

Diversity strategy of the University of Oldenburg

Presidential Board of the University of Oldenburg

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Preamble

With this diversity strategy, the University of Oldenburg (UOL) commits itself to recognising, valuing, promoting and shaping its own diversity, reducing existing disadvantages and barriers and thus sustainably increasing the diversity of its student and staff body in the long term.

The strategy is based on the results of the diversity audit "Vielfalt gestalten" (Shaping diversity) of the Stifterverband (2020-2023, which the UOL successfully completed on 14 February 2023. In several participatory (project) groups, a large number of measures on diversity were developed, discussed and in some cases already implemented across all statuses. In the course of the auditing process, the UOL has adopted a policy on diversity in the context of equal opportunities and long-term working and governance structures on diversity were established as a cross-cutting task. During the pilot phase of the Diversity Audit, the UOL had already taken part in the Stifterverband's "Ungleich besser! Verschiedenheit als Chance" programme in 2010-2012 and was able to do important pioneering work on actively dealing with diversity with its certified concept of a "hearing-sensitive university".

On this basis of ground-breaking, intensive organisational development processes, this diversity strategy has been developed with the participation of the various central and decentralised organisational units at the UOL and has been widely discussed in the Diversity Committee and all relevant committees of the UOL. Following a positive opinion from the UOL Senate on 1 November 2023, the Presidential Board of the UOL adopted this diversity strategy on 21 November 2023. Subsequently, the staff council and the representative for persons with severe disabilities were informed.

The legal framework for universities (and other public institutions, but also private companies) for addressing diversity and the obligation of equal treatment and non-discrimination is provided at the international level by the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities of 2006 (ratified in 2009). On the European level, relevant regulations include the Anti-Racism Directive of 2000 and on the national level there is the Equal Treatment Act (AGG) of 2006 in addition to the relevant articles of the German Basic Law. Essential regulations on the equal treatment of people with disabilities can also be found in the Social Code IX on the rehabilitation and participation of people with disabilities from 2001 and the Act on the Equality of People with Disabilities of 2002. The Lower Saxony Higher Education Act (NHG) regulates individual aspects of diversity at universities and higher education policy management instruments such as the target agreements with the Lower Saxony Ministry of Science and Culture provide further framework conditions at state level for the development, implementation and funding of diversity activities at universities in Lower Saxony.

As a young, nationally and internationally recognised and innovative university, the UOL uses its scope for manoeuvre to fulfil its social responsibility for equal opportunities and diversity - and is always open to new approaches.

Existing strategic approach to diversity & links to other strategies, concepts and processes

Since its foundation in 1973, the University of Oldenburg has positioned itself as an open university that is a nationwide pioneer in paving the way for new, non-traditional target groups to access study programmes (*Profile of the University*). Diversity is already integrated as a cross-cutting issue in various strategies, concepts and processes and individual diversity dimensions have been established as strategic areas of responsibility. There are important strategic links to the other pillars of equal opportunities - gender equality and family friendliness.

In the **University Development Plan (HEP)** 2016, diversity is anchored as a strategic topic of university development and planning at the University of Oldenburg. There, the UOL formulates its policy of recognising the diversity of its members and the variety of their convictions and lifestyles and of seeing this as an opportunity and enrichment for the university as a whole. Diversity will also be part of future university development planning as a cross-cutting issue (*see focus area "Diversity in strategy & structure"*). Diversity aspects were also taken into account in the **structural planning discussions** with the schools. In the follow-up discussions with the schools and other central higher education policy management instruments at the university, diversity is to be further anchored as a cross-cutting issue (*see focus area "Diversity in strategy & structure"*).

In 2019, the UOL adopted a **Mission statement for teaching** in which it affirms its self-image as an open university that consciously opens itself up to a diverse student body and welcomes the diversity of its members, affiliates and guests, perceives it as enriching and sees it as an opportunity for its own further development. The development and implementation of a statement paper on the topic of "Open University" in the area of studying and teaching, which was initiated as part of the diversity audit, follows on from this mission statement (*see focus area "Open study programme start and progression"*).

In its **Gender Equality Plan 2020**, the UOL formulates the objective of developing a cross-university diversity strategy with a clear focus on anti-discrimination. Action regarding gender diversity and sexualised discrimination and violence, which is also addressed by the gender equality plan and underpinned by actions, is covered in the focus areas "*Anti-discrimination*" and "*Gender diversity in service & infrastructure*" of this strategy. The **Policy against sexualised discrimination and sexual violence** which has been in place at UOL since 1996, is to serve as a starting point for developing a university anti-discrimination guideline. In the development of the **Gender Equality Plan 2024**, gender diversity and sexualised discrimination and violence will remain relevant as topics at the interface of gender equality and diversity and will be underpinned by further measures.

The UOL has been recognised as a "family-friendly university" by the "**family-friendly university**" audit in 2004 and received the permanent certificate in 2017. In 2023 the UOL underwent the dialogue procedure of berufund-familie Service GmbH with a focus on support structures for academic qualifications with family responsibilities and compensation for disadvantages for students with family responsibilities. Issues relating to the compatibility of family and studies or career (especially research as a career) form links to diversity issues. These relate, among other things, to parenthood and the long-term assumption of responsibility and care duties for other people in the private sphere in a variety of family constellations.

On 31 August 2022, in accordance with Section 166 SGB IX, an **Inclusion agreement** was adopted by the Presidential Board, the representative for persons with severe disabilities and the staff council. The new agreement regulates the cooperation between the university, the representative for persons with severe disabilities and the staff council with regard to the interests of severely disabled colleagues. One of the aims of the inclusion agreement

is to increase the number of severely disabled people employed by the university based on the statutory employment quota. In addition to the inclusion agreement, an **action plan** was adopted, which sets out measures for implementing the aforementioned objectives. This diversity strategy covers the objectives and measures of the inclusion agreement and the action plan in the focus areas "*Inclusion in personnel development*" and "*Structural accessibility*". They are implemented and further developed in the established structures and processes in the area of inclusion (see *Structural integration of diversity as a cross-cutting task* and "*Diversity-related quality assurance as a cross-cutting task*").

Since 2011, the UOL has been pursuing a structured internationalisation process, in the course of which an **internationalisation strategy** with key areas of action and objectives was defined in 2012. The university received important impetus for the further development of this process through its participation in the HRK's **internationalisation of universities audit** in 2014. A particular focus in its implementation of the *internationalisation strategy* is on increasing the number of foreign students and academics at all qualification levels. When updating the internationalisation strategy, a future focus will be on aspects of diversity in order to establish important links between the cross-cutting issues of diversity and internationalisation.

in 2019, the university developed and adopted a **language policy** which defines objectives in the areas of German and English as academic languages and in the promotion of individual multilingualism for all members of the university and describes corresponding fields of action and relevant measures.

