

Gender Equality Plan - Offenburg University of Applied Sciences

Mandatory content areas of the Gender Equality Plan

1. Structural anchoring of gender equality work

Offenburg University of Applied Sciences is actively committed to implementing and promoting equal opportunities for all students and employees. According to the principles of gender mainstreaming, the university treats equality as a cross-sectional task that permeates all organisational units.

The equality concept is part of the university's strategic process which is annually revised and updated. Key-Performance-Indicators are defined that measure the progress towards gender equality. In addition, the Equality Officer reports annually to the university management on the latest figures and measures taken to promote gender equality.

This continuous adjustment process is supplemented by the "Structural and Development Plan 2022-2026" (StEP), the university's strategy paper. In this document the equal opportunities policy of Offenburg University is centrally anchored. A central chapter of the StEP is the [Equality Plan](#) (in accordance with the Higher Education Act of Baden-Wurttemberg LHG § 4, 7), in which the university's equality strategy is set out and the equal opportunity objectives are specified. Implementation goals and measures for the upcoming planning period are defined and detailed monitoring data as well as target figures are depicted.

The main gender equality goals of Offenburg University are:

- Increasing the proportion of women at the various academic and non-academic qualification levels in areas where women are underrepresented.
- Further development and strategic anchoring of gender equality work and measures
- Fostering an inclusive and diverse learning and working environment that benefits from a variety of different perspectives
- Promote the potential of all students and employees to enhance the innovative capacity of the university
- Ensure a family friendly environment that enables the compatibility of private responsibilities and professional ambitions.

2. Dedicated resources

For thirty-three years gender equality is anchored in the organisational structure of Offenburg University. Starting with a women's representative in 1992 who was supported by three deputies of each faculty in 1996, the team grew larger over the years. Alongside the team size the responsibilities of these actors in university committees increased.

Currently, the following actors are appointed to promote equal opportunities within the university: (professors receive a reduction of teaching hours to ensure free capacities for this task)

Professors:

- Equality Officer Offenburg University and Department of Business
- Equality Officer Department of Electrical Engineering, Medical Engineering and Computer Science

- Equality Officer Department of Mechanical & Process Engineering
- Equality Officer Department of Media

Equality Office:

- Gender Equality Representative (0.5 FTE)
- Academic Employee managing the Mentoring Program "MentoringFuture" (0.5 FTE)
- Academic Employee responsible for Gender-Monitoring and Active Recruitment (0.5 FTE)
- Academic Employee responsible for awareness campaigns and measures (0.25 FTE)

Staff in faculties and projects:

- Officer for Equal Opportunities responsible for non-academic staff (0.15 FTE)
- Deputy Officer for Equal Opportunities responsible for non-academic staff
- Openness, Diversity and Inclusion Officer (ODEI Officer) in [ChallengeEU](#) Project (0.5 FTE)
- Three contact persons from different faculties entrusted with the task to offer support in cases or questions regarding sexual harassment
- Two contact persons for cases regarding anti-discrimination

These actors as well as further members of the university compose the Equal Opportunities Commission, a committee of the University Senate. The Equal Opportunities Commission is chaired by a member of the rectorate and meets twice a year to coordinate the strategic, university wide equality work.

In addition to the dedicated personnel funds, the Equality Office has material funds amounting to 10,000 euros per year. These are used for trainings, events, networking meetings and projects:

For example:

- Organisation of the "Women's Business Days": An event that enables the interconnection of students, professors, university employees and actors of the regional industry and politics. Together topics regarding gender equality are discussed and different experiences and point of views are exchanged. In 2025 a panel discussion addressing diverse teams is conducted.
- Trainings addressing gender sensitive recruitment processes
- Trainings on the topic of sexual harassment in the working environment
- Meetings of the network ("Familie in der Hochschule")
- Meeting of the network LaKof – Conference of Equal Opportunities Officers at Universities of Applied Sciences in Baden-Württemberg "
- Funding for study ambassadors: A program in which students from the university share their experience with pupils at various schools
- Funds for the university's own holiday care for children of employees and students

