

Gender Equality Plan

The Hague University of Applied Sciences



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Diversity and Inclusion

The Hague University of Applied Sciences (THUAS) wishes to be a location where everyone can feel welcome, safe and appreciated. This is why (since 2002) the THUAS already has a wide-ranging and varied history in relation to initiatives for promoting diversity and inclusion, within the framework of anti-discrimination and representation of, for example, ethnical-cultural diversity, gender and functional impairment. Within this framework, the THUAS envisages opportunities to further promote more gender equality in education, research, and among the staff members. In addition, as a UNESCO University of Applied Sciences, THUAS is committed to the Sustainable Development Goals that call for a strong focus on inclusion, so that students and staff members can develop to their full potential with dignity, equality and, above all, in a healthy and safe educational environment.

Gender equality

In this plan, we define gender equality as the equality and equal treatment of people of different sexes, genders or sexual orientations¹.

The European Commission has set itself the objective of actively promoting gender equality (Gender Equality Strategy 2020-2025; Gender Equality in the European Research Area), including in research and innovation. In this context, from 2022, all higher education institutions must have a gender equality plan.

THUAS emphasises the importance of the European Commission actively promoting gender equality in higher education, research and innovation. The following activities and measures contribute to gender equality and are, just as other sub-plans relating to diversity and inclusion, an elaboration of our university-wide vision and objectives for inclusion, as described in the vision document **An inclusive university (2021)**.

1. Resources

In 2018, the signing of the [Diversity Charter in 2018](#) provided fresh impetus for the theme of diversity and inclusion (D&I) within our university, with the establishment of the **D&I Task Force** in 2019.

Diversity and inclusion are everyday topics that deserve constant attention within our university, so that we see substantial added value in the sustainable continuation of the D&I Task Force in 2022, and thereafter.

Our goal is to complete the transition from the D&I Task Force to an Inclusion Office by the summer of 2022. From the **Inclusion Office**, extensive and centrally coordinated work can be done to promote an inclusive learning and working environment for our students and staff members. From the beginning of 2022, the recruitment of an Inclusion Officer will start. Together with a dedicated team (up to 4FTE consisting of staff members and students), **events** will be organised, a varied range of **networks** (including a woman's network, D&I learning network, and a rainbow network) will be supported, and they will take care of **knowledge sharing, advising and awareness-raising** in our university. The Inclusion Office has an annual budget of circa € 100,000 for out-of-pocket expenses.

¹ Source: [Gender equality | Human Rights Board \('College voor de Rechten van de Mens'\) \(mensenrechten.nl\)](#)

2. Training and capacity building

Our vision for inclusion is described in the vision document ‘**An inclusive university**’, in which we describe how we want to cooperate in relation to inclusive education and research. Our vision emanates from various social categories such as gender, ethnicity, function impairment, age, sexual orientation. We see that these categories are inextricably linked and require an intersectional viewpoint in order to facilitate a comprehensive approach for inclusion, where gender is an important constituent.

In addition, inclusion is an important priority in our [educational vision and framework](#), for which attention exists in the classroom as well as during the development of our education and research. For example, this has resulted in the start of the **Inclusive Education research group** in 2017, with (since January 2021) lector Dr Naomi van Staple. This lectorate is part of the [Global & Inclusive Learning knowledge centre](#), consisting of five research groups. The Inclusive Education research group focuses on action-oriented research to help THUAS to further develop into an educational institution where everyone feels welcome and included and is supported to develop their full educational potential. Via the [Inclusive Education](#) research group, the THUAS focuses on more gender equality by:

- **Inclusivity pathway training** — where patterns of dominance (for example, in terms of gender) are combatted from the perspective of ‘the Other’ (e.g. Women of colour).
- **The Hague University Teaching Skills Inclusive Education** — train lecturers to recognise and actively counteract mechanisms of inclusion and exclusion in educational situations in order to promote equality in diversity, including equal gender relations between students and between colleagues.
- **Student branch** is a student-led project that, among other things, researches and undertakes actions to strengthen equal gender relations.
- **Inclusive Language Project** is a project in which students and teachers together develop a new teaching language to combat sexism, among other things, and to contribute to equal gender relations through language.
- **Student-led pedagogy** is a method in which students actively and critically participate in the development, implementation and evaluation of education, so that their gender expressions and experiences, among other things, become guiding principles in education, in order to work towards equal gender relations from a student perspective.
- **Minor Gender and Sexual Diversity** guides students across THUAS in conducting research on gender relations and developing and testing interventions to promote equality and inclusion.

