

## Diversity as an Opportunity- The Code of Leuphana University Lüneburg

The Charter of Diversity signed by the university in 2014 refers in its wording mainly to companies and economically oriented institutions. This code clarifies the Diversity Charter in the context of the university and underlines the principles regarding anti-discrimination, inclusion, appreciation and self-reflection. Diversity is understood in the university context as a value in itself - independent of economic aspects. Or in the words of Adorno, 1945/1951: "Being able to be different without fear". As part of civil society, Leuphana University wants to face the challenges of society and approach this in a sustainable, action-oriented and humanistic way by recognising the existing diversity, giving it room to develop and become visible, and incorporating this for the further development of the university.

The code includes all members of the university as well as lecturers, our cooperation partners and guests. This diversity in connection with the different biographies, identities, orientations, abilities, skills, experiences, life plans and life situations is treated with appreciation. By addressing and realising equal opportunities across the university, the university takes its social responsibility seriously by structurally enabling access and participation. The implementation of the Code in our organisation aims to create a creative, supportive, appreciative environment in terms of learning, teaching, research and work and for academic discourse, which enables a (self-)reflective approach to prejudice, structural exclusion and privilege and further advances our welcoming and anti-discriminatory culture: All members of the university will be valued - irrespective of gender as well as trans- and intersexuality, ethnic origin, nationality, religion or belief, disability and chronic illness, age, sexual orientation, social origin or residence status. Discriminatory behaviour is not tolerated at Leuphana University.

The basis for this are the general statutory regulations as well as the more extensive regulations for universities that go beyond the private sector, for example:

- UN-Frauenrechtskonvention/ Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW)<sup>i</sup>
- UN-Behindertenrechtskonvention/ Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD)<sup>ii</sup>

- UNESCO-Übereinkommen gegen Diskriminierung im Unterrichtswesen/  
Convention against Discrimination in Education (DISCRI-E)<sup>iii</sup>
- Grundgesetz (GG)
- Allgemeines Gleichbehandlungsgesetz (AGG)
- Behindertengleichstellungsgesetz (BGG)
- Sozialgesetzbuch IX
- Hochschulrahmengesetz (HRG)
- Niedersächsisches Landesgleichstellungsgesetz (NGG)
- Niedersächsisches Hochschulgesetz (NHG)
- Empfehlung der Hochschulrektorenkonferenz „Eine Hochschule für Alle“
- DFG's Research-Oriented Standards on Gender Equality
- Regulations of Leuphana University of Lüneburg, e.g. basic regulations, appointment regulations, admission regulations, framework examination regulations, rules of procedure, etc.
- Senatsrichtlinie zur Verwirklichung des Gleichstellungsauftrages
- Senate Directive on the Realisation of the Equality Mission

With the help of the Code and its inter-university concept, teaching, learning, working and research conditions are designed to be sustainable and equal in terms of opportunity. Structural discrimination is specifically identified and processes in the sense of "empowerment" are promoted at all status levels. Leuphana University creates a climate of acceptance and mutual trust.

#### **Within the framework of this code we will**

1. Foster a university culture characterised by mutual respect, anti-discrimination and appreciation of each and every individual. Together, we will create the conditions for university members to recognise, share and live these values, regardless of their status group. In this respect, the supervisors have a special responsibility.
2. Review and ensure our structural processes, so that these meet the diverse competencies of all university members as well as the central values of humanism, sustainability and action orientation in the sense of the Leuphana mission statement.
3. Recognise social diversity within and outside the organisation and valuing the potential it brings, e.g. through transparent recruitment procedures, promoting social permeability and creating equal opportunities.
4. Make the implementation of the Code and the handling of discrimination a regular topic of internal and external dialogue.
5. Evaluate, prioritise and regularly adjust measures and targets of the respective organisational unit.
6. Provide regular public information on the activities of the university community.
7. Train, network, professionalise and inform all university staff on diversity and equal opportunities and proactively involve them in the implementation of measures.
8. Actively promote the process of change and participation as a cross-cutting task.

We are convinced that living equal opportunities and valuing diversity has a positive impact on university community and civil society!

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<sup>i</sup> The Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) was adopted by the United Nations General Assembly on 18th December 1979 (United Nations General Assembly Resolution 34/180) and entered into force under international law on 3rd September 1981. CEDAW is the most important human rights instrument for women, as it commits State Parties to the Convention to ensure the full and fair equality of women in all spheres of life, including the private sphere. The state must not only not violate the principle of equality itself, but it must also take active steps to achieve fair equality in society.

Source: <http://www.institut-fuer-menschenrechte.de/menschenrechtsinstrumente/vereinte-nationen/menschenrechtsabkommen/frauenrechtskonvention-cedaw/> (as of 13.04.17)

<sup>ii</sup> The UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities came into force in Germany in March 2009. It does not implement any additional rights, but confirms the universal human rights to the living reality of people with disabilities and health impairments. By signing the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, Germany has committed itself to respecting, supporting and actively implementing the rights of persons with disabilities and health impairments. Source: <http://www.Behinderteneinrichtungen.de/DE/Koordinierungsstelle/UNKonvention/UNKonventionnode.html> (Stand: 16.03.2017)

<sup>iii</sup> It was adopted in Paris on 14 December 1960.

“Article 1:

(1) For the purposes of this Convention, the term "discrimination" shall include any distinction, exclusion, restriction or preference based on race or colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, discrimination, exclusion, restriction or preference based on race or colour, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, economic condition or birth, which has the purpose or effect of nullifying or impairing the equality of treatment in the field of discrimination and in particular of

- a. denying a person or group of persons access to education of any kind or level,
- b. restricting a person or group of persons to a low level of education,
- c. establishing or maintaining separate systems or institutions of accommodation for any person or group of persons, except as permitted in Article 2,
- d. placing any person or group of persons in a situation incompatible with human dignity.

(2) For the purposes of this Convention, the term "education" refers to its various types and levels and includes access to instruction, its level and quality and the conditions under which it is given.”

Source: <http://www.nds-voris.de/jportal/?quelle=jlink&query=UntWDiskr%C3%9CbKG+ND+Artikel+1&psml=bsvorisprod.psml&max=true> (as of: 13.04.2017)