3. Data collection and monitoring

Offenburg University continuously collects and evaluates data in order to assess the measures taken to achieve the gender equality goals. The following regular monitoring and project-specific evaluations take place:

- Annual accountability report by the Equality Officer to the university public, Senate and University Council (in accordance with the Higher Education Act LHG §13, 9)
- [Equality plan](#): Five-year report as part of the university's structural and development plan (2021-2026, in accordance with the Higher Education Act of Baden-Württemberg LHG § 4, 7)
- Interim and final reports within the framework of the Federal Government's Program for Women Professors 2030 (funded by BMBF, 2024-2029)
- Interim and final reports within the framework of the Federal Government's Program for Professorships at Universities of Applied Sciences (project "[HaW-PROAKtif](#)", funded by BMBF, 2021-2027, focusing on the recruitment and development of professorial staff)

In 2025 an additional position was created within the Equality Office that focuses on gender-monitoring.

4. Training and awareness

Offenburg University offers a range of awareness-raising measures and training in the area of gender equality for current and potential future students as well as for employees through various departments and stakeholders. Essential elements are:

- [Guideline on gender-equitable language](#)
- Counselling services ("gender consulting") offered by the university through the Equality Officers of the faculties, the anti-discrimination officers and the Equality Office on topics such as career planning with family, anti-discrimination, promotion of women in research projects
- Further training on the topic of gender equality aspects in appointment procedures for professorial staff as well as project-specific measures with a focus on employer branding and onboarding to attract female professors and young academics (project "HaW-PROAktif", funded by BMBF, 2021-2027)
- Training offered by a team member of the Equality Office "Training of argumentative skills to face discriminatory statements".
- Training offered by the ODEI Officer of the ChallengeEU project on gender-sensitive language
- Organization of campaign days, e.g. November 25th – The International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women

In July 2025 an additional position was created within the Equality Office that focuses on awareness measures.

Optional content areas of the Gender Equality Plan

1. Work-life balance and organisational culture

Offenburg University is committed to an open, diverse and cooperative university culture. Since 2021, specific measures are in place to include employees in the strategic development of the university. Working groups for the creation of the structural and development plan as well as the transfer strategy of the university are only two examples in which the participation of various university members is promoted. Workshops on leadership, cooperation and work culture as well as regular exchange formats between the university management and the student council AStA are part of a permeable communication culture.

The university management actively encourages employees to submit questions or address challenges. These are answered or discussed in a regular online meeting called "Dialogue Event".

Offenburg University takes several [measures](#) to promote gender equality through a successful work-life balance and a gender-sensitive organisational culture. For example, the university particularly supports mobile working, which is generally open to all employees for up to three days per week. This enables flexible working time models to better harmonize private and professional responsibilities.

Two family rooms, one on each campus, allow employees and students to take care of their children while at work and have a place of retreat.

During public school holidays, employees and students can rely on the university's own holiday care for children. This sums up to six weeks of provided child care on campus each year.

Offenburg University attended the network "[Familie in der Hochschule](#)" in June 2025 after it held the family-friendly certificate "familiengerechte hochschule" since 2009.

Within this network, Offenburg University cooperates with other universities, is part of a university-tandem and learns from best practices. The participation in a working- group is mandatory and highly appreciated.

Due to its various and permanent support services, Offenburg University is respected for its family-friendly work environment.

2. Gender balance in leadership and decision making

In its [equality plan](#), Offenburg University regularly sets targets for the proportion of women to be achieved among employees and students as well as their representation in committees and leading positions. In the [gender monitoring brief](#) the gender representation in different career stages is depicted for every department. It can be observed that with increasing qualification level, the share of women decreases.

Committee work plays an important role within the university context and is highly relevant for the decision-making process. In the university council, a women's quota of 40% is requested by the ministry according to the Higher Education Act of Baden-Württemberg LHG. Currently, Offenburg University fulfills this requirement with a quota of 45%. In the university senate, 30% of its members are women. Within the last 10 years the representation of women in leading positions has significantly increased. The following measures shall provide further growth with regards to women's representation in managing positions and university committees:

- The university rectorate and the equality office proactively address female employees and request their participation in university committees.
- Women shall be elected in high, influential committee positions to compensate the fact that they are unrepresented. Since there are fewer women available to be recruited for these positions, these women shall make use of their voice in the most influential committees.
- Compensation in terms of time and budget shall be provided to employees who agree to fulfill committee work, which can be very time-consuming. Thereby committee work and an active contribution in decision making processes shall be attractive and compatible with family-friendly working hours.

