

Foreword

I am pleased that you have chosen to read Åbo Akademi University's *Guidelines for Gender Equality, Equal Treatment, Inclusion and Accessibility*. I would like to extend my sincere thanks to everyone who contributed to the development of these guidelines, and to all those who work to ensure that gender equality, equal treatment, inclusion and accessibility are realised throughout our university.

The strength of the university lies in the people who study, conduct research and work here. For everyone to contribute their expertise and develop in their role, we need to provide a study and work environment characterised by equality, respect and equal opportunities. This is not a separate project, but an integral part of our core activities. It affects the quality of our education, research and collaboration and is a prerequisite for a sustainable university.

I am proud that, as part of the action plan for Åbo Akademi University as an employer, we have introduced mandatory anti-racism training for all employees. *The Finnish Institute for Health and Welfare's online course, Anti-Racism for Professionals*, provides us with a shared understanding of what racism is, how it can manifest itself, and how we can counteract it in practice. At the same time, we must remember that a single training course alone does not eliminate racism.

These guidelines point the way forward for our continued work. At the same time, their significance depends on all of us taking responsibility in our daily actions. Through conscious choices, respectful interaction and active efforts to combat discrimination, together we can create a university where everyone feels welcome, included and valued.

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Gunilla Widén, Rector