

**PUBLIC INSTITUTION “EUROPEAN HUMANITIES UNIVERSITY”
EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES AND GENDER EQUALITY POLICY AND ITS
IMPLEMENTATION PLAN**

I. GENERAL PROVISIONS

1. Public institution “European Humanities University” (hereinafter referred to as the “**University**”) approved this Equal opportunities and gender equality policy and implementation plan (hereinafter referred to as “**Policy**”), which consolidates the main principles of equal opportunities applied by the University and the procedure for their implementation.
2. The aim of the policy is to ensure equal treatment of all University staff and those applying for employment, both before and after the conclusion of an employment contract, as well as for students and listeners, both before and after admission to the University, regardless of gender, race, nationality, language, origin, social status, belief, convictions or views, age, sexual orientation, disability, ethnic origin or religion.
3. Policy is an independent internal document of the University.

II. DEFINITIONS

4. **Discrimination** means direct and indirect discrimination, harassment, instruction to discriminate on the grounds of gender, race, nationality, language, origin, social status, belief, convictions or views, age, sexual orientation, disability, ethnic origin or religion.
5. **Equal opportunities** shall mean the implementation of human rights enshrined in international human and citizens’ rights instruments and laws of the Republic of Lithuania irrespective of gender, race, nationality, language, origin, social status, belief, convictions or views, age, sexual orientation, disability, health status, ethnic origin, membership in a political party or association or religion. Equal opportunities at work shall mean equal treatment of employees irrespective of the employee’s sex, race, nationality, language, origin, social status, belief, convictions or views, age, sexual orientation, disability, health status, ethnic origin, membership in a political party or association, religion.
6. **Violation of equal opportunities** means direct and indirect discrimination, instruction to discriminate or harassment.
7. **Equivalent work** shall be defined as work which, according to objective criteria, is not less qualified and not less significant for the employer in achieving the objectives of his activities than other comparative work.
8. **Indirect discrimination** shall mean a neutral act (omission), assessment criteria which are formally identical, but their application may result, cause or could result in a violation of equal opportunities.
9. **Harassment** means unwanted conduct aimed at infringing human dignity, creating an intimidating environment or causing unpleasant consequences: insulting dignity, creating an intimidating environment.
10. **Sexual harassment** means any unwanted, verbal, oral, written or physical conduct of a sexual nature with a person, where such conduct is determined by an aim or its effect on the

dignity of a person, in particular by creating an intimidating, hostile, humiliating or offensive environment.

11. **Social status** means education, qualification or studies at higher education and research institutions acquired by a natural person, his property held, income received, the need for state support specified in legal acts and/or other factors related to the person's financial (economic) situation.
12. **Direct discrimination** means treatment of a person where, on the grounds of gender, race, nationality, language, origin, social status, belief, convictions or views, age, sexual orientation, disability, health status, ethnic origin, membership in a political party or association or religion, they are or would be treated less favourably than another person is, has been or would be treated in similar circumstances, except for the exceptions provided for by laws.
13. **Same job** means work which, according to objective criteria, is identical or similar to another job to the extent that both employees can be replaced without higher employer costs.
14. **Members of the community** – members of the University's governing bodies, employees, students and listeners.
15. **Governing bodies** means the Governing Board, the rector, the Senate, the students' representative union.

