

Directive of the Rector of Trnava University in Trnava
ON INCLUSION AND EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES AT UNIVERSITY

Article 1 – Introductory Provisions

1. This directive regulates the principles, responsibilities, and support mechanisms in the field of equal opportunities, dignity protection, and support for vulnerable groups (hereinafter "inclusion") at Trnava University in Trnava.
2. Its objective is to ensure a safe, supportive and open environment for all members of the university community, as well as equal and dignified access to education and academic life for all students and staff, in accordance with academic freedom, international standards, Slovak legislation, and the values of the university.
3. Trnava University in Trnava, as a public higher education institution that respects the principles of equality, actively implements measures to promote inclusion and ensures equal access to education, employment, services and opportunities regardless of individual's social, cultural, economic, health, ethnic, or other backgrounds.

Article 2 – Principles of Inclusion

1. Trnava University provides all members of the academic community and other staff with equal opportunities without any discrimination, including but not limited to discrimination based on age, gender, racial or ethnic origin, nationality, religion or belief, disability, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, social origin, marital status, political beliefs, language, nationality, or other status or identity. It also recognises the intersectionality of these factors and their impact on access to education and the workspace.
2. Trnava University actively fosters an environment that promotes equality, inclusion, and respect, while systematically identifying and removing barriers to education, research, and job opportunities. Inclusion is understood as both a process and a goal that requires active measures and continuous evaluation.
3. Trnava University is committed to protecting academic freedom, freedom of expression, freedom of belief, and respecting diverse worldviews, while ensuring that no form of expression is misused to promote hatred, discrimination, or exclusion. Diverse worldviews are respected within the framework of the principles of democratic culture and human rights.
4. Supporting diversity is part of Trnava University's culture, not solely the responsibility of individuals or selected parts of the university. All members of the academics community and staff share responsibility for building a safe, respectful, and inclusive environment.
5. Trnava University maintains worldview neutrality, while promoting diversity of opinions in a manner that does not favour or discriminate against any particular ideology or belief. Measures related to diversity and inclusion are based on principles of human dignity, equality, and science-based knowledge.
6. Trnava University promotes education in the field of diversity, equality, and inclusion for students, teaching staff, and non-teaching staff. Prevention of discrimination, unconscious bias, and microaggressions forms part of professional development and the cultivation of the culture of respect.

Article 3 – Areas of Inclusion

1. Trnava University creates conditions for study, teaching, and research that are fair, accessible and respectful of the individual needs of students and staff. It takes into account various forms of disadvantage, such as health limitations, language barriers, social and economic background, or other specific life circumstances.
2. Every member of the academic community and every employee, has the right to dignified, fair and respectful treatment, regardless of gender, age, racial or ethnic origin, language, nationality, religion or belief, health, sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, worldview, marital status, social or economic origin, or other personal characteristics.
3. Teaching and study materials should be designed inclusively and with cultural sensitivity to minimise unconscious bias and strengthen plurality.
4. Trnava University ensures effective, transparent, and fair mechanisms for handling complaints and reports concerning discrimination, harassment, bullying, microaggressions, or other inappropriate treatment. These mechanisms must be trustworthy, accessible, and safe for all. Individuals submitting reports or providing testimony in cases of discrimination or harassment are protected from any form of retaliation.
5. Trnava University supports inclusive pedagogical approaches, including diverse assessment methods, flexible approaches to assignments and deadlines for students with specific needs, and access to support services (e.g. sign language interpreting, psychological counseling, mentoring, tutoring).
6. The research environment at Trnava University is guided by the principles of ethics, equality, and inclusion. The university promotes participation of marginalized groups in research, ensures their fair representation in research teams and evaluation committees, encourages international collaboration with attention to global responsibility and respect for cultural differences.

