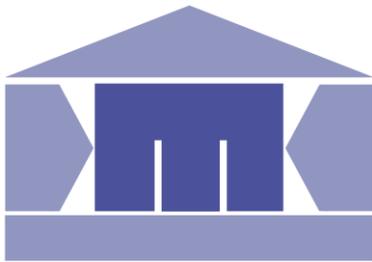
- What are the most important steering documents? Can the content of the steering documents be related to the identified gendered inequalities? To what extent do objectives, activities and other content promote gender equality?
- Is it made clear that achievement of objectives, results and indicators must be reported based on gender? Are the gendered statistics analysed and described in writing?
- At which levels of the chain of command are there currently formulations that promote gender equality? Is the university's gender equality ambition, as expressed in central steering documents, incorporated also in steering documents at other levels of the chain of command? Are formulations about gender equality missing at any level?

- How does the university ensure that the content of its gender-mainstreaming plan is incorporated into its central steering documents?

### Useful tip!

Download the tutorial [Gender Mainstreaming of Regulatory Documents](#) from [includegender.org](http://includegender.org)

## Core activities



A university's core activities comprise its research, education and outreach activities. This is where the operational improvements shall lead to concrete results, with the support of the general structural changes implemented in the organisation. The gender mainstreaming of the core activities should begin with an assessment of where gendered inequalities in gender equality occur. To this end, it is important that appropriate assessment methods, knowledge about how to interpret assessment results and support regarding how sustainable improvements can be achieved are made available.

### Research

A central issue when it comes to *research* is a review of the allocation of basic funding from a gender/gender equality perspective. Structures for recruitment and appointments, co-funding and allocation of supplemental resources, as well as systems for measuring quality and acquisition of qualifications, are other aspects of strong importance. There is also reason to review the situation of PhD students in order to come to grips with gender inequality problems related to stereotypes regarding suitability and 'the ideal researcher'.

In the assignment given to universities, career paths are identified as a key factor. Aspects affecting a researcher's career development include access to career-

development posts and the distribution of worktime between research, education, administration and outreach activities. Peer review plays a central role in the appointment of staff, allocation of resources and publication of articles in scholarly journals.

Knowledge about how concepts such as competence, qualifications, scholarly quality and excellence are operationalised in various preparatory and decision-making processes is central in order to understand how gender inequality arises and is reproduced. It is also important to bring attention to the indirect processes that influence peer reviewing, such as how access to formal and informal networks affects citation and publication rates, or the propensity to apply for funding or various services.

### Guiding questions: research

#### CONDITIONS FOR RESEARCH

- What are the consequences of the financial structure (basic funding, government education funds, co-funding models, internal development projects etc.) for gender inequality in research and academic environments? What are the consequences for PhD students with respect to work environment and equal conditions?
- Which outreach and collaborative activities with research funders and other actors can strengthen the work against gender inequality in research?
- How can a gender/gender equality perspective be promoted in the recruitment of researchers and PhD students in the entire organisation?
- What does the formal and informal power structures look like given that research directors in 'strong' research environments have the opportunity to make decisions outside the formal structures for decision-making?

#### ASSESSMENT SITUATIONS

- In what contexts are there risks that various preparatory and decision-making processes create or maintain gendered or other inequalities?
- What does the composition of various assessment groups, for example in connection with expert reviews, look like? How is gender and gender equality competence ensured in these groups? Are gendered statistics on group composition and assessment outcomes properly reviewed?
- What is considered a relevant qualification? What value is assigned to education, research, administration and outreach/cooperation in various assessment processes? How are career-development posts, supervisory and expert assignments, examining committee appointments etc. distributed

among staff members and what value is such work and other appointments assigned in the career development system?

- What criteria are used when assessing quality, and are the consequences of using them neutral from a gender/gender equality perspective?
- How can assessment processes be reviewed from a gender/gender equality perspective?

#### RECRUITMENT AND FORMAL/INFORMAL CAREER PATHS

- Which appointments are subject to a competitive recruitment process and through which channels are the vacancies advertised?
- What is the connection between career paths and access to networks? What access is given to PhD students? How does this differ depending on the PhD student's sex, funding source and subject area?

