

Gender Equality Plan / Gender Equality Concept of FernUniversity in Hagen

The European Commission is committed to promoting gender equality and equal opportunities in research and innovation. Despite progress achieved on gender equality in research and innovation under the Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme, implementation of EU gender equality objectives needs to be improved. Therefore, the European Commission has made some changes in its policy. One novelty is the **requirement of a gender equality plan (GEP) for all public bodies, research organisations and higher education establishments** within the European Union. Starting in 2022, the new condition serves as an eligibility criterion to get access to funding, such as the Horizon Europe programme.

Legislation on Gender Equality Plans in Germany

The Federal Equity Law for the federal state of North Rhine-Westphalia in Germany, where the city of Hagen is situated, requires every higher education establishment to have a gender equality plan which consists of a central gender equality plan (applying to the whole institution) and the gender equality plans for the faculties and units.

The Gender Equality Plans of FernUniversity in Hagen

Gender equality is a central development objective of the university and is considered an issue of shared and social responsibility based on a legal framework involving all areas of the university. The university has developed several instruments to implement gender equality in the last years, among them the [central gender equality plan](#), which applies to the whole university as well as [gender equality plans for the faculties and units](#). The focus areas of the central gender equality plan apply to the faculties and units through various gender equality measures, which are described in their gender equality plans. They are effective for three years and the faculties and units agree upon special quota and objectives that need to be fulfilled and evaluated by them.

The Gender Equality Concept of FernUniversity in Hagen

The Gender Equality Concept complies with the requirements of a gender equality plan of the European Commission.

FernUniversity in Hagen has had a Gender Equality Concept since 2010. It serves to strategically specify and implement the objectives and measures of the university's central gender equality plan. Over time, the Gender Equality Concept has been extended and adjusted. Creative gender equality measures were created, based on FernUniversity's specific needs and demands, to improve the situation on short and long term. The concept runs for four years (2019-2022) and consists of five focus areas with a total of 24 measures and a budget of 2.4 million EUR. It involves all areas and target groups of the university, particularly (female) researchers. The single measures are evaluated on a regular basis and quantitative and qualitative data are collected to make sure the measures still comply with the corresponding objectives.

Thus, **the Gender Equality Concept fulfils the requirements of the gender equality plan** as stated by EIGE (Link):

1. conducting impact assessment/audits of procedures and practices to identify gender bias;
2. identifying and implementing innovative strategies to correct any bias;
3. setting targets and monitoring progress via indicators.