Article 4 – Responsibilities of Trnava University and its Constituent Parts

1. The Rectorate, including Vice-Rectors and the Bursar of Trnava University:
 - a) is responsible for allocating and redistributing resources to support inclusion and planning measures in this area,
 - b) manages and coordinates the inclusion policy at the university level and ensures its alignment with the strategic objectives of the university,
 - c) publishes regular reports on the state of inclusion at Trnava University and on measures taken,
 - d) provides professional and psychological counselling and assistance to students and staff, including support for their identity.
2. Faculties of Trnava University and Deans:
 - a) ensure the implementation of measures in the daily academic and work environment within their faculties,
 - b) are responsible for the implementation of inclusive measures in daily study, teaching, and work environments,
 - c) support the education of faculty, staff, and students in the field of diversity and inclusion.
3. Coordinator for Students with Specific Needs:

- a) manages and addresses individual student requests, communicates with faculty, and provides guidance on university and faculty regulations to ensure inclusion of students with specific needs,
 - b) proposes adjustments to study and ensures communication with faculty,
 - c) collaborates with technical and administrative units to ensure physical and digital accessibility.
- 4. Student Representatives
 - a) represent the students in proposing Trnava University management measures to improve inclusion,
 - b) provide feedback and inform the management of Trnava University about the needs of diverse groups of students (e.g. international students, students from minority backgrounds, student–parents, LGBTI+ students, and others).
- 5. All Trnava University Staff
 - a) share responsibility for creating a respectful and fair environment,
 - b) are entitled to actively participate in educational activities in the field of inclusion and report shortcomings or risks,
 - c) are obliged to act in accordance with this directive, the Statute of Trnava University in Trnava, the Code of Ethics of Trnava University in Trnava, other internal regulations of Trnava University in Trnava, and applicable laws.

Article 5 – Reporting and Support Mechanisms

1. Contact and support options:
 - a) Trnava University staff and students may contact the following bodies if their rights under this directive are violated:
 - Coordinator for students with specific needs for specific study adjustments, support related to disadvantages or environmental barriers,
 - Ethics Committee for formal and informal reports, investigation and recommendation of measures,
 - Rector of Trnava University.
 - b) Reports may be submitted:
 - in person,
 - by email.
2. Trnava University guarantees that all reports will be handled discreetly and confidentiality will be maintained. Protection against retaliation or disadvantage for submitting a report or providing testimony will be ensured.
3. Reports will be addressed impartially, professionally, and fairly, with appropriate corrective and preventive measures implemented. In cases of serious violations, the university will adopt systemic measures, including policy adjustments, training, or internal process changes.

Article 6 – Evaluation and Revision

1. The effectiveness of measures will be periodically evaluated through anonymous surveys, feedback, and statistics on received reports. Evaluation results will be included in Trnava University's Annual Report, which will also include recommendations for improvement.

2. Trnava University will transparently publish selected data on the implementation of this directive in anonymized form (e.g., number of reports, training topics, recommended systemic changes, etc).

Article 7 – Respecting the Identity of Specific Faculties

1. Faculties, as units with specific focus, operate in accordance with their mission and internal regulations.
2. No measures under this directive may be interpreted in a way that:
 - interferes with teaching, research or internal faculty life contrary to its mission;
 - compels staff or students to act against their beliefs, provided that no applicable Slovak law is violated.
3. Faculties ensure respect, fairness, and protection of the dignity of all members of the academic community, while maintaining their autonomy.

Article 8 – Protection of Freedom of Opinion and Belief

1. Every member of the academic community has the right to freely express opinions, philosophical, ideological, religious, or secular beliefs – including conservative, traditional, liberal, progressive, or other values – and to be treated with dignity and fairness regardless of their beliefs, identity, or status.
2. The university ensures that no individual is compelled to participate in activities or expressions that conflict with their conscience or beliefs.
3. Freedom of opinion must be exercised in a cultivated manner and must not be used to insult, ridicule or humiliate others.
4. The university actively supports plurality of opinions and fosters a space for dignified and open dialogue without ideological domination.
5. Freedom of expression at the university is exercised in accordance with Slovak law, in particular the Constitution of the Slovak Republic and the Penal Code, and does not include expressions that:
 - incite violence, hatred, or discrimination based on race, nationality, religion, sexual orientation, or other status,
 - contain offensive, dehumanizing, or degrading statements toward individuals or groups,
 - spread false or harmful information intending to harm members of the academic community.

Article 9 – Final Provisions

1. This directive is binding for all employees and students of Trnava University.
2. The implementation of this directive is overseen by the Rector of Trnava University.
3. This directive comes into effect on 1 September 2025.

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Rector of Trnava University in Trnava

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