#### MOBILITY AND INTERNATIONALISATION

- What do the university's strategies look like with respect to people's ability to combine a research career with various life events (parenthood, caring for a family member)?
- What routines for mobility and internationalisation exist at different levels and how do they counteract gendered and other inequalities?
- What conditions and opportunities are international researchers provided and how are negative effects linked to sex/gender and other power structures counteracted?

#### Useful tip!

Download the tutorial [Gender mainstreaming of the allocation of grants](#) from [includgender.org](http://includgender.org)

#### Education

In education, there is a need for an assessment of the agreement between, and presence of, gender equality objectives in the system of qualifications, course objectives and course and programme syllabi, something that is partly dealt with as part of the operational planning. It is also important to analyse the distribution

of resources between female-and male-dominated courses and degree programmes, university teachers' development opportunities from a gender/gender equality perspective, and the presence of gender imbalances in the overall conditions for teaching staff. There is furthermore a need to review and revise the gender coding of study environments and the presence of harassment and other forms of demeaning treatment.

Gendered educational choices puts study guidance and student recruitment in focus, along with assessments of information campaigns and information material. In order to discourage gendered educational choices, it is also important to analyse how disciplines are designed as well as the content of each study programme and what identities are favoured in various educational contexts. A gender/gender equality perspective on outreach activities with the labour market, for example measures to broaden the recruitment and participation to higher education, are core issues to focus.

Education is one of a university's fundamental activities. Gender mainstreaming of teaching activities is based on continuous critical assessment of the priorities, strategic orientations and fundamental decisions that form a platform for the provided instructions.

It is important to distinguish between gender-mainstreamed teaching as a *pedagogical practice* and how knowledge about gender and gender equality is integrated into *the subject content*. Both components are important and should be handled within the framework of the development work, but they require different approaches. The latter refers to the presence of a gender or gender equality perspective on the subject, course literature and other teaching material, whereas gender-mainstreamed teaching requires problematisation of the design and implementation of teaching activities, for example when it comes to the distribution of speaking time and confirmation, the presence of domination techniques or who is granted the right of interpretation. In both cases, the aim is to ensure that students in their future occupational roles possess the knowledge required to handle the consequences of gender inequality in the exercise of their professions and in society in general.

The planning and implementation of teaching activities involve several categories of actors at a university. The ways in which teaching staff, administration and

university libraries cooperate are of relevance to completion and dropout rates, career choices and changes in study routes. Because of demographic changes and the expansion of post-secondary education, university instructors are facing an increasingly heterogeneous student body, with a variety of strategies for learning. This implies a demand for continuous and critical assessment, development and revision of teaching styles and models. Gender mainstreaming of the content, implementation and development of teaching activities interacts with the opportunity and ability of university instructors to individually and collegially reflect over which knowledge is selected and defined as important and which identities are favoured, legitimised and challenged in the teaching activities.

### Guiding questions: education

#### GENDERED EDUCATIONAL CHOICES, STUDENT RECRUITMENT AND STUDY ENVIRONMENT

- What does the student recruitment work look like, given the gendered educational choices?
- Are gender and gender equality analyses of the work to promote broadened recruitment and broadened participation carried out, or are connections with the gender mainstreaming assignment made in other ways?
- What joint efforts are made with other actors to discourage gendered educational choices and how does the university ensure that analyses based on other power structures than gender are included in this work?
- Are there gendered patterns with respect to completion and dropout rates among students at all levels?
- How are gender inequalities in and gender coding of the study environment counteracted?

#### CONDITIONS FOR TEACHING STAFF

- Who is appointed director of studies and what is the selection based on? What proportion of the person's employment contract does the appointment correspond to? What does the administrative support provided to directors of studies look like?
- What do the opportunities for directors of studies (or equivalent) to lead and develop the pedagogical work look like? What do the opportunities to lead the work related to research-based education look like?
- How much time for research are senior lecturers given and how is it linked to subject development and development of the content of the teaching

#### GENDER AND GENDER EQUALITY IN THE CONTENT AND IMPLEMENTATION OF TEACHING ACTIVITIES

- What do course and programme syllabi and degree and course objectives look like with respect to gender, gender equality and other critical perspectives? How is it ensured that degree objectives are achieved, followed up and developed?
- What opportunities and acting space do teaching staff have, individually and collegially, to gender mainstream the content and implementation of teaching activities? Do the opportunities and acting space vary depending on the discipline, focus area or occupational field that the teaching is carried out within?
- What do the prospects for changing the power structures that courses and study programmes are currently reproducing look like?
- How can the channels for student influence be modified so that the students' interest and engagement in gender mainstreaming of the content, implementation and development of the university's education are utilised?