III. KEY PRINCIPLES OF EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES POLICY

16. The University does not tolerate forms of direct or indirect discrimination, as well as an instruction to discriminate on grounds of sex, race, nationality, language, origin, social status, belief, convictions or views, age, sexual orientation, disability, health status, ethnic origin, membership of a political party or association, religion.
17. The University also does not tolerate any form of harassment, psychological violence, bullying, or use of position.
18. Decisions related to the admission of students and listeners and the evaluation of their study results, recruitment of employees, training, education, payment for work and other benefits, promotion, appointment of members of governing bodies, awarding of scientific degrees, leave and conduct at work shall be made on the basis of objective criteria and factors and without discrimination.
19. All members of the University community must act in a collegiate and respectful manner.
20. The University is taking measures, taking into account the specificities of the services provided and available financial resources, to enable disabled people to apply for vacancies at the University, as well as to work, make career, study and learn (including proper accommodation of premises, provided that such measures do not result in a disproportionate burden on the employer's obligations).
21. The University aims to achieve gender equality in individual fields of study at the University, by creating and implementing a study programme and study plans in compliance with the principles of gender equality.
22. The University strives to organise its activities and work in such a way that members of its community feel secure, respected and able to use their skills for their own benefit and for the benefit of the University.
23. The fact that in the University's internal documents some of the terms are used only for male or female purposes is not to be regarded as discrimination on grounds of sex. In the

University's internal documents adopted after the approval of this Policy, responsibilities, professions and similar names (except in job advertisements) are summarised in the nouns of the male family. Such a clerical policy must not be regarded as discriminatory or prejudicial to equal opportunities.

24. It should be noted that not all cases of not fully equal treatment of members of the community must be regarded as discrimination or any other violation of equal opportunities. The so-called cases of *positive discrimination* shall not be considered discrimination:
 - 23.1. special protection of women during pregnancy, childbirth and breastfeeding;
 - 23.2. the requirements for the safety of persons at work applicable only to women, which, taking into account the physiological characteristics of women, are intended to preserve their health;
 - 23.3. certain work which can be performed only by a person of a particular sex;
 - 23.4. age restrictions provided for by law where justified by a legitimate aim and the means of achieving this aim are appropriate and necessary;
 - 23.5. requirement of knowledge of the state language as stipulated by laws;
 - 23.6. different rights apply on grounds of citizenship in cases established by law;
 - 23.7. special measures laid down by law in the areas of health care, safety at work, employment, the labour market seeking to create and apply conditions and opportunities for disabled persons guaranteeing and promoting integration into the working environment;
 - 23.8. special temporary measures established by laws, applied with a view to ensuring equality and preventing violation of equal opportunities on grounds of age, sexual orientation, disability, health status, racial or ethnic origin, membership of a political party or association, religion or beliefs;
 - 23.9. cases where, by reason of the nature of a given professional activity or the conditions in which they are carried out, a particular human characteristic constitutes a normal and decisive occupational requirement, and this objective is legitimate and the requirement is proportionate.

IV. RECRUITMENT AND DISMISSAL OF EMPLOYEES

25. The Finance and Personnel Unit is responsible for the recruitment, selection and recruitment process at the University.
26. The University aims to ensure that all potential employees are treated fairly and that recruitment is carried out according to pre-published criteria, taking into account the candidate's abilities, competence, available qualification and knowledge.
27. Job vacancies at the University are publicly announced through specialized search portals or databases. If the University entrusts employee recruitment to find third parties, the latter are informed about the principles of equal opportunities policy applied at the University.
28. Taking into account the specifics of the University's activities (the only Belarusian university operating independently abroad), the requirements for knowledge of the Russian language and/or specific education cannot be considered discriminatory and non-discriminatory, if such requirements are objectively necessary in order to ensure the quality of the services provided by the University.
29. The University promotes loyalty of its employees, so if there are employees at the University who have the necessary qualifications and competences to take up the vacant positions, the University can first offer it to employees already working and not to announce the vacancy to the public (except in cases when a free position must be announced in a public tender, which is open to all persons who meet the requirements).