Diversity aspects are also taken into account in the UOL's **digitalisation strategy**: in the design of digital accessibility, the provision of educational offerings that are taught in a gender- and diversity-sensitive manner, and the reflection of risks of digitalisation such as the reproduction of discriminatory patterns ("machine bias"). In this way, the digitalisation process at UOL also contributes to increasing participation opportunities for all. In this diversity strategy, the objectives and measures for diversity-oriented digital offerings in teaching and learning spaces are based in the focus area "*Diversity and Digitalisation in Teaching and Learning Spaces*".

Our understanding of diversity

As part of the 2020-2023 diversity audit "Vielfalt gestalten" (Shaping diversity) of the Stifterverband, the UOL has adopted a policy on diversity in the context of equal opportunities at the University of Oldenburg which was adopted by the Senate on 6 July 2022 and by the Presidential Board of the UOL on 11 July 2022. This understanding of diversity forms the basis and starting point of this diversity strategy.

The University of Oldenburg is firmly committed to **equal opportunities** for all its members, affiliates and guests. It considers constant progress in this area as an indispensable basis for developing talent and potential in studies, research and teaching, as part of its professional actions in administration and transfer and as a contribution to fulfilling its social responsibility and role model function. The university considers anti-discriminatory action as indispensable for successfully promoting equal opportunities. At the same time it pursues equal opportunities in the knowledge that social inequalities are always (re-)produced at university. So, as an institution, it must always be aware of its own role when it comes to producing exclusions or inclusions in the context of the university.

The joint commitment to equal opportunities is institutionalised at the University of Oldenburg in the three pillars of **equal opportunities**, **family friendliness** and **diversity**. These structures are designed to allow all university members, affiliates and guests regardless of gender, sexual orientation, age, health impairment, ethnic or social origin, educational background, language, religion or ideology and family situation to participate on an equal footing. At universities, there are structural relationships of dependency, particularly between the various status groups, which can have an unequal impact on different social groups. The University of Oldenburg is committed to reflecting on social inequalities at all levels, raising awareness of these inequalities and counteracting structural exclusion. It takes an offensive stance against all forms of discrimination while taking the interconnections between different forms of social inequality (intersectionality) into account. In this way, the university promotes a participatory, inclusive and less discriminatory environment in which its members can study, research and work successfully.

Diversity

The University of Oldenburg is committed to a culture of diversity and equal, non-discriminatory participation of all its members, affiliates and guests. In addition to the established areas of gender equality and family friendliness, the University of Oldenburg's policy addresses the strategic handling of diversity as part of the university's organisational development. Dealing with diversity is seen as a cross-cutting management task that affects all areas of university development and management, such as studies, teaching and continuing education, research, transfer and promotion of young talent, technology and administration, staff recruitment and development. Actively promoting and organising diversity is a strategic management task which is carried out with the participation of the diversity officers and interest groups at the University of Oldenburg. At the same time, all members, affiliates and guests of the university are called upon to organise their fields of activity in a diversity-sensitive and participatory manner. In order to enable diversity-competent action, the university is opening up spaces which help it recognise social inequalities and structural exclusion at the university in the present and past and allow it to reflect on its own actions. The University of Oldenburg is thus pursuing the common objective of a diversity-friendly organisational structure and culture at various organisational levels and with the participation of all status groups. It sees itself as a learning organisation that takes a self-critical and error-friendly look at its structures, processes and practices and constantly develops them further.

Within the diversity pillar, the areas of inclusion, open university and internationalisation are already established at the UOL and also form the focus of this strategy:

For the University of Oldenburg, the **inclusion** of members, affiliates and guests with health impairments is a process of accepting and actively shaping diversity - and thus far more than just fulfilling the legal mandate. All physical and mental impairments are included, regardless of whether they are visible or invisible. The design of accessibility, compensation for disadvantages and inclusive management processes in research, teaching and administration are central elements on the way to a diversity-sensitive and participatory university with a living culture of inclusion.

The University of Oldenburg sees itself as an **open university** that is deliberately open to a diverse student body, especially students with a vocational background and first-generation academics. Based on this self-image, it offers target group-specific services, counselling and support while promoting lifelong learning. The University of Oldenburg thus actively promotes permeability between the vocational and higher education systems.

At the University of Oldenburg, **internationalisation** is both a practised attitude and a strategic development task. One of the main objectives of the University of Oldenburg's *internationalisation strategy* is to continue to increase its competitiveness in international comparison and its international visibility in order to make the university more attractive for international academics and students and at the same time to offer all university members, affiliates and guests a cosmopolitan campus and opportunities for international networking.

In the area of **gender diversity**, the UOL aims to recognise the gender diversity of its members, affiliates and guests more strongly and to work towards open, respectful treatment of people who see themselves as trans*, inter, queer or non-binary. We want to actively oppose disadvantages and discrimination based on (ascribed) gender affiliation beyond the binary gender model.

The complete policy on diversity in the context of equal opportunities at the University of Oldenburg is attached to this strategy ([see appendix](#)) and goes into further detail regarding the pillars of gender equality and family friendliness.

Strategic diversity objectives

Based on its understanding of diversity, the UOL sets itself overarching strategic objectives that it wants to achieve in the long term. These objectives correspond to specific objectives and selected measures in various focus areas (see below) which the university intends to prioritise and shape over the next few years.

Objective 1 Further anchor diversity as a cross-cutting issue at the UOL both strategically and structurally

Corresponding focus area

Diversity in strategy & structure

Objective 2 Designing access, transitions and participation in the context of studies, academic qualifications, vocational training and employment at UOL with a view to improving equal opportunities and lowering barriers

Corresponding focus areas

**Diversity in
personnel
recruitment**

**Inclusion in
personnel
development**

**Open study
programme start
and progression**

**Diversity in the
promotion of early-
career researchers**

Objective 3 Promote diversity sensitivity and equal participation in knowledge production and communication in research, studies and teaching

Corresponding focus areas

**Diversity and digitalisation in
teaching-learning spaces**

Diversity-sensitive research

Objective 4 Create a management and work culture that is diversity-sensitive and enables participation and implement this culture in all service aspects

Corresponding focus areas

Diversity culture

**Diversity in
personnel
recruitment**

**Inclusion in
personnel
development**

**Gender diversity in
service &
infrastructure**

Objective 5 Counteract discrimination and (structural) disadvantages and remove structural barriers

Corresponding focus areas

Anti-discrimination

Structural accessibility

**Gender diversity in service
& infrastructure**

Key points on diversity

Based on its understanding of diversity, the UOL defines key points that will guide its further development in the area of diversity and guide its diversity activities:

Diversity as a cross-cutting task / *diversity mainstreaming*

The UOL considers dealing with diversity as a **cross-cutting task** that affects all areas of university development and management, such as studies, teaching and continuing education, research, transfer and promotion of young talent, technology and administration, staff recruitment and development. This means that addressing diversity is a cross-cutting, structure-shaping and quality-forming element of university management.