#### Outreach and cooperation

Besides education and research, the Swedish Higher Education Act specifies a so-called 'third task' for all state-funded universities, namely to disseminate information about research and other work and to engage in 'cooperation with the surrounding society,' or outreach activities. Outreach is of critical importance to a university's role in relation to the labour market and the rest of society. Outreach activities can be arranged within research and innovation, in the form of external education assignments, and in relation to certain issues and areas of knowledge that a university has chosen to specialise in. The selection of researchers and instructors for different outreach assignments can be analysed in a gender/gender equality perspective. It is also important to look at which types of outreach activities are considered more relevant than others in a career perspective and how the findings can be linked to gender and power. In this context, there is an opportunity to take advantage of the gender mainstreaming work and turn it into a competitive advantage in order to attract qualified staff and students.

The outreach task is often deprioritised. This gives grounds for a review of which reward systems and models for resource allocation are used or how staff mobility within and between outreach initiatives creates and reproduces gender inequality.

There should also be a focus on meeting places and activities for cooperation where several quality-increasing measures can be carried out based on a problem-assessment from a gender and gender equality perspective.

### Guiding questions: outreach

- What formal and informal networks and partnerships are available for collaboration with external actors, and what access do research and teaching staff have to these? Are there any mechanisms that exclude women or other groups?
- Are outreach activities in certain subject domains favoured at the expense of others, and what are the consequences of these patterns from a gender/gender equality perspective?
- What does the university do to ensure that instructors, researchers and students are credited equally for outreach activities, regardless of gender?
- How is proper competence in the fields of gender and gender equality ensured in the university's research environments, especially in relation to practical utilisation of research results?
- How does the university ensure that labour market-oriented components of courses and study programmes address gender equality challenges?
- How is gender and gender equality integrated into the external communication regarding the university's research and education?
- Are gender-mainstreamed routines for outreach activities available in order to prevent arbitrary determination of which research and knowledge is disseminated in society?
- How is a gender and gender equality perspective ensured in the areas and issues that the university has chosen to specialise in, and how are these issues linked to current challenges in society?

## Management processes



The gender mainstreaming assignment given to Swedish universities emphasises the importance of management processes.

Management processes can be understood as the systems and routines that an organisation uses in

its work related to decision-making, planning, implementation and evaluations and that are documented in operational plans, budgets and annual reports. The management processes concretise applicable legislation and other external control mechanisms, as well as the respective university management's aims and objectives. They also play an important role in the allocation of resources and reporting of goal fulfilment.

Gender mainstreaming of *decision-making* often takes the form of ensuring that all relevant information, such as gendered statistics and gender/gender equality analyses, is considered when decisions are made at all levels of a university's organisation.

Gender mainstreaming of *budget work* consists of ensuring that all available data, analysis results and other information regarding how women, men and the equality between them are affected by various budget decisions and allocation models are considered at all levels of the budget process. This work requires that all staff involved in the budget work, including the members of the faculty and department boards, have been trained in gender budgeting.

### Useful tip!

To read more about Gender Budgeting go to [Includegender.org](https://includegender.org).

Gender mainstreaming of *the operational planning process* involves a review and revision (if needed) of the existing steering documents from a gender equality perspective (see *Governance* above). The analysis and revision of the organisation's steering documents at various levels require that the staff in charge of policy development possess or have access to knowledge about which aspects are relevant to review and include and that they have a mandate to decide on necessary changes.

### Guiding questions: management processes

#### DECISIONS

- Which routines and decision-making processes require analysis and revision in order to ensure gender-equal consequences?

- How is academic management influenced by norms related to gender, and what are the consequences of this for the core activities when it comes to for example work and study environments, recruitments and career paths?
- What support resources linked to academic management are available, and how do they relate to various inequality challenges?

