

MISSION STATEMENT ON GENDER AND DIVERSITY AT LBS

Diversity as a core characteristic of Lauder Business School

1. In comparison with other tertiary educational institutions in Austria, Lauder Business School's (LBS) most striking feature is the high degree of diversity within its student body. Yet, at the same time, the legal situation of Universities of Applied Sciences, the Business School set-up and the location in Vienna create norms which are binding for all LBS members – students, lecturers, researchers and administrators.
2. Our concept of diversity encompasses personality dimensions (e.g. age, gender, sexual orientation, mental and physical abilities, language(s), national origin, religious affiliation, social origin), life circumstances (e.g. residence, education, professional experience, interests, family status, income, leisure behavior, world view, traditions), and organizational framework (position at the institution, tasks, duration and intensity of affiliation). LBS puts individuals and their multiple–changeable and unchangeable–identity features and group belongings center-stage.
3. LBS subscribes to the concept of Diversimilarity. The diverse individual experiences of the people gathering at LBS are pooled with the shared objectives of employability, applicability and innovation in teaching and research. To meet our ambitious goals, organizational cultures constantly have to be challenged. To encourage Diversimilarity, we are seeking to break up homogenous groups on campus and to prompt co-operation based on convergence of interests.
4. LBS creates an inclusive learning environment, which allows students to grow in light of their different experiences, life circumstances, strengths and weaknesses. In this spirit, LBS encourages prospective and current students to develop their abilities, reflect on their interests, and seize career opportunities as part of their degree.
5. Since LBS strives to increase equal opportunities for its members, structures, contents and procedures in teaching (didactics), curriculum development, research and organization are being re-conceptualized against the backdrop of diversity management and gender mainstreaming. Diversity- and gender-sensitive language and representations encompass the visibility of women and men engaging in egalitarian actions. As language shapes meaning, LBS advocates a consistently reflecting and inclusive use of language, which challenges stereotypes in terms of traditional gender roles and identity-based attributions. The use of offensive, derogatory and discriminatory images in oral, written and visual communication is clearly being rejected. Coping with diverse value concepts as well as permanent formal and informal communication on diversity- and gender questions are therefore central.

Diversity and gender as parts of Lauder Business School's research focus

6. As part of its research activities, LBS addresses gender, diversity and inclusion topics. By way of contesting clichéd assumptions on diversity and gender and the questioning of knowledge hegemonies, we are developing applied solutions for diversity- and gender-induced conflicts in management processes.
7. This sensitivity for diversity- and gender-induced power hierarchies is of utmost relevance during the design and execution of research projects. Likewise, this also guides the acquisition of academic literature and data-bases and is advantageous, because the greater the array of topics, theories and research methods, the more novel perspectives can be formed. Similarly, LBS encourages the diversity- and gender-differentiated collection and processing of statistical data. The intercourse between researchers, project participants, target groups and affected people is likewise informed by the principles of diversity management and gender mainstreaming.
8. The transfer of topical research findings into taught courses is a priority at LBS. The presentation of study results and the discussion thereof by our diverse student body serve as indispensable feedback for our researchers. Moreover, the students enrolled in the Masters programs are being co-opted into ongoing projects. This enhances multiperspectivity on research problems and triggers innovation.
9. LBS places great importance on the distribution of study results among the international scientific and management community by means of English-language publications and conference papers. In addition, we organize public talks on diversity and gender issues, which reach out to a larger audience and provide an easy-to-access discussion forum.

Diversity management and gender mainstreaming in the area of human resources

10. Prior to headhunting new employees, we devise detailed staff profiles. We seek to strike a balance between the opportunities and challenges of incorporating novices into the institutional fabric and the necessary adjustments on LBS's part. The rapprochement between new employees and the existing institution is expected to reduce the risks of the similar-to-me effect in recruitment and of conflicts in day-to-day operations.
11. Human resource development and traineeship schemes are significant leverages in order to overcome traditional allocations of disciplines and tasks. For example, LBS deliberately allocates the teaching of management subjects to women and of foreign languages to men and, depending on qualification and proactive training measures, disciplinary boundaries can therefore be transcended. Diversity and gender criteria also inform the staffing of leadership positions.
12. Of no less significance are working hours tailor-made to the individual needs of LBS employees. By means of diversity- and gender-sensitive human resource management, LBS wishes to continue being an attractive employer and thus an attractive destination of studies and research. A dual career service supports employees in their relocation to Vienna and Austria and helps to facilitate compatibility concerning work, partnership and family life.
13. Training to further LBS employees' diversity and gender competence is regularly held, and similar events offered by other institutions are advertised. Diversity and gender issues are simultaneously integrated as a cross-sectional matter into the preparation and execution of various other professional training seminars.

Diversity- and gender-sensitive organizational structures and procedures

14. Diversity management and gender mainstreaming touch upon all fields of activity and procedures at LBS. Owing to LBS's relatively low level of structural complexity, diversity management and gender mainstreaming are not assigned to a designated department. All employees promote and reciprocally urge diversity management and gender mainstreaming on the basis of this mission statement.
15. Decision-making processes concerning the allocation of human and monetary resources undergo an examination based on the principles of diversity management and gender mainstreaming.
16. Diversity- and gender-sensitive quality assurance and controlling safeguard the attainment of these objectives in both day-to-day operations and in the run-up to external evaluations. Furthermore, the students' course evaluation is generally considered to be a key feedback mechanism.
17. Thanks to its singularly diverse campus and corresponding applied research focus, LBS enjoys a strategic edge as a provider of expertise across Austria, Europe and beyond.

Dealing constructively with diversity and gender challenges

18. LBS seeks to raise the awareness for diversity- and gender-related conflicts. Also, diversity management and gender mainstreaming are considered to be instruments for the principled and transparent steering of necessary change.
19. Diversity management and gender mainstreaming are primarily implemented top-down. Nevertheless, they are only effective because tools to avoid and manage conflict have been made available to all LBS members.
20. As diversity- and gender-related challenges are seen to be a learning resource with the objective of an improved management of future conflictual situations, LBS places high value in enabling confidential conversations and auditing mechanisms.