



**EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES POLICY AND ITS IMPLEMENTATION ARRANGEMENTS
AT LITHUANIAN SPORTS UNIVERSITY**

**CHAPTER I
INTRODUCTION**

1. The Equal Opportunities Policy and Its Implementation Arrangements (hereinafter referred to as the Policy) at Lithuanian Sports University (hereinafter referred to as LSU) establish the principles of equal opportunities and the conditions and procedure for their implementation at LSU.
2. The purpose of the Policy is to ensure the equal status of all employees of LSU and those applying for employment, both before and after the conclusion of an employment contract, irrespective of gender, race, nationality, language, origin, social status, religion, beliefs or views, age, sexual orientation, disability, ethnicity, or religion.
3. The Policy is an internal document of the University, binding on all employees. All LSU employees shall be given proper familiarization with the Policy via information and communication technologies. The Policy is publicly available on the LSU website. In performing their duties, employees shall comply with the obligations and principles laid down in the Policy.
4. The University Labour Council has been informed and consulted with regard to the adoption of the Policy.

**CHAPTER II
DEFINITIONS**

5. **Discrimination** means direct or indirect discrimination, harassment, instruction to discriminate on grounds of gender, race, nationality, language, origin, social status, religion, beliefs or views, age, sexual orientation, disability, ethnicity, or religion.
6. **Equal opportunities** mean implementation of the human rights enshrined in international human and civil rights instruments and in the laws of the Republic of Lithuania without discrimination on grounds of gender, race, nationality, language, origin, social status, religion, beliefs or views, age, sexual orientation, disability, ethnicity, or religion.
7. **Violation of equal opportunities** means direct or indirect discrimination, instruction to discriminate, and harassment.

8. **Indirect discrimination** means act or omission, legislation or evaluation criterion, a clearly neutral condition or practice that are formally identical but when implemented or adapted, the actual restriction of access rights or the provision of privileges, preferences or advantages on grounds of gender, race, nationality, language, origin, social status, beliefs or views, age, sexual orientation, disability, ethnicity, or religion appear or may appear, unless such an act or omission, legislation or evaluation criterion, condition or practice is justified by a legitimate purpose, targeted by appropriate and necessary measures.
9. **Harassment** means an act of unwanted conduct which is aimed at offending or offends personal dignity and which is aimed at creating or creates frightening, hostile, humiliating or offensive environment on grounds of gender, race, nationality, language, origin, social status, religion, beliefs or views, age, sexual orientation, disability, ethnicity, or religion.
10. **Social status** means education, qualifications or studies in educational institutions, ownership, income, the need for state support established in legal acts and/ or other factors related to the financial (economic) situation of a person.
11. **Direct discrimination** means treatment of a person less favourably because of the attribute of gender, race, nationality, language, origin, social status, religion, beliefs or views, age, sexual orientation, disability, ethnicity, or religion compared with someone who does not have that attribute, except:
 - 11.1. age limits set by law when justified by a legitimate purpose, which is being pursued by appropriate and necessary measures;
 - 11.2. the statutory requirement to know the state language;
 - 11.3. participation in political activities in cases provided for by law;
 - 11.4. different rights in relation to citizenship established by law;
 - 11.5. special measures established by law in the field of occupational and health safety, employment, and labour market in order to create and apply conditions and opportunities guaranteeing and promoting integration into the labour environment;
 - 11.6. special provisional measures established by law to ensure equality and prevent the violation of equal opportunities on grounds of gender, race, nationality, language, origin, social status, religion, beliefs or views, age, sexual orientation, disability, ethnicity, or religion;
 - 11.7. cases when a specific character trait of a person is a fundamental and decisive vocational requirement due to the particular nature of the professional activities or conditions for their performance when the objective is legitimate and the requirement is proportionate;
 - 11.8. cases when the legal regulation of restrictions, special requirements or certain conditions regarding the social status of a person justify a legitimate purpose, which is being pursued by appropriate and necessary measures.

CHAPTER III
GENERAL PROVISIONS

12. All employees shall be given equal opportunities in the workplace. Recruitment and recruitment procedures shall be determined solely on the basis of individual characteristics of the person and the criteria related to a corresponding position. In all cases, the focus shall be on the ability to do the job well.
13. LSU shall organize work so that all groups of society are represented by its employees, and each employee feels respected and able to apply to the best of his/ her abilities.
14. LSU shall create an environment in which the individual differences and their contribution are recognized and valued. Every employee shall have the right to work in an environment that encourages respect for the dignity of each person.
15. All employees shall have the opportunity to learn, develop their skills and strive for professional progress.
16. LSU shall ensure equal conditions of work for all employees, as well as access to qualification development, vocational training, retraining, practical work experience, and equal benefits, regardless of gender, race, nationality, language, origin, social status, beliefs or views, age, sexual orientation, disability, ethnicity, or religion.
17. All employees shall comply with the Policy in order to ensure equal opportunities and avoid discrimination. Employees shall not discriminate, harass, bully or intimidate other employees on grounds of their gender, race, nationality, language, origin, social status, beliefs and views, age, sexual orientation, disability, ethnicity, or religion, and the latter shall not persecute or take other sanctions against employees who raise unjustified allegations.
18. A breach of the Policy will be considered a breach of employment obligations. Such breaches will be subject to the liability provided for in the Labour Code of the Republic of Lithuania. Cases of discrimination at LSU will be immediately forwarded to the Equal Opportunities Ombudsman or other competent authorities.
19. LSU shall take measures to ensure that an employee who complains of discrimination or participates in a discrimination case, his/ her representative or person certifying and providing explanations of discrimination, is not persecuted and is protected against hostile behaviour or negative consequences.
20. LSU shall take measures to ensure that people with disabilities have access to employment, work, career or training, including appropriate facilities, provided that such measures do not disproportionately impede the duties of LSU.
21. Not all cases of unequal treatment of employees shall be considered as discrimination or any other violation of equal opportunities. The following cases of positive discrimination shall not be considered to be discrimination:
 - 21.1. special protection for women during pregnancy, childbirth and suckling period;