30. Job vacancy notices shall specify the requirements relating to the competences, experience and skills required to perform the job function. Notices about vacancies shall be drawn up in such a way that they do not constitute a possibility to claim a position only to candidates of a particular sex, race, nationality, language, origin, social status, belief, convictions or views, age, sexual orientation, disability, ethnic origin or religion. Discrimination and equal opportunities cannot be considered as a violation in situations where, due to the specific nature of the position held and the requirements for the post, a person of a particular nationality is more likely to be a candidate for such a position (for example, more Belarusians are likely to be candidates for the position of lecturer of Belarusian history).
31. In the job advertisement/work interview, all requirements/issues are related only to the employee's ability to perform the job function, their competence, professionalism, experience and other similar criteria.
32. All questions asked during interviews for job vacancies relate to the selection criteria. It shall be prohibited to request information from a candidate which is not related to their qualification or other circumstances not related to the direct performance of the job function. Staff members participating in the interview may not ask any questions concerning the candidate's sex, age, sexual orientation, social status, ability, state of health, race or ethnic origin, religion, convictions or beliefs, membership of a political party or association, the role of the candidate at home or family, unless this is directly related to the proper performance of job functions.
33. Where possible, at least two of the University's Finance and Personnel Unit selection staff shall attend the interview with the candidate.
34. After a contract for employment has already been concluded with a candidate, the staff of the University's Finance and Personnel Unit should inform the staff member what information they should provide on his/her marital status in order to ensure the application of the statutory guarantees (e.g. information on the number and age of children, etc.). An employee should not be required to provide such information if the employee refuses to provide it. In this case, the Financial and Personnel Unit must inform the employee that if the information or documents are not provided, the University will not be able to guarantee the application of the statutory guarantees to the employee.
35. The criteria for redundancy at the University relate only to the qualification of the employee, the poor performance of their duties and other circumstances provided for by law.
36. When taking a decision to dismiss an employee, the criteria for dismissal shall be applied equally, taking into account objective criteria, irrespective of gender, race, nationality, language, origin, social status, belief, convictions or views, age, sexual orientation, disability, ethnic origin or religion.

V. WORKING CONDITIONS, IN-SERVICE TRAINING, REMUNERATION FOR WORK, PROMOTION AND AWARD OF A SCIENTIFIC DEGREE TO EMPLOYEES

37. The University undertakes to provide equal working conditions for all employees (as far as possible taking into account the specific nature of the employee's work), as well as opportunities to improve qualification, seek professional development, retrain, acquire practical work experience, as well as provide equal privileges to employees. However, the way the work is organised by the employer, where the University does not have an objective opportunity to provide identical or equal working conditions to employees of the same category, cannot be regarded as discrimination.
38. The salary rates of positions located at the university (indicating the minimum and maximum salary applicable to a specific position) are fixed in the University's work pay

system. The specific amount of remuneration for a potential or existing employee shall be determined on the basis of objective criteria related to the employee's abilities, competence, qualification, experience and knowledge. It shall be prohibited to set remuneration taking into account gender, race, nationality, language, origin, social status, belief, convictions or views, age, sexual orientation, disability, state of health, ethnic origin, membership in a political party or association, religion.

39. All employees must be paid the same salary for the same or equivalent work, irrespective of gender, race, nationality, language, origin, social status, belief, convictions or views, age, sexual orientation, disability, state of health, ethnic origin, membership of a political party or association or religion.
40. Various bonuses, benefits and all other employee incentives are applied in accordance with the salary and motivation procedure in force at the University, based on clear criteria known to the employees. If the procedure of certain benefits or motivation measures is not discussed or approved at the University, the University is guided by the general principles of equal opportunities, fairness and reasonableness when providing such payments or motivation measures.
41. Employee promotion opportunities at the University depend only on the employee's competence, qualification, experience and knowledge, achieved work results, quality of work and the University's possibilities to give the employee a higher position. A decision to promote or not to promote an employee shall not depend on the employee's sex, race, nationality, language, origin, social status, belief, convictions or views, age, sexual orientation, disability, health status, ethnic origin, membership in a political party or association or religion.
42. Scientific degrees shall be conferred on the basis of pre-published criteria, applied equally, irrespective of the worker's sex, race, nationality, language, origin, social status, belief, convictions or views, age, sexual orientation, disability, health status, ethnic origin, membership of a political party or association, religion.
43. Evaluation of employees at the University is organised and performed in accordance with and applying evaluation criteria important for a specific position, which are set regardless of gender, race, nationality, language, origin, social status, belief, convictions or views, age, sexual orientation, disability, state of health, ethnic origin, membership in a political party or association, religion. The work of employees in the same position shall be assessed on the basis of the same evaluation criteria, while the evaluation criteria may differ from one position to another.
44. The University protects the employment rights of employees who are on maternity, parental leave. Cases in which certain requests of an employee for the fulfilment of family obligations are met cannot be regarded as discrimination.
45. Employees who have made use of parental leave provided for in the Labour Code shall be guaranteed the right to return to former or equivalent positions, without prejudice to the fact that they have taken such leave and have the right to benefit from better working conditions to which he would have been entitled during his absence.
46. Women during pregnancy, as well as employees raising a child under 7 years of age or two children under 14 years of age, in order to reconcile work and family obligations, may apply to the employer for more flexible working hours, reduction of working time standard (setting of a part-time working day) or remote work. The requests referred to in this paragraph of the Policy shall be examined in compliance with the principle of equality and equal treatment. A situation where the employer is unable to satisfy the employer's request for objective reasons such as the nature of the work performed by the employee (for example, the absence of the