But it is not only through our lectorate Inclusive Education that we see attention for this important theme. We also see that:

- **Gender and peacebuilding** plays an important role in the minor ‘Making Peace not War’ from the United Nations Studies in Peace and Justice research group. Students from all faculties and other colleges participate annually.
- The Global Governance training knowledge centre organises activities for students, such as a [reading group for the diversity topic](#), where the gender topic is also discussed.
- We also contribute to gender equality by training our students to act as **ambassadors for gender equality** in society.

In addition, in 2020, we (the D&I Task Force) started two university-wide initiatives, namely:

- the development of a university-wide **trainee program**. Since November 2020, 17 talented lecturers from various backgrounds have been following an intensive development programme to become teacher-researchers. In addition, they jointly work on assignments that relate to more inclusion in education and research. In September 2021, a second intake of trainees started.

- engage in a structural dialogue and exchange knowledge and experience on diversity and inclusion. In 2020, we started a **diversity and inclusion learning network** for students, staff members and external business partners, and in 2021 we organised a major event three times a year called **Brave Conversations** to discuss diversity and inclusion. New meetings are also planned for 2022.

3. Data collection and monitoring

An insight into the data is necessary in order to provide adequate guidance and formulate ambitions. In 2020, we deployed a 0-measurement by participating in the [Cultural Barometer](#) from the CBS. In 2022, the next step is to develop a broader analysis on several variables in the form of a **Diversity & inclusion monitor**. In this D&I monitor, the HRM Department will report D&I-related data on employees, so that guidance can be given throughout the entire organisation. This monitor will, for example, monitor the male/female ratio in the organisation and in management positions, but also equal pay for men and women in the same functions. In addition, the insight into the data will determine our future ambitions relating to the D&I topic.

Moreover, the feasibility of adding a **gender-neutral option** to our personnel systems will be explored.

In order to monitor the satisfaction of our employees, [an employee satisfaction survey](#) is conducted every two years. This questionnaire also includes questions about inclusion and improper behaviour. In addition, **Preventive Medical Research** (PMR) is also conducted, and in the spring of 2022, we will conduct a **well-being survey** for employees. The results of this research will enable us to deploy new interventions, or to adapt existing policy in order to promote gender equality in our university. Since September 2021, we also monitor the **reasons for the departure** of an employee at our university. Reporting about this will be included in the Annual Social Report.

Our student population is very diverse. We are proud of this. We also see the importance of this being reflected amongst our staff members, in terms of ethnicity, gender, sexual preference, etc. The annual **NSE** provides us with student satisfaction data. The NSE also enquires about the extent to which students feel at home and safe within the university, how we treat each other with respect (people from different backgrounds), and the level of satisfaction relating to the options and provision of information for support needs (such as pregnancy and parenthood, gender transition and informal care). In addition, we also conduct **well-being research** amongst all students, and plans to structurally monitor this are underway. All first-year students also receive a **first 100-day survey** in which we question study behaviour, bonding and the feeling of belonging.

We also structurally monitor the **study success of students**, because we see that there is a difference between men and women in relation to study success and study behaviour. For this, we annually compile KPI's, i.e.: the percentage of dropouts in the first year, the binding study recommendation (BSR) after the first year, and the graduation rates of students re-enrolling.

Annual reporting from various forums will take place annually in relation to issues concerning the social safety of staff members and students. The **Confidential Advisors** annually report the number of incidents relating to improper behaviour, including abuse of power, discrimination and sexual intimidation. This report is used as a signalling tool and is followed up through the PDCA cycle.

4. Work-life balance and culture within the organisation

The **well-being** of our students and staff members is paramount. [The Hague Centre for Teaching and Learning](#) (HCTL) offers a wide range of **workshops and training courses** relating to healthy working, work/life balance, mindfulness and happiness at work. Moreover, staff members and students can consult

coaches. Students can also consult [student deans](#) and **student psychologists** who are ready to support them in relation to a wide range of personal questions.

The work/ life balance of our staff members is of paramount importance to us. The Collective Labour Agreement (**CLA**), **legislation, and our own working conditions** provide many options to find possibilities in relation to a better balance between work and private life, such as sustainable deployment hours, the option for informal care and parental leave for partners (WIEG).

In November 2021, THUAS received a favourable evaluation from the **employment discrimination inspectorate** relating to our policy for improper behaviour at the workplace. This is something that we can be proud of.

Students and staff members are given time and space to breastfeed or pump breast milk during study and working hours. For this, every location of THUAS is equipped with a private **room for pumping breast milk**. In addition, pregnant students and staff members can also use a lockable **relaxation room**. At the request of students and staff members, in 2019, we also installed **gender-neutral toilets** within THUAS.

Since 2021, we organise [Well-being weeks](#) for students twice each year, where they can participate in various workshops that can contribute to enhancing social, mental and physical welfare. Moreover, we structurally organise many different **sports and social workshops** at our campus for all students. The university has also invested in a meeting point for students, called **The LINK (Linking Inclusive Networks and Knowledge)**. This meeting point provides peer-to-peer support for students, and also promotes inclusivity within THUAS.