In this sense, the UOL pursues an approach of **Diversity mainstreaming** in which all university planning, development and decision-making processes are scrutinised in terms of their impact on individuals and social groups along diversity dimensions. Diversity must also be organised and managed. Structural barriers can be broken down primarily by changing structures and cross-divisional synergies can best be identified and utilised through institutional interaction.

Responsibility & participation

In order to achieve systematic and sustainable structural change, the UOL pursues a strategic approach that combines bottom-up and top-down elements. University management has a special **responsibility** here - the Presidential Board, the dean's offices, the heads of departments and divisions, but also every single people manager, be it in the technical-administrative or research area. These individuals are responsible for defining commitment and objectives in line with this strategy and provide appropriate resources such as space and time. At the same time, all members, affiliates and guests of the university are called upon to organise their fields of activity in a diversity-sensitive and participatory manner.

All member groups should **participate** in the further development of a diversity-sensitive and inclusive university. Visibility and representation in everyday university life and in university structures is of particular importance for people and groups who are structurally disadvantaged along diversity dimensions. The diversity officers and interest groups at the UOL play a prominent role here ([see Structural integration of diversity as a cross-cutting task](#)).

Multi-level approach to diversity

The UOL takes a multi-level approach to diversity. The focus of diversity-oriented organisational development is on further opening up **structures and processes** and making them more equal in terms of opportunities, not on adapting individuals to existing structures and cultures - some of which are exclusionary, obstructive and disadvantageous ("fixing the institution, not fixing the individual"). In addition, targeted measures and programmes to **support and promote** individuals and groups who are structurally disadvantaged along diversity dimensions can also make an important contribution to achieving more equal opportunities. The interplay between diversity-oriented structural development and individual promotion and development is bringing about a cross-level **cultural change** towards sustainable diversity.

When looking at diversity dimensions, there is always a tension between the necessary consideration and visualisation of social positioning and structural disadvantages of individuals and groups on the one hand, and the danger of essentialising identity categories, homogenising groups and deficit orientation or stigmatisation on the other. This tension must always be considered, especially when providing individualised support or funding. Where possible, these should be topic-oriented and cross-dimensional, and they should address target groups in a resource-oriented and appreciative manner while recognising the diversity of identities and heterogeneity of groups.

In addition to structural developments and individual support, the constant **transfer of knowledge while raising awareness and developing skills** of all members, staff and guests regarding diversity, structural inclusions and exclusions, historical continuities and discontinuities is both a component and proof of the quality and professionalism of a public educational institution and modern employer and the basis for the daily practice of respectful, appreciative cooperation.

Diversity & anti-discrimination

As a public institution, universities - and thus also the UOL - have a special social responsibility and role model function in addition to legally prescribed tasks. Dealing with diversity is not least relevant to the quality of an educational institution: Unless we ensure that our university is open and permeable, allowing everyone to freely develop their skills and their potential and use them under the best possible conditions, this means a loss of labour market attractiveness, academic quality and social credibility and acceptance.

The promotion and organisation of diversity and the consistent implementation of an **anti-discrimination** approach are two sides of the same coin. Effective - and preventive - protection against discrimination is a prerequisite for the free development of skills and potential. Competent, systematic handling of incidents of discrimination is a quality criterion for a professional working, teaching and learning environment.

Intersectionality

In the context of promoting and shaping diversity and implementing effective anti-discrimination protection, the UOL takes the interconnections between different forms of social inequality (intersectionality) into account. This approach of **intersectionality** is a guiding principle for diversity work at the UOL, but is challenging to analyse and implement. This means making existing gaps and potential needs at the intersection of different diversity dimensions visible and workable remains a constant development process. There is an important link here to the UOL's gender equality strategy and work, which focuses on structural disadvantages and the special promotion and support needs of women.

Self-reflection & error-friendliness

The UOL sees itself as a learning organisation that takes a self-critical and error-friendly look at its structures, processes and practices and constantly develops them further. The ability for **self-reflection**, which we practise and apply every day in learning, teaching, research and work, is also directed at the university as an institution itself, its structures, processes, traditions and visions. We use time and create spaces to learn and reflect on this - also together - and to engage in dialogue again and again. Our strength as an organisation is not the unconditional avoidance of mistakes, but rather the **conscious, competent and learning-friendly handling of mistakes**. Dealing with diversity always means **dealing with dilemmas** that the university must face and weigh up in appreciation of different interests, positions and perspectives.

Quality management

Diversity as a cross-cutting and management task requires regular **quality assurance**. This requires a set of instruments for constant self-assurance, review and control, as well as orientation towards external and the (further) development of internal quality standards ([see Diversity-related quality assurance as a cross-cutting task](#)). It also draws on the scientific expertise available at the UOL in various areas of research on diversity and social inequality.

Diversity-related focus areas

In focus areas, the UOL takes a systematic look at selected diversity dimensions or diversity-related topics in individual university fields of action and backs these up with concrete objectives and selected measures (see below).

The selection of focus areas is based on the project groups conducted at the UOL as part of the Diversity Audit of the Stifterverband 2020-2023. Various university fields of action were considered (strategy & structure, personnel management, studies & teaching, promotion of early-career researchers, research, service & counselling, communication & participation) and either worked on across dimensions ("Diversity in ...") or with a focus on a specific diversity dimension or diversity-related topic area (e.g. health impairment/inclusion, educational background/open university). As a result, a wide range of topics have already been addressed in a diversity-oriented manner and measures have been developed and implemented in various fields of action (see [UOL's second self-report for the Stifterverband 2023 diversity audit "Shaping diversity"](#)). Other topics could not yet be systematically addressed as part of the auditing process and should be focussed on more closely in the future (e.g. in the area of anti-discrimination and dealing with gender diversity). Other topics were dealt with in parallel to the auditing process and in addition to the audit project groups in existing institutionalised contexts (e.g. the topic of accessibility in the "Structural Accessibility" working group, led by the employer's Inclusion Officer). In order to make further links visible and create synergies, these diversity-related topics are also incorporated in the diversity strategy as focus areas. Furthermore, even after the development and implementation of this diversity strategy, the decision process regarding other topics and aspects of diversity the UOL will focus on in the future is still ongoing. Continuous further development of the focus areas takes place in the established work and governance structures for diversity at the UOL (see ["Structural integration of diversity as a cross-cutting task"](#), and ["Diversity-related quality assurance as a cross-cutting task"](#)).