#### BUDGET

- What are the consequences of the financial structure (basic government funding, government funding for education, co-funding models, internal development projects etc.) for gender inequality in research, education and outreach/cooperation?

#### OPERATIONAL PLANNING AND FOLLOW-UP

- What functions are involved in the planning and follow-up work and how are the needs for knowledge about gender and gender equality fulfilled? How is it ensured that staff involved in policy work have a mandate to decide on necessary revisions?

## Support processes



*Support processes* refers to administration related to for example HR, information, education and research; that is, functions that the organisation relies on to function effectively. Gender mainstreaming of the HR work can imply systematic work environment management where all existing routines, administrative systems and documentation processes are problematised and developed to eliminate gender inequalities. A gender equality perspective can also be ensured in recruitment processes and all types of competence development activities.

The university's central administrative units for education and research are designed to reduce the burden placed on the departments and ensure efficient and professional administration related to for example admissions, examinations and applications for research grants. These are processes of critical importance in gender-mainstreaming work. Other support processes include IT development and procurement work, as well as functions for internal and external

communication. Systematic efforts to challenge existing norms and eliminate use of pictures and language that may reinforce gender stereotypes or exclude certain groups or identities are key components of the work to gender mainstream an organisation's communication.

A university's work environment management involves all staff categories and must therefore allow for a wide variety in terms of procedures, acting space, authority and influence. Some of this variation can be attributed to position in the academic hierarchy, and the gender mainstreaming of a university's work environment management may ultimately provide resistance to the established academic hierarchy by mapping and questioning such variations. A university's students should also take an active part in the work environment management. Issues related to gender and power should be included in the work to facilitate equal conditions for students, for example in terms of the workload required in different courses and programmes.

Thus, gender mainstreaming of the university's work environment management requires continuous critical review of daily life in the organisation and how it is perceived by staff and students, as well as of routines, priorities and decisions. Gender mainstreaming of the work environment management implies critical assessment of whether norms, approaches and jargon in the interaction among staff and students reproduce patterns related to gender and power and thereby run contrary to the organisation's fundamental values. The work environment management also includes the implementation of measures to prevent sexual harassment, bullying and violence, as well as of a gender equality perspective regarding salaries, part-time work, sick leaves, parental leave, unpaid domestic work etc.

### **Guiding questions: support processes**

#### WORK ENVIRONMENT

- What do the routines for the continuous work environment management look like? What functions are involved in the work and what competence with respect to gender and power does this group have? How is sufficient expertise ensured?
- What does the procedure look like when a staff member wants to file a complaint about the work environment? What other staff members are involved in the processing of the complaint? What does the documentation

look like and how is it ensured that the situation or condition that led to the complaint is included in a comprehensive analysis of the organisation's work environment? Is the filing of a complaint considered a unique occurrence or is it analysed as a potential expression of a gendered organisational culture?

- How is it ensured that the work environment management, in a line organisation, encompasses all parts of the organisation? For example, how does the gender mainstreamed work environment management reach into externally funded research environments?
- How are work environment aspects of a fluctuating workload monitored for the different staff categories? How are requirements and expectations regarding the availability of administrative staff analysed?

#### COMMUNICATION

- How is the gender mainstreaming assignment communicated internally and externally?
- What communication channels are used and is it ensured that the effects of content, pictures and text are gender neutral?
- Are staff members aware of the requirement to gender mainstream all of the university's operations? What would be required to further raise the level of awareness?

#### ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT

- Are the outcomes of the administrative support systems gender neutral (for example IT support, admission and recruitment systems)?
- Are the working conditions for technical and administrative staff gender equal?
- How is a gender equality perspective integrated when it comes to:
  - the way researchers and teaching staff correspond and interact with administrative staff?
  - valuation of work tasks?
  - a staff member's power over his/her own work time?
  - workplace opportunities for development?

## Prioritisation

The problem assessment must be demarcated in relation to the scope of the organisation, resources, existing competence and many other factors. It is also important to prioritise present and future processes in the organisation that per definition are in a stage of development and therefore are more open to critical

perspectives. This does not preclude challenging central phenomena such as meritocracy, quality, assessment etc., but in order to reach an impact with the gender mainstreaming work, it is important to identify which aspects of these factors exhibit a potential for change.