5. Gender equality in leadership and decision making

In 2009, THUAS signed the **Charter Talent to the Top**, aiming for a higher influx, through-flow and retention of mainly female talent in top positions. At THUAS, we still reap the benefits of this. The **percentage of women in management functions** from pay scale 13 is still increasing. Compared to 2019, we note an increase from 6% (40.5% reference date October 2019 to 46.5% reference date October 2021). **The percentage of women among the number of professors** (research leaders) is 41%, and among the number of FTE professors, it is 44% (reference date 1 December 2021). This is higher than the European average of 33.8% women among all researchers, and the 26.4% of all Dutch researchers². Since September 2020, Dr Elisabeth Minnemann has been in charge of our university as **chairperson of the Executive Board**.

All of our managers participate in a **university-wide leadership programme**, where there is a continuous focus on diversity and inclusion, including through awareness and unconscious bias training, the development of inclusive education and in policy.

6. Gender equality in recruitment and career development.

Diversity and inclusion are a common thread in our [recruitment and selection policy](#).

In 2021, we also participated in a **Nudging in Recruitment and Selection pilot** in cooperation with the Ministry of Social Affairs and Labour, and TNO. We increasingly use evidence-based methods of working, including the writing of inclusive vacancy texts and an objective preliminary selection based on pre-formulated questions and a score form. We also pay attention to a selection board being composed of persons from diverse backgrounds, consisting of managers, staff members and students, but also with the

² Source: <https://www.neth-er.eu/onderzoek/nederland-onderaan-qua-percentage-vrouwelijke-onderzoekers>

correct balance between men and women. Providing a transparent and inclusive process is of paramount importance to us. At the beginning of 2022, a **tool kit** will be developed for managers in relation to inclusive recruitment and selection. This also takes into account the findings from the pilot.

In the context of equal opportunities and **career development**, the university-wide D&I monitor will be examined in order to determine to what extent women have equal career opportunities, and to what extent the university still has to take additional action in this respect.

As already mentioned, we also monitor the **outflow of our staff members**, based on exit interviews and questionnaires. The feedback that we receive from this is deployed in order to improve our processes and actions.

7. Integration of the gender dimension in the content of research and education

The Diversity & Inclusion Task Force is, in conjunction with the women's network, explicitly proceeding with gender dimensions, gender relationships and representations of gender via various educational and research interventions. In paragraph 2, we described various interventions that mainly focus on inclusive education. In addition, we focus on gender equality in research by:

- **Full representation and participation of women in education and research** as lecturer, research leaders, researchers, research participants, external partners/clients, members of curriculum- and research committees, persons nominated for prizes, and persons requesting subsidies.
- **Integration of gender awareness in existing institutional research policy and in training activities** for research personnel and support. We have a [range of training courses](#) for our researchers that is being constantly expanded.

8. Measures against gender-related violence, including sexual intimidation.

Inequality, insecurity, racism and exclusion must be investigated, recognised and addressed. We want to be an organisation with an open and professional culture, where we try to have interactive discussions and where difficult discussions are not overlooked. Our staff members must be able to deal with a complaint, problem or conflict in a safe manner within our existing [help and complaints structure](#). A transparent, simple and accessible help and complaints structure is essential for this. In 2018, the help and complaints structure of THUAS was completely evaluated, and where necessary, renewed. This structure consists of **Confidential Advisors**, an **Integrity Counsellor** and an **Ombuds-officer**. In addition, there are several committees (including the **Complaints committee for improper behaviour** and a **Whistleblower committee**).

We also have a **THUAS Integrity Code** and a [complaints mechanism for improper behaviour](#).

We protect our staff members from gender-related violence and other forms of gender-related harm during all phases of educational and research projects, but attention is also paid to the prevention of gender-based prejudice. Institutional committees contribute to prevention, e.g. the [confidential scientific integrity counsellor](#), the [ethical committee for research](#) and the [complaints committee for scientific integrity](#).

Students can consult the **Career Counsellor, Confidential Advisors and the Ombuds-officer** if they are confronted by problems and improper or worrying behaviour. A Reporting and Safety Advice Point is also available for students. Thematic sessions are also organised annually, where students are invited to

discuss the subjects on the agenda. Recently, during the Safety week 2021, workshops were offered in relation to sexual violence and unsafe situations. In addition, our student deans and psychologists are always available for our students if something happens to them.

9. Quality assurance and evaluation

The gender equality plan is part of our university-wide vision and '*an inclusive university*' approach. The Inclusion Office (still to be established) will be responsible for the evaluation and quality assurance of this plan. Based on data (D&I monitor) and developments, gender equality within our university will be annually monitored and evaluated.