Current and future diversity-related focus areas at the UOL

Diversity in strategy & structure	Inclusion in personnel recruitment	Inclusion in personnel development	
Open study programme start and progression	Diversity and digitalisation in teaching-learning spaces	Diversity in the promotion of early-career researchers	Diversity-sensitive research
Diversity culture	Anti-discrimination	Structural accessibility	Gender diversity in service & infrastructure

Assignment of the focus areas to subject areas/diversity dimensions and university fields of action

		Field of action							
		Strategy & structure	Personnel management	Study & teaching	Promotion of early-career researchers	Research	Service & counselling	IT & properties	Communication & participation
Subject area/diversity dimension	Diversity/cross-dimensional	Diversity in strategy & structure Anti-discrimination	Diversity in personnel recruitment	Diversity and digitalisation in teaching-learning spaces	Diversity in the promotion of early-career researchers	Diversity-sensitive research	Diversity and digitalisation in teaching-learning spaces Anti-discrimination		Diversity culture
	Inclusion/health impairment		Inclusion in personnel development					Structural accessibility	
	Open university/ educational background, social background			Open study programme start and progression			Open study programme start and progression		
	Gender diversity/gender						Gender diversity in service & infrastructure	Gender diversity in service & infrastructure	

Specific objectives & selected measures regarding diversity

In the designated focus areas on diversity at the UOL, the UOL pursues concrete objectives and selected measures, the implementation of which is the responsibility of the respective organisational units (see “Diversity-related quality assurance as a cross-cutting task”). The objectives and measures in the focus areas correspond to the overarching strategic objectives on diversity at the UOL and contribute to their achievement (see “Strategic diversity objectives”).

Diversity in strategy & structure

- Objective 1 **Continued structural integration of diversity as a strategic cross-cutting task at the UOL, particularly with regard to decentralised governance and working structures**
- Objective 2 **Further embedding of diversity as a cross-cutting issue in the central strategic university management instruments**
- Objective 3 **Further development of diversity-related data collection and analysis**

Selected actions

Action	Responsible	Status
Carry out an inventory and further development of decentralised governance and working structures on diversity as a cross-cutting issue	VP Diversity, Structural Planning and Development Unit, Schools and other decentralised OUs	planned
Integrate diversity as a cross-cutting issue in future university development planning (HEP), follow-up discussions with the Schools on structural planning, system accreditation and other central management instruments	P, VP Diversity, Structural Planning and Development Unit	implementation ongoing
Carry out an inventory and targeted, systematic further development of data collection and analysis on various aspects of diversity at the UOL	Structural Planning and Development Unit/AcCo, Division 1/Organisation Department, Department for Studying and Teaching/Internal Evaluation	planned

Diversity in personnel recruitment

Objective 1 **Minimise structural discrimination in the approach and selection of potential, previously underrepresented applicant groups**

Objective 2 **Raise awareness and openness to diversity on the part of recruiters and confront unconscious forms of exclusion**

Selected actions

Action	Responsible	Status
Develop recommendations with regard to openness to diversity in job profiles and for selection criteria	Division 1/Labour and collective bargaining law, Professional Development (PEOE), Employer's Inclusion Officer	implementation ongoing
Raising awareness as part of training courses on recruitment processes and selection procedures	Division 1/PEOE, Employer's Inclusion Officer	implementation ongoing
Implementation of model specifications for the diversity-oriented design of tenders and thus the targeted addressing of underrepresented groups of people	Division 1/Labour and collective bargaining law, Professional Development (PEOE), Employer's Inclusion Officer	implementation ongoing

Inclusion in personnel development

- Objective 1 **Increase the proportion of employees with a health impairment and/or chronic illness (in the MTV sector and in the scientific field) through awareness-raising and education**
- Objective 2 **Ongoing development and implementation of customised personnel development programmes to promote inclusion (or diversity in general)**

Selected actions

Action	Responsible	Status
Develop and publish a FAQ list on the topic of "Working and studying with a health impairment or severe disability"	Division 1/Professional Development (PEOE)	implementation ongoing
Develop and publish a FAQ list with information on the recruitment of persons with a severe disability in the scientific field	Division 1/Professional Development (PEOE)	implementation ongoing
Maintain a regular further training programme which incorporates inclusion aspects	Division 1/Professional Development (PEOE)	implementation ongoing

Note: In August 2022, an [Inclusion Agreement](#) and an associated [Action Plan](#) were adopted by the Presidential Board, the representative for persons with severe disabilities and the staff council. Some of the measures mentioned above are taken from the action plan and named here as examples. The action plan should be seen as the leading document.

Open study programme start and progression

- Objective 1 **Increased outreach and support for non-traditional prospective and current students during the transition to higher education and in the introductory phase of their studies**
- Objective 2 **Increased awareness of the topic of open universities based on an intersectional understanding of open universities**
- Objective 3 **Examine the possibilities of increasing flexible access to degree programmes and in the course of studies (e.g. by expanding part-time study options, including for internships)**

Selected actions

Action	Responsible	Status
Develop and implement a statement paper on the topic of "Open University", which sets out an intersectional understanding of Open University	VP Teaching, Department for Studying and Teaching	implementation ongoing
Implement the new digital business process for credit portfolios for students with previous professional experience	VP Teaching, Department for Studying and Teaching, PLAR service	planned (funding from the Teaching programme line)
Opening up the guest lecture programme to non-traditional prospective students in the sense of a "taster course", which enables a low-cost, low-threshold initial study experience free of study organisation requirements	C3L	implementation ongoing

Diversity and digitalisation in teaching-learning spaces

- Objective 1 **Provide a reference framework for the realisation of ethically reflective and diversity-conscious teaching and learning opportunities**
- Objective 2 **Test digital and hybrid offerings in teaching and learning spaces to promote the participation of students who are structurally disadvantaged along diversity dimensions**
- Objective 3 **Practical support and counselling for teachers on the diversity-oriented design of teaching materials and courses**

Selected actions

Action	Responsible	Status
Develop and implement a statement paper on the topic of "Recommendations for diversity-conscious teaching at the UOL"	VP Teaching, Department for Studying and Teaching	implementation ongoing
Develop diversity-oriented digital and hybrid teaching/learning formats and accessible content based on open educational resources (OER) (incorporating the experience and expertise of a team with a diversity focus)	Department for Studying and Teaching, participate@UOL project	implementation ongoing
Create diversity-oriented digital support services to assist students in the introductory phase of their studies (e.g. for students without A-levels, first-generation academics or international students)	Department for Studying and Teaching, participate@UOL project	implementation ongoing
Create or expand support and counselling services for lecturers who wish to design their teaching materials and courses in a diversity-oriented manner, e.g. with low barriers	Department for Studying and Teaching	planned (funding from the Teaching programme line)