possibility to perform the function of work at a distance) or because such a request would cause excessive organisational inconvenience or additional financial resources cannot be considered an infringement of equal treatment.

VI. APPOINTMENT AND WITHDRAWAL OF A MEMBER OF THE GOVERNING BODY

47. The University seeks a balance of gender representation in the University's governing bodies.
48. Candidates for members of the governing bodies at the University are evaluated regardless of their gender, race, nationality, language, origin, social status, belief, convictions or views, age, sexual orientation, disability, state of health, ethnic origin, membership in a political party or association, religion.
49. All questions asked to candidates for members of the governing body relate to the selection criteria. It shall be prohibited to request information from a candidate which is not related to their qualification or other circumstances not related to the performance of the duties of a member of the governing body. Other members of the governing body participating in the selection process may not ask any questions concerning the candidate's gender, age, sexual orientation, social status, ability, health status, race or ethnic origin, religion, convictions or beliefs, membership of a political party or association, the role of the candidate at home or family, unless this is directly related to the proper performance of job functions.
50. All elective members of the governing body shall attend an interview with the candidate as far as possible.
51. The decision on appointing a candidate as a member of the governing body at the University depends only on the candidate's competence, qualification, experience and knowledge, results achieved and quality of work. The decision to elect or not to elect a candidate as a member of the University's governing body shall not depend on the candidate's gender, race, nationality, language, origin, social status, belief, convictions or views, age, sexual orientation, disability, health status, ethnic origin, membership in a political party or association, religion.
52. When deciding on the withdrawal of a member of the governing body, the criteria for recalling all members shall be applied equally, taking into account objective reasons for recall, irrespective of gender, race, nationality, language, origin, social status, belief, convictions or views, age, sexual orientation, disability, ethnic origin or religion.

VII. DECISION-MAKING OF THE GOVERNING BODIES

53. The principles of diversity and equal opportunities are enshrined in the decisions of the University's governing bodies, in the documents and processes on studies and science, in which the entire community of the University is involved.

VIII. ADMISSION AND EVALUATION OF STUDENTS AND LISTENERS

54. Students and listeners are admitted to the University and the results of their studies are evaluated according to pre-published criteria, applied to all of them equally regardless of their gender, race, nationality, language, origin, social status, belief, convictions or views, age, sexual orientation, disability, health status, ethnic origin, membership in a political party or association, religion.

VIII. PROTECTION OF COMMUNITY MEMBERS IN THE EVENT OF VIOLATION OF EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES

55. All members of the University's community and candidates for vacancies or places of study, who believe that they have not been guaranteed equal opportunities or have suffered a situation of violation of equal opportunities, have the right to apply to the University either personally or anonymously.
56. Members of the Community may, in order to report any violation of equal opportunities, address the head of their unit/division, the Chief Personnel Manager of the Finance and Personnel Unit, indicating the nature of the violation and the person who may have violated equal opportunities by his/her conduct. The responsible staff shall undertake to preserve their confidentiality upon receipt of such communication from a member of the community.
57. A member of the Community wishing to submit a report anonymously may do so by sending an anonymous letter to the Chief Personnel Manager of the Finance and Personnel Unit.
58. Any member of the Community who notices or receives information about a possible violation of equal opportunities may inform the Chief Personnel Manager of the Finance and Personnel Unit, the Rector, or submit an anonymous complaint to Chief Personnel Manager of the Finance and Personnel Unit).
59. Having received information or notification about violation of equal opportunities, the responsible University staff member, within the shortest possible time, but no later than 10 working days from the date of receipt of the information, finds out the situation and listens to both parties, if necessary, takes additional measures to resolve the situation. A complaint or notice of a member of the community may also be transferred for investigation to the institution of the Equal Opportunities Ombudsperson or another competent authority.
60. Any report or complaint received from a member of the community relating to the violation of equal opportunities shall always be investigated on the basis of a presumption of confidentiality and the information relating thereto may not be made public to persons who are not involved in the investigation of the complaint.
61. The University ensures that a member of the community will be protected from hostile behaviour or negative consequences if a member of the community complains about violation of equal opportunities or takes part in a case of discrimination against the University, a member of its community or any other person related to the University.
62. Any persecution or hostility against a member of the community or a job vacancy or student who has filed a complaint about violation of equal opportunities is prohibited and is considered to be a violation of the University's Code of Academic Ethics, which may be subject to the negative consequences provided for in the law (for example, dismissal from work).
63. Having established that a member of the community has committed a violation of equal opportunities, depending on the nature of the violation, a member of the community may be warned of inappropriate conduct incompatible with the University's operating principles, as well as the University employee may not be subject to incentive monetary supplements or other motivational measures.
64. If the employee's violation of equal opportunities conforms to the characteristics of a gross breach of labour discipline and is recognised as such, dismissal may be applied to such employee in accordance with the procedure laid down by laws.
65. When it transpires that a complaint or a report on violation of equal opportunities has been submitted with a view to deliberately damage the reputation of another member of the community, such conduct shall be considered to be a serious and intolerable violation of

their duties and the University's Code of Academic Ethics, which may lead to dismissal for an employee and termination of the study (listener) agreement.

VIII. IMPLEMENTATION OF THE POLICY

66. Within one month of the adoption of this Policy, the University shall appoint a staff member of the Finance and Personnel Unit responsible for acquainting members of the community with this Policy, as well as for monitoring the implementation of this Policy. If such a staff member is not appointed, the Chief Manager of Finance and Personnel Unit shall automatically become a responsible person.
67. The employee responsible for monitoring the implementation of the Policy shall, at least once a year, provide to the Labor Council updated information about the depersonalized data of the employees, with the exception of management positions, on average pay by groups of occupations and sex.
68. The University staff responsible for monitoring the implementation of the Policy shall submit a report on the implementation of this Policy at the University by the end of each calendar year to the Rector of the University.

IX. EVALUATION OF THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE POLICY

69. Each member of the community shall have the right to comment on the Policy, its effectiveness and to submit proposals regarding the amendment and/or supplement of the Policy. Proposals shall be submitted in person or anonymously through the University staff responsible for monitoring the implementation of the Policy. For reasons of discretion, proposals and observations may also be submitted anonymously to the Chief Manager of the Finance and Personnel Unit.
70. For the first time, the effectiveness of the Policy shall be assessed and possible amendments and/or supplements shall be considered one year after the adoption of the Policy. Thereafter, the provisions of the Policy shall be reviewed at least once every two years.
71. The Labor Council shall be informed and the consultation procedure shall be conducted on amendments to the Policy. All members of the University community shall be informed about the changes made.

X. FINAL PROVISIONS

72. The Policy is applicable and its provisions shall be binding to all members of the University community.
 73. All members of the University community shall be introduced to this Policy by publishing it publicly on the University's website www.ehu.lt, and employees – by signing or by electronic means. Members of the Community shall comply with the obligations laid down therein and in performing their functions shall be guided by the principles laid down in this Policy.
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