### Guidelines for prioritisation

#### Good prioritisation...

... **lets the problems dictate the work** – what are the organisation's central areas for improvement? What are the central problems and what results are desired? Map the development of challenges and problems over time, with the support of research and knowledge, in dialogue with the organisation. Let the problem formulations guide the work.

... **is demarcated but of central importance** – what prioritisations and demarcations need to be made? What budget and what resources are available? These factors determine the scope of the work. Do not select peripheral issues; instead focus on processes directly linked to inequalities in the core activities. Ideally, a small process that will have a large impact and that benefits from the ongoing development work should be chosen.

... **is based on voluntary action** – what parts of the organisation have enough knowledge, interest and willingness to be used as pilots?

... **is realistic** – in relation to for example existing budgets and potential to accomplish change.

... **is guided by sustainability and the development of the organisation's regular processes** – where is there a potential for sustainable effects? Do not select limited projects or activities that ultimately depend on the contributions of a single individual.

## Organisation

The challenges that must be overcome in order to achieve gender equality in academia are numerous and diverse and require both structure- and culture-changing measures at many different levels. There is also a need to establish sufficient conditions and resources in the form of a clear division of responsibilities, necessary mandates from the management, provision of

knowledge and process support as well as a well-organised and broadly supported change perspective.

The development work should be managed from the top of the organisation and implemented within the framework of the existing organisational structure and through the organisation's regular processes. The university management should ensure that the necessary resources be made available for the internal coordination and implementation. A steering committee should be appointed for the work. The local work should be led by one or several coordinators tasked with initiating, supporting and developing the change processes. The coordination function needs to engage in continuous dialogue with the management, which is also in charge of allocating the proper resources and workhours to the coordination function. Optimally, the coordinators should be assigned an operative role directly under the top management and a specific member of the management team should be assigned the responsibility for planning and follow-up of the work.

There should be an awareness of the need for and a readiness to implement certain reorganisations in order to:

- ensure impact across the organisation
- ensure sustainability of the development work
- achieve synergy effects through joint processes with adjacent perspectives and assignments, such as broadened recruitment and broadened participation, accessibility, core values, social sustainability and the equality work.

### **Guiding questions: organisation**

#### RESOURCES, ROLES AND MANDATES

- What resources in terms of time, staff and budget has the management reserved for the development work?
- How will the development work be coordinated? How will the assignment be operationalised – through a coordination group, steering committee, other working groups and reference groups? How will responsibilities be distributed among these bodies?

- How will the coordination function's access to the management be ensured? How often will the management and the coordination function review and discuss the progress made?
- How will traditional student participation become true student influence in change processes?

#### COMPETENCE MAINTENANCE

- How will the possible need of staff members for support, advise and sharing of experiences be fulfilled internally?
- How will the long-term maintenance of necessary competence be ensured across the organisation?

#### FOLLOW-UP, EVALUATION AND LEARNING

- How will the development work be followed up and evaluated? How will the management ensure that the evaluations are used as learning material in the organisation?
- How will knowledge and experiences gained be put to practical use in the organisation in the long term?

### Contact

Head of operations:

[fredrik.bondestam@genus.gu.se](mailto:fredrik.bondestam@genus.gu.se), +46 (0)766 22 92 38

Process support:

[ulrika.hellden@genus.gu.se](mailto:ulrika.hellden@genus.gu.se), +46 (0)31 786 49 27

[boel.kristiansson@genus.gu.se](mailto:boel.kristiansson@genus.gu.se), +46 (0)31 786 54 12

[anna-karin.wyndhamn@ped.gu.se](mailto:anna-karin.wyndhamn@ped.gu.se), +46 (0)31 786 24 43

Administration:

[magdalena.lindroth@genus.gu.se](mailto:magdalena.lindroth@genus.gu.se), +46 (0)31 786 92 46



UNIVERSITY OF  
GOTHENBURG



SWEDISH  
SECRETARIAT FOR  
GENDER RESEARCH

Swedish Secretariat for Gender Research  
PO Box 709, SE 405 30 Gothenburg. Visiting Address: Övre Husargatan 36  
Phone +46(0)31-786 92 32 [genus.se](http://genus.se)