Diversity in the promotion of early career researchers

Objective 1 Reduce inequalities of opportunity and counteract structural disadvantages in the transitions between phases of the academic career path

Objective 2 Increase the proportion of first-generation academics in academic positions by providing individual support and counselling services

Selected actions

Action	Responsible	Status
Incorporate regulations for special arrangements to compensate for disadvantages in the model doctoral degree regulations	Department for Research and Technology Transfer, in cooperation with the legal department	planned
Incorporate regulations for special arrangements to compensate for disadvantages in the habilitation regulations	Department for Research and Technology Transfer, in cooperation with the legal department	planned
Implementation of a line for first-generation academics as part of the Helene Lange mentoring programme	Department for Research and Technology Transfer, GA	implementation ongoing
Increasing integration of diversity-related topics into the Graduate Academy's programme (e.g. workshops on intercultural communication, unconscious bias, diversity management)	Department for Research and Technology Transfer, GA	implementation ongoing

Diversity-sensitive research

- Objective 1 **Appropriate consideration of diversity dimensions in research**
- Objective 2 **Visualisation and communication of diversity research and diversity-sensitive research initiatives**

Selected actions

Action	Responsible	Status
Increased information and awareness-raising measures regarding the consideration of diversity dimensions in research in accordance with DFG standards	VP Research, Department for Research and Technology Transfer	implementation ongoing
Organisation of events, workshops etc. on the practice of diversity-sensitive research, especially for early-career researchers	VP for early-career researchers	implementation ongoing
Planning and organising a lecture series or conference on diversity research or diversity-sensitive research	CMC - Center for Migration, Education and Cultural Studies	planned (funding from the Diversity programme line)

Diversity culture

- Objective 1 **Increased information, visibility and awareness-raising measures regarding diversity issues at the UOL**

Selected actions

Action	Responsible	Status
Expansion of information on diversity as a cross-cutting issue and on individual diversity dimensions on the equal opportunities landing page (e.g. on gender diversity)	VP Diversity, Structural Planning and Development Unit	planned
Increased visibility of diversity issues through (often bilingual) use of internal and external communication channels (e.g. UOL website, UOL social media channels, press releases, university newspaper, research magazine, information emails to employees and students)	P+C	implementation ongoing
Review and consistently promote diversity-sensitive communication in student services (e.g. training on diversity-sensitive counselling, inclusion of the topic of diversity-sensitive communication in cross-school tutor training courses)	Division 3	implementation ongoing

Anti-discrimination

Objective 1 Further structural integration of qualified anti-discrimination work at the UOL, following on from the existing structures, especially regarding sexualised discrimination and violence

Selected actions

Action	Responsible	Status
Networking of existing counselling services and complaints desks with the mandate: - Develop a university anti-discrimination guideline with transparent and binding regulations on complaints procedures	Division 1, Professional Development (PEOE)	planned
- Establish a qualified counselling and support service for university members and staff in the event of discrimination, taking into account existing counselling structures	Division 1, Professional Development (PEOE)	planned

Note: Addressing sexualised discrimination and violence is also part of the Central Gender Equality Plan 2020; in the development of the Central Gender Equality Plan 2024, this topic area remains relevant at the interface of gender equality and diversity and will be underpinned by further actions.

Structural accessibility

Objective 1 Expansion of barrier-free, or at least low-barrier, access to all UOL facilities, appropriate workplace design and compliance with barrier-free construction methods in accordance with legal requirements and standards

Selected actions

Action	Responsible	Status
Carry out an inventory of the structural barriers at the UOL and develop an action plan for their removal	Division 4, Structural Accessibility work group	implementation ongoing
Develop a checklist for renting buildings	Division 4, Structural Accessibility work group	implementation ongoing
Develop a checklist for new buildings	Division 4, Structural Accessibility work group	implementation ongoing

Note: In August 2022, an [Inclusion Agreement](#) and an associated [Action Plan](#) were adopted by the Presidential Board, the representative for persons with severe disabilities and the staff council. The objective and the aforementioned measures are taken from the inclusion agreement and the action plan and serve as examples here. The inclusion agreement and the action plan are the lead documents. Aspects of digital accessibility are embedded in the objectives and measures in the focus area 'Diversity and digitalisation in teaching and learning spaces'.

Gender diversity in service & infrastructure

Objective 1 **Further professionalisation of the handling of gender diversity at the UOL, especially in the service area for students and employees**

Objective 2 **Equip the UOL with toilet and changing facilities for all genders as required**

Selected actions

Action	Responsible	Status
Create and implement transparent and binding regulations on changing civil status and first names for trans*, inter or non-binary (TIN) students and employees	Division 1, Division 3	implementation ongoing
Implement the pilot project to set up unisex toilet facilities with showers and changing rooms in the Sports Research and Training Centre, implement a further pilot project on gender-neutral toilets in building A09 and use the experience gained during operation for the planning of WC facilities for major new construction projects, such as the medical campus	Division 4	implementation ongoing

Note: Addressing gender diversity is also part of the Central Gender Equality Plan 2020; in the development of the Central Gender Equality Plan 2024, this topic area remains relevant at the interface of gender equality and diversity and will be underpinned by further measures.

Structural integration of diversity as a cross-cutting task

Diversity as a cross-cutting issue is already anchored in the structures of the UOL in various places, responsibilities have been defined and resources made available, thus ensuring that diversity is dealt with strategically and operationally on a permanent basis:

Presidential Board

Diversity as a cross-cutting issue is assigned as an independent department to a member of the Presidential Board, who is responsible for it. The overall responsibility for dealing with diversity at the UOL lies with the entire Presidential Board. Each member of the Presidential Board is responsible for ensuring that diversity aspects are taken into account in their area of responsibility and for actively promoting and shaping diversity at the UOL in line with this strategy.

A diversity programme line is assigned to the member of the Presidential Board responsible for this area, in which funding is available for individual central diversity activities.

The Presidential Board has additional, independent departmental responsibilities for individual diversity dimensions and diversity-related topics, particularly in the areas of inclusion, health and internationalisation. In particular, the Lower Saxony Higher Education Act (NHG) defines the promotion of international cooperation and exchange, with special consideration of the needs of foreign students, as well as participation in the social promotion of students, taking into account the special needs of students with disabilities or chronic illnesses, as tasks of the university - under the responsibility of the Presidential Board (Section 3 in conjunction with Section 37 NHG).

The members of the Presidential Board responsible for diversity as a cross-cutting task and diversity-related areas of work maintain a regular dialogue in order to coordinate strategic and operational diversity activities and advance them together. This also applies to the members of the Presidential Board, who are responsible for gender equality and family friendliness as part of the three-pillar model for equal opportunities at the UOL ([see diversity policy](#)) are also responsible for independent departments.