3. Gender equality in recruitment and career progression

Offenburg University monitors the representation of women in different career stages in its [Equality Plan](#) which is updated every five years. The target figures for the promotion of women into higher career stages are set in accordance with the cascade model. By applying the cascade model, a quota is defined for each career level that corresponds to the proportion of women in the career level below.

To increase the proportion of female professors Offenburg University conducts an active recruitment process. This means that a member of the appointment committee is responsible for the active search and address of female candidates and the encouragement of these women to apply for the vacant professorship. In addition, the Equality Officer of the department has to be a member of the appointment committee. Offenburg University has revised its appointment guidelines for professorship and thereby optimized the process regarding a gender-balanced recruitment. Two checklists, one for the active recruitment and one for the Equality Officer have to be applied and filled in. One criterion that is inquired in the checklist is a gender-balanced appointment committee.

Offenburg University is funded by the Federal Government's Program for Professorships at Universities of Applied Sciences (project "HaW-PROAKtif", funded by BMBF, 2021-2027) which is dedicated to employer branding in the area of professorial staff, the direct approach of female applicants to job advertisements and the onboarding of female professors and female post-docs.

Offenburg University participates in the mentoring program "Traumberuf Professorin Plus" which is funded by the European Social Fund (ESF) and the Baden-Württemberg Ministry of Science, Research and Arts. The one-year program offers support to female researchers in the pursuit of their career towards professorship.

Information and support measures for career planning offered by Offenburg University as well as supra-regional networks in the state of Baden-Württemberg and Germany can be found on the equality website. The Equality Office provides support and information for women interested in applying for an external Mentoring Program, e.g. "MuT- Mentoring and Training" (offered by the state of Baden-Württemberg). Within this program female researchers are supported and trained to advance their career towards a professorship.

Offenburg University has successfully applied for the Federal Government's Program for Women Professors 2030 (funded by BMBF, 2024-2029). Within the scope of this program several measures have been initiated to promote gender equality in research careers.

- **MentoringFuture:**
Mentees: Female students in their final year of their master studies
Mentors: Female leaders from industry, science or politics
Duration: 1 year
Process: Regular meetings between Mentee and Mentor, Workshops on female leadership and career paths, lecture series with female speakers
- **Förderpool Gender:**
Offers financial support for female students to participate in external training measures, e.g. "meccanica feminale" or "informatica feminale".
Financial support of female students to carry out projects or research activities.
- **Equality Award:**
Each year the Equality Office honors a female student for outstanding work in her final thesis with a prize of 2000 Euro.
- **Mint4Girls**
Set up of an Instagram channel addressing female pupils and students. Role models and STEM studies are presented as well as the importance of science for a positive future.

4. Integration of the gender dimension into research and teaching content

Offenburg University is currently working on several measures to address the influence of gender aspects in research and teaching:

- A guideline "Gender in Research Projects" is currently prepared
- As part of the gender-monitoring task, gender-budgeting shall be carried out
- An onboarding workshop for new professors addressing gender-sensitive teaching shall be prepared
- A self-evaluation tool rating the gender sensitivity of one's lecture is shared among professors
- A workshop on gender-sensitive language is offered by the ODEI Officer within the framework of the ChallengeEU project
- A [guideline](#) addressing gender-sensitive language is published on the university website

5. Measures against gender-based violence including sexual harassment

The university is committed to combat gender-based violence and sexual harassment.

There are several contact persons at the university for anti-discrimination and sexual harassment as well as a guideline on "Sexual Harassment, Discrimination and Mobbing" which is published on the university homepage.

Information is distributed among the employees and students to empower them to identify sexual harassment and encourage them to ask for help or consultation.

In July 2025 a job was created within the equality office that focuses on awareness campaigns regarding sexual harassment and discrimination.

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