- 21.2. only women shall be subject to the requirements of safety at work, which, in view of the physiological characteristics of women, aim to preserve their health;
- 21.3. certain work that can only be carried out by a person of a particular gender;
- 21.4. statutory age limits, when justified by a legitimate purpose, which is being pursued by appropriate and necessary measures;
- 21.5. statutory requirement to know the state language;
- 21.6. different rights applied to citizenship in cases provided for by law;
- 21.7. special measures established by law in the field of occupational and health safety, employment, and labour market in order to create and apply conditions and opportunities guaranteeing and promoting integration into the labour environment;
- 21.8. special provisional measures established by law to ensure equality and prevent the violation of equal opportunities on grounds of gender, race, nationality, language, origin, social status, religion, beliefs or views, age, sexual orientation, disability, ethnicity, or religion;
- 21.9. cases when a specific character trait of a person is a fundamental and decisive vocational requirement due to the particular nature of the professional activities or the conditions for their performance when the objective is legitimate and the requirement is proportionate.

CHAPTER IV

RECRUITMENT AND REDUNDANCIES

22. The Office of Personnel and Law shall be responsible for the recruitment procedures and employee selection.
23. LSU shall support the diversity of employees and seek to ensure that all applicants are treated fairly and that they are only accepted on the basis of their abilities and qualifications.
24. Only the most suitable applicants shall be selected for a position based on their experience and qualifications.
25. The process of selection of new employees shall be systematically implemented for all positions at all levels. The criteria for all positions shall be clearly defined and described in detail.
26. Job vacancies at LSU shall be published on the Internet portals. Job vacancy notices shall be designed so that all candidates can participate in the selection/ competition for vacancies regardless of their gender, race, nationality, language, origin, social status, beliefs or views, age, sexual orientation, disability, ethnicity, or religion. LSU job vacancy notices shall highlight the commitment to comply with the requirements of equal opportunities.
27. The selection of new LSU employees shall be based on job vacancies, suitability and ability to perform work, and the information obtained from candidates, which shall be related only to qualifications related to workplace requirements.

28. The employees responsible for the selection of candidates, job interviews and their appointment shall be clearly informed about the selection criteria and the requirement to implement equal opportunities policy.
29. All questions addressed to a candidate shall be related to the selection criteria. Personnel participating in the interview shall not ask questions about the candidate's gender, age, sexual orientation, social status, disability, race or ethnicity, religion, beliefs or views; they shall not make assumptions about the role of the candidate at home and in the family insofar as they are not directly related to the guarantees provided to the employees by the Labour Code.
30. The disabled candidates who provide the information about their disability when applying for a vacancy shall be provided with appropriate conditions at the time of the interview (e.g., easy access to interview rooms or services provided by a sign language interpreter) to ensure equal opportunities.
31. After the employment contract with the candidate is signed, the employees of the Office of Personnel and Law shall inform the employee about the information about his/ her marital status to be provided in order to ensure the guarantees provided for in the legislation. The employee may refuse to provide such information. In this case, the employee is informed that, without providing the specified information or documents, LSU will not be able to ensure the guarantees provided for in the legal acts.
32. LSU has the approved criteria for redundancies, which relate exclusively to the qualification of the employee, work performance and other circumstances, including imperative protection, which is established by the Labour Code of the Republic of Lithuania. When taking a decision on the dismissal of an employee, all employees are treated equally regardless of their gender, race, nationality, language, origin, social status, beliefs or views, age, sexual orientation, disability, ethnicity, or religion.

CHAPTER V

EMPLOYEE EDUCATION AND TRAINING

33. Taking into account strategic goals and financial possibilities, LSU shall organize employee education, which:
 - 33.1. improves the understanding of employees about prevalence and harmfulness of discrimination and prejudices related to gender, race, nationality, language, origin, social status, beliefs or views, age, sexual orientation, disability, ethnicity, or religion;
 - 33.2. introduces employees to the direct and indirect nature of discrimination, conditions under which it may occur and the ways it can be avoided;
 - 33.3. familiarizes employees with the existing legislation and their application in the field of equal opportunities;
 - 33.4. helps managers and employees avoid violations of equal opportunities policy and legislation, as well as provides information on conflict resolution.