Central diversity-related working, service and counselling structures

To support the Presidential Board and, in particular, the responsible member of the Presidential Board, diversity is a permanent responsibility of the Structural Planning and Development Unit as a cross-cutting task at a central working level. The planning officer specialising in diversity is primarily responsible for developing and implementing university-wide diversity concepts and strategies, as well as diversity-related structural and development planning and the coordination, monitoring and reporting of university diversity activities.

Further central working, service and counselling structures exist at the UOL for individual diversity dimensions and diversity-related areas of work. For example, the Department for Research and Technology Transfer has established competencies for internationalisation, e.g. for the development of needs-based measures to support international early-career researchers. In the Department for Studying and Teaching, the workgroup for teaching and learning in higher education helps UOL teaching staff develop and implement diversity-sensitive teaching.

Division 1: Personnel & organisation is home to UOL's health management, which promotes workplace health and reintegration in accordance with the legal mandate in the German Social Code in order to create health-promoting working conditions for all employees.

Department 1 is also home to the complaints desk for UOL employees in the event of discrimination within the meaning of the General Equal Treatment Act (AGG) and the conTakt counselling centre for issues relating to sexualised discrimination and violence. The AGG complaints desk provides students and employees with psychological and legal advice and support and does prevention and public relations work. The UOL's complaints and improvement management system (managed by Division 3 - Student and Academic Affairs) offers all students of the University the opportunity to report their concerns to the responsible office.

The university's International Office manages the international exchange activities, relationships and cooperations of the UOL and provides advice and support to international students, doctoral candidates, postdocs and (guest) researchers.

In the spirit of an open university, procedures and instruments for permeability from vocational to academic education are being developed in the academic competence area of credit transfer (School I). On this basis, the Prior Learning Assessment and Recognition (PLAR) Service, which is part of the Department for Studying and Teaching, advises students on the recognition of competences acquired outside of higher education for study modules and supports them in the creation of recognition portfolios. The Centre for Lifelong Learning (C3L) is home to the Open University department, which designs and implements various formats to further open up the UOL, such as guest studies and the KinderUniversität.

The Study and Career Counselling Service (ZSKB) also provides target group-specific services, but above all aims to take gender equality and diversity aspects into account as cross-cutting issues in all counselling and support services and to practise and continuously develop gender and diversity competence as a natural part of professional counselling.

The Psychological Counselling Service (PCS) for students and the Counselling and Coaching service for employees also address diversity aspects. A detailed description of the existing diversity-related programmes at the UOL can be found in the [UOL's First Self-Report for the Diversity Audit "Shaping Diversity"](#) of the Stifterverband 2020 [in German].

Central governance structures for diversity

The Presidential Board has set up a **diversity committee** to advise, support and assist the Presidential Board in dealing with diversity as a cross-cutting task at the UOL. This committee has a prominent place in the organisation. The committee is composed of representatives from a wide range of different organisational units, making it a forum for initiating, planning and coordinating diversity-related activities across the UOL. By heading and coordinating the committee, the Presidential Board assumes permanent responsibility for dealing with diversity as part of the university's organisational development. Through the participation of diversity officers and interest groups, the perspectives of various UOL member and stakeholder groups are taken into account. For example, representatives of the Staff Council, representatives for severely disabled employees, the Commission for Gender Equality and the AStA and its autonomous departments fulfil an important interface function in the committee.

In accordance with the three-pillar model anchored in the UOL equal opportunities policy, which places gender equality, family friendliness and diversity side by side as equal areas of institutional importance, the diversity committee deals with the cross-cutting issues of diversity and anti-discrimination. The diversity committee deals with gender equality and family issues when they are related with intersectional links.

Decentralised working and governance structures for diversity

Individual schools, institutes and other decentralised organisational units also already have various responsibilities, competencies and resources for diversity as a cross-cutting task or for individual diversity-related areas of responsibility (for example, in School VI - Medicine and Health Sciences with the (project) position of a Gender and Diversity Management Officer). This diversity strategy aims to implement actions to create an inventory and promote

further development of these decentralised governance and working structures on diversity as a cross-cutting issue(see focus area "Diversity in strategy & structure").

Diversity representatives and interest groups

Various interest groups and officers at the UOL have a legal mandate to deal with diversity as a cross-cutting issue or with individual diversity dimensions and fulfil this mandate partly independently and partly on behalf of the Presidential Board or the university as an employer.

In accordance with the Lower Saxony Staff Representation Act, the **Staff Council** ensures that employees are not discriminated against because of their descent, religion, nationality, origin, sexual identity, political or trade union activity or attitude, age, disability or gender. In addition to other tasks in the area of gender equality, it particularly promotes the integration and professional development of employees with a severe disability or migration background and other vulnerable employees. The Staff Council exercises various participation and information rights in this regard and is not bound by instructions in its work.

The **representatives for persons with severe disabilities**, a position which is required by the German Social Code, promotes the integration of severely disabled individuals into the university, represents their interests and provides them with advice and support. They exercise a supervisory function vis-à-vis the university as an employer and applies for measures that benefit people with a severe disability. To this end, they also exercise various participation rights and are not bound by instructions.

In contrast, the **Employer's Inclusion Officer** acts on behalf of the employer, represents the university as an employer in matters relating to severely disabled people and, above all, ensures that the employer fulfils its obligations and supports it in these tasks. The legal basis for this responsibility is also the German Social Code.

The **representative for the interests of students with disabilities or chronic illnesses**, as stipulated in the Lower Saxony Higher Education Act, is responsible for advising and supporting students with health impairments on behalf of the Presidential Board, including aspects such as impairment-related study organisation, support measures and accessibility issues, but also for teaching staff in terms of designing accessible teaching.

According to the Lower Saxony Higher Education Act, universities in Lower Saxony are required to have a **Student Council (AStA)** which represents the student body. On behalf of the student body, the AStA meets its legal mandate to help promote the realisation of the university's objectives, and is therefore also responsible for supporting diversity as a cross-cutting task and for individual diversity-related areas of responsibility (for example with the Department of Social Affairs, inter* trans* counselling, or study-related issues counselling services).

The **AStA's autonomous departments** represent students who are members of a special status group and carry out independent - also diversity-related - tasks for them. These departments include, for example, the Autonomous Feminist Women's and Lesbian Department (FemRef), the University Foreign Students Group (HGAS), the Autonomous Department for Disabled and Chronically Ill Students (BeRef) and the Autonomous Gay Department (SchwuRef).

In addition to the legal provisions, there are other officers in the decentralised area of the UOL who perform diversity-related tasks, such as the internationalisation officers in the schools or the ombudspersons in School V - Mathematics and Natural Sciences.

