



## Equal Opportunities at TU Braunschweig

TU Braunschweig is in stage 3 within DFG's Research-Oriented Standards on Gender Equality" framework, and has thus implemented a convincing equal opportunity concept for the most part. TU Braunschweig's concept defines target figures as to percentages across the various levels of qualification at both central and faculty level. Currently, the share of women with a doctorate is at 27 %, and 24 % of all professorships are held by women.

TU Braunschweig aims to promote equal opportunities for all genders in the university sector and to reduce structural disadvantages. Women and men should be equally represented in all stages of qualification and employment groups.

The Equal Opportunity Office—Equality Diversity Family—is affiliated with the President's Office. Regarding gender equality as a central task and a cross-sectional effort, the "Gender, Family Working and Diversity Group and Jour fixe", chaired by the President, has been established. The University's management, heads of the faculties and the administration as well as representatives of the group of junior researchers get together regularly to discuss topics such as gender equality, diversity and how to promote the compatibility of studies, career and family. In addition, gender equality is addressed as part of the University's internal audit and quality management.

In 2021, TU Braunschweig received the "Total E-Quality Award" for its equality and diversity-oriented human resource policy for the fifth time. Presently, the "Female Professors Programme III" promotes three professorships. TU Braunschweig's equality concept, which the University submitted in 2018 as part of the the "Female Professors Programme III", was assessed positively. The "Gender Equality Plan" (GEP) of TU Braunschweig was published by the Equal Opportunity Office on a prominent place on the University's website. In June 2022, our University signed the "Diversity Charter".

## **Equality**

To increase the proportion of women on all qualification levels, there are (beside gender-sensitive guidelines for appointment processes for professorships and information about active recruitment) consecutive programmes to support women in science, focusing on STEM subjects: programmes for female pupils and secondary school graduates (step in MINT, Niedersachsen-Technikum), an improved approach and gender-sensitive teaching methods to increase the proportion of women in engineering study programmes (fiMINT Culture), career programs for female students and young female scientists and researchers (Tailored Career, FEMnet), and a mentoring programme for female doctoral students, female postdocs and junior professors (FEMentoring). Since 2022, TU Braunschweig has again been participating in the Femtec Career-Building Programme to establish networks and support female STEM students in business and science. The doctoral scholarships for young female scientists whose completion of their doctorate has been delayed for family reasons or for reasons of particular hardship will also be continued. In addition, female professors who are strongly involved in academic self-government can apply for compensatory funds as part of the “PROfessorin” programme. In this way, TU Braunschweig would not only like to promote the participation of women in academic self-government but also value exceptional commitment.

Coaching and mentoring programmes support the career of female students and junior scientists in particular. In the “Tailored Career” programme (group coaching for female STEM students), female students develop competencies for their professional development and career goals, guided by a coach. The students train important, job-relevant key competencies and participate in discussion groups with experts and leaders from academia and the industry. The mentoring programme for female doctoral students and post-doctoral female researchers addresses young female researchers who have either already completed or a close to finishing their doctorate. The objective of the programme is to support female scientists in their scientific career, to expand their network and to prepare them for academic selection processes. Experienced professors of TU Braunschweig and other universities as well as scientific institutions are on hand to advise the mentees for two semesters.

In order to facilitate exchange, visibility and mutual support, there have been regular network meetings of female scientists at TU Braunschweig with the President since 2021.

## **Diversity**

Together with equality, diversity is a cross-cutting issue that affects all areas and all members of TU Braunschweig. As a component of all fields of action<sup>1</sup> of the University, it is one of the strategic management tasks and is part of the development of strategies as well as organisational and quality goals at TU Braunschweig: e.g. cooperative, project-oriented study formats, intercultural exchange, establishing barrier-free (digital) teaching.

The basis for the development of a diversity strategy at TU Braunschweig is the introduction of a Diversity Impact Assessment (DIA), a close integration of diversity with strategic university development, and the involvement of the Gender, Family Working and Diversity Group and Jour fixe—Equality Diversity Family.

The Equal Opportunity Office promotes student diversity and advises students who face challenges and barriers in their studies. The focus areas vary: students with mental health problems or physical handicaps, international students, “First Generation Students” (focus of 2022), anti-sexism (KNOW MORE campaign). The emphasis is also on intersectionality of diversity: gender, age, ethnicity, religion, social background, physical and mental impairments, sexual identity. The Equal Opportunity Office offers counselling, information and networking services for various target groups and organises diversity mentoring for students of all diversity dimensions for better orientation in their studies and support in everyday university life. (Counselling for students is also offered by AStA (the General Student Committee) and the International House of TU Braunschweig. The University’s offers for international students: e.g. SCOUT—a programme to support and connect international students, language tandems, Bridges4Refugees, and many more.)

The Braunschweiger Centre of Gender Studies promotes gender and diversity competence among students and teaching staff and supports the integration of gender and diversity in studying and teaching.

In cases of discrimination, TU Braunschweig’s technical and administrative staff turn to the Complaints Office (pursuant to the AGG), the Office for Severely Disabled Persons, the Equal Opportunity Office or, in cases of sexualised violence, ombudspersons. Academic staff at TU Braunschweig benefit from the services offered by the International House and from awareness-raising measures such as intercultural competence development.

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<sup>1</sup> Research, study and teaching, transfer, administration, university and personnel development, university management.

Guiding objectives of personnel development include cross-cutting issues such as internationalisation<sup>2</sup> and equal opportunities as well as target group-specific offers that take into account the requirements of different genders and people with family responsibilities and contribute to the integration of people with illnesses and impairments.

## **Family**

In 2022, TU Braunschweig obtained the certificate “Family-Friendly Higher Education audit” for the sixth time and therefore made a commitment to develop and implement permanent measures for balancing family and studies or academia, respectively. In 2017, TU Braunschweig signed the Charta “Families in higher education” and joined the associated Best-Practice-Club, showing its commitment towards the implementation of family-friendly study and working conditions.

When it comes to questions on balancing obligations, the Family Office is the central contact point. It offers counselling for all students and employees. In addition to offerings for parents of young children, the Family Office provides a service for nursing relatives.

TU Braunschweig offers 75 places in a day nursery holiday care and flexible child care all day. On top, several parent-child rooms are available to families and private places, so-called “breastfeeding and feeding stations”, have been set up on campus.

Furthermore, there is a “Dual Career Couples” service teleworking places as well as regulations regarding flexible working hours and short-term options for remote work. In 2016, “Guidelines for family-friendly management” were developed in a participatory process involving all status groups. The construction of a new day care facility is being discussed in order to expand childcare offers.

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<sup>2</sup> Alongside equality and diversity, internationalisation is a central component of the University’s overall strategy. The internationalisation process is seen as a cross-sectional task that is supported by all members of the University and is monitored and governed by the Internationalisation Committee of TU Braunschweig.

In the alignment and implementation of its internationalisation measures, TU Braunschweig is accompanied by the HRK (the German Rectors’ Conference) and will be the first German university to undergo a re-audit<sup>2</sup> process from 2022 to 2025.