CHAPTER VI
REMUNERATION ARRANGEMENTS AND PROMOTION

34. LSU shall create equal working conditions for all employees (as far as possible taking into account the work done by the employee), as well as opportunities for qualification and professional development, retraining, acquisition of practical work experience, as well as equal advantages.
35. When determining remuneration for specific employees, LSU shall be guided by exclusively objective criteria related to the qualification of the employee, the level of responsibility of the employee, the nature of the work performed, the results achieved and other objective criteria that are set out in a separate document. The employee's gender, race, nationality, language, origin, social status, religion, beliefs or views, age, sexual orientation, disability, ethnicity, or religion shall not be taken into account in determining remuneration.
36. All employees shall be paid the same salary for the same or equivalent work regardless of the employee's gender, age, sexual orientation, social status, disability, race or ethnicity, religion, beliefs or views. The same work means doing work that, according to objective criteria, is the same or similar to another work so that both employees can exchange positions without high costs of the employer. An equivalent work means that, according to objective criteria, it is as qualified and important to the employer in pursuit of the goals as another comparable work is.
37. The criteria for selection of candidates for promotion relate exclusively to the person's abilities and the quality of work done as well as personal achievements. No employee shall be discriminated on grounds of gender, race, nationality, language, origin, social status, beliefs or views, age, sexual orientation, disability, ethnicity, or religion.
38. Annual employee work performance assessment (or assessment of another period) shall be carried out in accordance with uniform criteria for all employees, regardless of gender, race, nationality, language, origin, social status, religion, beliefs or views, age, sexual orientation, disability, ethnicity, religion or other circumstances that are not related to the employee's occupational performance, professional achievement or personal work results.

CHAPTER VII
**EMPLOYEE PROTECTION AGAINST DISCRIMINATION AND IN CASES OF A BREACH OF
THE PRINCIPLE OF EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES**

39. LSU shall take measures to ensure that the employee is not subjected to harassment or sexual harassment in the workplace; the employee shall not be persecuted or instructed to discriminate; he/ she shall be protected from hostile behaviour or adverse consequences if he/ she has made a complaint about discrimination or participates in a discrimination case.

40. All LSU employees and candidates to fill vacant positions who consider that their equal opportunities have been violated or they have been discriminated, have the right to apply to the Rector and indicate a person who has likely violated or discriminated against employee rights.
41. An employee may also report a breach of the principle of equal opportunities anonymously by leaving a message on the LSU website <https://www.lsu.lt/en/about-university/discrimination-report/>.
42. Information on such a complaint shall be considered confidential and shall not be disclosed to persons who are not related to a possible violation or investigation thereof.
43. The LSU employee responsible, having received a complaint from an employee or a candidate to fill a position about breach of the principle of equal opportunities or discrimination, shall look into the situation and submit a report to the LSU Rector no later than within 15 business days from the receipt of the information.
44. If it is found that an employee has committed a breach of the principle of equal opportunities, the measures provided for in the Code of Academic and Professional Ethics of LSU or other internal legislation may be applied depending on the nature of the violation committed.
45. An employee or a candidate to fill a position may file a complaint to the Equal Opportunities Ombudsman's Office or to another competent institution in case of a breach of the principle of equal opportunities. LSU shall cooperate with the investigating authority.
46. Any persecution or hostility towards an employee or candidate to fill a position who has filed a complaint about discrimination or any other violation of his/ her equal opportunities rights is prohibited and considered a breach of employment obligations which may be subject to the liability provided for in the Labour Code of the Republic of Lithuania.
47. When it becomes apparent that a complaint or notice of a breach of the principle of equal opportunities has been made in order to harm the reputation of another employee, such conduct shall be considered a serious and intolerable breach of employment obligations which may be subject to the measures provided for in the Code of Academic and Professional Ethics of LSU or other internal legislation.

CHAPTER VIII

FINAL PROVISIONS

48. The employer shall appoint an employee responsible for informing other employees about the Policy as well as monitoring the implementation of the Policy.
49. LSU shall use the following equal opportunities policy implementation measures:
 - 49.1. Gender Equality Index;
 - 49.2. audit of the pay gap and its reduction policy;
 - 49.3. work flexibility;
 - 49.4. rules of conduct at work;
 - 49.5. adjustment of LSU infrastructure for disabled employees;

- 49.6. The Policy implementation measures shall be included in the Human Resources Strategy and its implementation measures.
50. The LSU employee responsible for monitoring the implementation of the Policy shall submit a report on the implementation of the present Policy to the LSU Rector in accordance with the approved measures not later than within 1 month after the end of the calendar year.
51. The Policy shall be approved by the Rector's order. It shall be reviewed and, if necessary, updated at least once a year or as a result of changes in the mandatory legislation of this policy area. LSU shall have the right to partially or completely change the present Policy. Employees and other responsible persons shall be introduced to the changes by signing or electronic means.