At the interface between diversity and equal opportunities, the **central gender equality officer** also plays an important role in addressing diversity as a cross-cutting task at UOL. In accordance with the Lower Saxony Higher Education Act, the officer works towards the fulfilment of the university's gender equality mandate and is therefore also responsible for intersectional aspects of gender equality, such as gender equality for women with disabilities or chronic illnesses. Like the staff council and the representative for persons with severe disabilities, the central gender equality officer is not bound by instructions in the performance of their duties.

External networking on diversity

External networking, together with the exchange and cooperation in cross-university, regional and national networks, provides an important contribution to continuous self-reflection, further development and quality assurance. The UOL is active in various external contexts on diversity as a cross-cutting issue:

Since 2014, the UOL has been a signatory to the [Diversity Charter](#) and has thus set itself the objective of recognising and promoting the diversity of its employees and their diverse potential as an employer and creating a working environment that is free of prejudice. Since 2021, the UOL has taken part in the annual nationwide **Diversity Day** organised by Charta der Vielfalt e.V. and decided to participate on a permanent basis in January 2023. It is an active member of the **City of Oldenburg's Diversity Network**, which is open to all Oldenburg companies and organisations that have signed the charter.

At university management level, the UOL participates in **the network of office holders with responsibility for diversity**, in which a professional exchange takes place on current political developments, new research results and the structural anchoring of diversity at universities. At a central working level, the university is involved in the nationwide [Diversity at Universities Network](#), which aims to strengthen diversity and anti-discrimination activities at universities and institutionalise diversity strategies and structures at universities through the exchange of experience and expertise between colleagues.

Diversity-related quality assurance as a cross-cutting task

Internal quality assurance

The implementation and continuous development of the objectives and measures anchored in this diversity strategy requires **coordination, control and regular evaluation** to ensure and continuously improve their quality. Anchoring diversity as a strategic cross-cutting task is a long-term development and learning process that thrives on university-wide exchange and cross-organisational cooperation, but also on the assumption of responsibility and the recognition of professional expertise. In accordance with the *diversity mainstreaming* approach, the university aims to continuously (further) develop **internal quality standards** for the active promotion and organisation of diversity in line with the present strategy for university structures and processes ([see key points on diversity](#)).

Internal quality assurance procedures have already been implemented in a number of diversity-related areas, e.g. for achieving the objectives of the inclusion agreement (by increasing the proportion of people with severe disabilities in the academic field, for example) and increasing the number of international students and the proportion of foreign academic and administrative staff in the UOL's internationalisation strategy ([see Existing strategic approach to diversity & links to other strategies, concepts and processes](#)). These existing processes for individual diversity dimensions are taken into account in the management of this overarching diversity strategy.

This diversity strategy is **evaluated and developed** on a regular basis. The next review is expected in three years' time.

As part of the Presidential Board's overall responsibility, **responsibility for implementing** the objectives and measures set out lies with the entire university, in particular the management level, and specifically with the individual organisational units for their respective areas of work and action. The responsibilities specified for the individual measures include the responsibility to initiate and support the implementation of the measure and to provide

or obtain the resources and specialist expertise required for implementation. The diversity officers and interest groups must be involved in this process in accordance with their legal mandate (see [Structural integration of diversity as a cross-cutting task](#)).

The member of the Presidential Board responsible for diversity is also responsible for coordinating and managing the implementation, evaluation and further development of the diversity strategy and is supported at an operational level by the planning officer specialising in diversity. This is also where **measures on diversity** as a cross-cutting task within central responsibility are **monitored** and the implementation results from the various areas of work on individual diversity dimensions at central and decentralised level are brought together.

Where possible and appropriate, existing **data on various aspects of diversity** will also be used for coordination, management, evaluation and further development, and these will be analysed and processed in line with this strategy, for example to review the implementation of individual objectives and measures. This diversity strategy aims to implement actions to create an inventory and promote further development of different diversity aspects at the UOL, e.g. for demonstrating long-term developments in the area of diversity (Diversity Controlling) (see [focus area "Diversity in strategy & structure"](#)).

Through communication and coordination, joint topic and priority setting, identification and utilisation of interfaces and synergies, the recommendations of the **Diversity Committee** make a significant contribution to internal quality assurance in the area of diversity at the UOL. The implementation of the diversity strategy is monitored through regular reports from the Presidential Board and the various organisational units on the implementation status of the individual objectives and measures, through cross-organisational planning and coordination of diversity activities at the UOL in line with this strategy.

The quality of diversity activities in the sense of the present strategy is ensured at the interface to the area of gender equality by leveraging the long-standing and often institutionalised experience and expertise in **intersectional gender equality work** at the UOL in the now newly institutionalised area of diversity. This is achieved, for example, by including the Central Gender Equality Officer(s) and a representative of the Senate Committee for Gender Equality as members of the diversity committee and by involving the established actors and committees in the field of gender equality on issues relating to intersectional links with gender equality (e.g. women with disabilities) and ensuring that they also remain responsible.

Finally, where possible, the UOL's existing **central management instruments** (e.g. university development planning, gender equality plan, follow-up discussions with the schools on structural planning, system accreditation) are used to support and steer the implementation of the diversity strategy and to further anchor diversity as a strategic cross-cutting task at the university (see [focus area "Diversity in strategy & structure"](#)).

External quality assurance

In addition to safeguarding and developing internal quality standards on an ongoing basis, the UOL actively promotes and shapes diversity with a view to external standards and quality-promoting processes and collaborations in line with this strategy.

As a voluntary commitment of its member universities (including the UOL) that also impacts research funding, the **research-oriented gender equality and diversity standards** of the German Research Foundation (DFG) are an important point of reference for evaluating the UOL's diversity activities, especially as they relate to the research context. The UOL plays an active part in the implementation process of the DFG standards and leverages it where possible and appropriate for quality assurance in the implementation, evaluation and further development of this diversity strategy.

The University of Oldenburg's participation in the **Diversity Audit** of the Stifterverband 2020-2023 provided a starting point as well as the framework for integrating diversity as a cross-cutting task at the UOL in a more systematic, structural and strategic way. The monitoring of this intensive organisational development process by an

external auditor as well as the collegial exchange with other participating German universities in diversity forums of the Stifterverband were important factors for the external quality assurance of the strategic and operational orientation of the UOL in the area of diversity. Against this background, the UOL intends to continue to actively use the exchange forums institutionalised by the Stifterverband for certified universities in the form of annual meetings and workshop discussions for quality-assuring orientation and networking. The UOL is also aiming for re-auditing by the Stifterverband when the certificate expires after three years.

The UOL sees further potential for external quality assurance in the utilisation and further development of its existing **international networks and collaborations** - above all with the Rijksuniversiteit Groningen, Netherlands (also as part of the joint European Medical School) and Nelson Mandela University in Gqeberha, South Africa - for example for the exchange of expertise on strategic and operational diversity activities at the respective universities.

Finally, by participating in various external networks on diversity ([see External networking on diversity](#)) and in other areas of university management the UOL also gains valuable insights for assuring the quality of its diversity activities by way of information exchange, collegial counselling, cross-university reflection and executing projects. Further specialised contexts and mechanisms for external quality assurance exist in the various work areas at the UOL which concern specific aspects of diversity that help continuously review and improve the quality in the overarching area of diversity.

Appendix

Diversity in the context of equal opportunities at the University of Oldenburg, Last revised: June 2022

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Diversity in the Context of Equal Opportunities at the University of Oldenburg

Last revised: June 2022

This policy on Diversity in the Context of Equal Opportunities at the University of Oldenburg was adopted by its Senate on 6 July 2022 and by its Presidential Board on 11 July 2022. The policy was developed as part of the Stifterverband's diversity audit "Shaping Diversity".

Preamble

This document presents the University of Oldenburg's understanding of diversity in the context of equal opportunities. The term "equal opportunities" forms the roof under which the three pillars of gender equality, family friendliness and diversity are institutionalised at the University of Oldenburg. The area of diversity, which was newly focussed on as part of the Stifterverband's diversity audit, is described in more detail below, while the established areas of gender equality and family friendliness are explained in more detail elsewhere.

The University of Oldenburg is firmly committed to **equal opportunities** for all its members, affiliates and guests. It considers constant progress in this area as an indispensable basis for developing talent and potential in studies, research and teaching, as part of its professional actions in administration and transfer and as a contribution to fulfilling its social responsibility and role model function. The university considers anti-discriminatory action as indispensable for successfully promoting equal opportunities. At the same time, it pursues equal opportunities in the knowledge that social inequalities are always (re-)produced at university. So, in this knowledge, the university must always be aware of its own role when it comes to producing exclusions or inclusions in a university context.

The joint commitment to equal opportunities is institutionalised at the University of Oldenburg in the three pillars of **gender equality**, **family friendliness** and **diversity**. These structures are designed to allow all university members, affiliates and guests to participate on an equal footing – regardless of gender, sexual orientation, age, health impairment, ethnic or social origin, educational background, language, religion or ideology and family situation. At universities, there are structural relationships of dependency, particularly between the various status groups, which can have an unequal impact on different social groups. The University of Oldenburg is committed to reflecting on social inequalities at all levels, raising awareness of these inequalities and counteracting structural exclusion. It takes an active stance against all forms of discrimination while taking the interconnections between different forms of social inequality (intersectionality) into account. In this way, the university promotes a participatory, inclusive and less discriminatory environment in which its members can study, research and work successfully.

Gender equality

The University of Oldenburg has a special statutory obligation to create equal opportunities for women and men of all status groups in their different life situations by promoting women, to counteract discrimination on the basis of gender, to work towards the elimination of existing disadvantages and to contribute to the promotion of women's and gender studies. With its successful commitment to promoting women, the UOL focuses on further reducing areas of under-representation, increasing the proportion of women in academic self-administration and organising working conditions and qualification opportunities in a non-discriminatory way. With its *Gender Equality Plan 2020*, the University of Oldenburg has placed its gender equality work on a systematic, transparent and binding long-term footing. The central gender equality officer acts as an independent representative of interests in decisions on gender equality work.

Family friendliness

The University of Oldenburg has made it its mission to consciously organise its working and study conditions in a family-friendly way. It promotes the compatibility of family and career or studies and supports its members and affiliates who provide care and nursing services in various phases of life. Family is understood as a social place in which personal responsibility for other people is assumed regardless of the family relationship. As part of the *family-friendly university audit*, the University of Oldenburg has repeatedly been recognised for its family-friendliness and now holds a permanent certificate.

Diversity

The University of Oldenburg is committed to a culture of diversity and equal, non-discriminatory participation of all its members, affiliates and guests. In addition to the established areas of gender equality and family friendliness, the University of Oldenburg's policy addresses the strategic handling of diversity as part of the university's organisational development. Dealing with diversity is seen as a cross-cutting management task that affects all areas of university development and management, such as studies, teaching and continuing education, research, transfer and promotion of early-career researchers, technology and administration, as well as staff recruitment and development. Actively promoting and organising diversity is a strategic management task which is carried out with the participation of the diversity officers and interest groups at the University of Oldenburg. At the same time, all members, affiliates and guests of the university are called upon to organise their fields of activity with diversity and participation in mind. In order to enable them to achieve this, the university is opening up spaces which help them recognise social inequality and structural exclusion at the university in the present and past and allow them to reflect on their own actions. The University of Oldenburg is thus pursuing the common goal of a diversity-friendly organisational structure and culture at various organisational levels and with the participation of all status groups. It sees itself as a learning organisation that takes a self-critical and error-friendly look at its structures, processes and practices and constantly develops them further.

The starting points for the further development of the strategic approach to diversity are the areas of inclusion, open university and internationalisation already established at the University of Oldenburg. This also draws on the scientific expertise available at the University of Oldenburg in various research areas relating to diversity and social inequality.

For the University of Oldenburg, the **inclusion** of members, affiliates and guests with health impairments is a process of accepting and actively shaping diversity - and thus far more than just fulfilling the legal mandate. All physical and mental impairments are included, regardless of whether they are visible or invisible. The design of accessibility, compensation for disadvantages and inclusive management processes in research, teaching and administration are central elements on the way to a diversity-sensitive and participatory university with a living culture of inclusion.

The University of Oldenburg sees itself as an **open university** that is accessible to a diverse student body, especially students with a vocational background and first-generation academ-

ics. Based on this understanding, it offers target group specific services, counselling and support while promoting lifelong learning. The University of Oldenburg thus actively promotes permeability between the vocational and higher education systems.

At the University of Oldenburg, **internationalisation** is both a practised attitude and a strategic development task. One of the main goals of the University of Oldenburg's *internationalisation strategy* is to continue to increase its international competitiveness and visibility in order to make the university more attractive for international academics and students and at the same time to offer all university members, affiliates and guests a cosmopolitan campus and opportunities for international networking.

The existing areas of work on diversity at the University of Oldenburg are constantly being developed and supplemented by additional subject areas. The University of Oldenburg has set itself the goal to recognise the **gender diversity** of its members, affiliates and guests more strongly and to work towards open, respectful treatment of people who see themselves as trans*, inter, queer or non-binary. The university wants to actively oppose disadvantages and discrimination based on (ascribed) gender affiliation beyond the binary gender model.

The overarching aim of the further development of strategies and measures designed to promote diversity at the University of Oldenburg is to emphasise and strengthen the interaction between the various subject and work areas and to utilise the resulting synergy effects in order to continuously and sustainably improve the framework conditions for studying, researching and working for everyone.