

# Gender Equality Plan

Aeres University of Applied Sciences

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Final



# Versioning

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0.1	05-07-2022	Arjan ter Horst	Draft
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# 1 Introduction

The Aeres University of Applied Sciences (Aeres UAS) stands for her societal contribution by delivering future-oriented professionals. These professionals are capable of making decisions in complex environments within an ever changing world. This also reflected within the mission statement of Aeres.

**Learning is the engine of growth and change. Whether you're at school, University, or working, Aeres constantly motivates you to develop even further. We challenge you to keep learning and to develop your knowledge and skills in working with 'life'. Hence our slogan, 'Talent for Growth!'**

The Netherlands is a leading country in the world in knowledge and expertise on food, living environment and the green sector. International themes such as world food security and a liveable environment are high on the agenda. Global developments lead to an increasing need for professionals in these fields. We believe that co-operation between organisations, professionals and students will broaden the knowledge base, which in turn paves the way for meaningful solutions for the future. Based on the cohesion between pedagogy, societal, environmental and philosophical choices, we demonstrate our social responsibility within society.

## Gender equality

Gender equality is a fundamental human right and as such Aeres UAS finds itself responsible for a safe environment for both students and staff. An environment where students and staff feel at home and are treated equally. Irrespective of their gender and other demographic characteristics. Consequently, the Executive Board of Aeres adopted a gender policy already in 2009<sup>1</sup>. Within this document we further specify the current and future operationalisations of Aeres UAS' gender policy.

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<sup>1</sup> 'Gender beleid Aeres groep'  
<https://www.aereshogeschool.nl/over-aeres-hogeschool/publieke-verantwoording>

## 2 Dedicated resources

Aeres UAS is a strong advocate of a healthy balance in work and life. Employees can benefit from various possibilities in order to develop or maintain a good work-life balance. For example, employees can gain temporarily more time for important private matters via:

- Pregnancy and maternity leave
- Care leave including informal care tasks
- Adoption leave
- Parental leave
- Sustainable deployment

The process of implementation and further development of the Gender Equality Plan (GEP) is embedded within the Quality Assurance department of Aeres UAS. By means of developing and structural monitoring of Key Performance Indicators (KPI's) with periodic audits, the Quality Assurance department secures the organisation wide implementation of the GEP.

### 3 Measures against gender-based violence including sexual harassment

The Aeres UAS implemented several preventive and curative measures regarding gender-based violence and sexual harassment. These are embedded within the broader scope of measures ensuring a safe and connected community of employees and students.

At Aeres UAS employees have the possibility to consult with a confidant(e). The ratio of female and male confidant(e)'s is actively monitored to be 50%. Policies on (gender based) violence are already implemented including regulations for an informer in case the complaints regulation and mediation with a confidant(e) did not result in the required effect.

## 4 Training and capacity building

Employees have the possibility to consult with a coach on their life balance. Aeres UAS also offers the possibility to follow (online) courses for employees on gender equality and unconscious prejudices. Next to the individual coaching Aeres UAS facilitates:

- Company fitness plans
- Sports at work
- Free health check

In addition, Aeres UAS offers employees the possibility to follow courses in the 'GoedBezig' programme. These courses capitalize on personal development and work-life balance. The programme changes over time, based on the organization's needs. Examples are:

- Preventing physical complaints
- Staying in control with changes in workload
- Grow your personal strength
- Effective time management
- Become effective with MS Office

All employees at Aeres UAS are annually granted time to spend on personal development.

## 5 Data collection and monitoring

Aeres UAS collects and monitors gender related data annually for the institution's annual social report. Data is disaggregated for students and employees. Regarding the latter, data is categorized for different positions. These data form part of the input for discussing gender balance regarding leadership and decision-making positions at Aeres UAS.

At Aeres UAS there is sustained balance over the last three years with 51.2% female employees in 2019, 50.4% in 2020 and 54.7% in 2021. In Figure 1, the percentages of male and female employees in different positions at Aeres UAS is shown. The executive board of Aeres UAS consists of two male members. Furthermore, there is a noticeable larger number of female employees within the board of directors and management positions (i.e., 66.7% and 59.1% respectively). Within our student population we notice a relative constant percentage of female students over the years, see Figure 2.

Note: registering as gender neutral in the HR system and student information system is possible since 2021.

Having a gender-balanced institution is a key objective of Aeres UAS in which female and male employees have equal access to leadership- decision making positions. Although the executive board consists of only two male members, the board of directors and management consist of 66.7% and 59.1% of female employees, respectively.

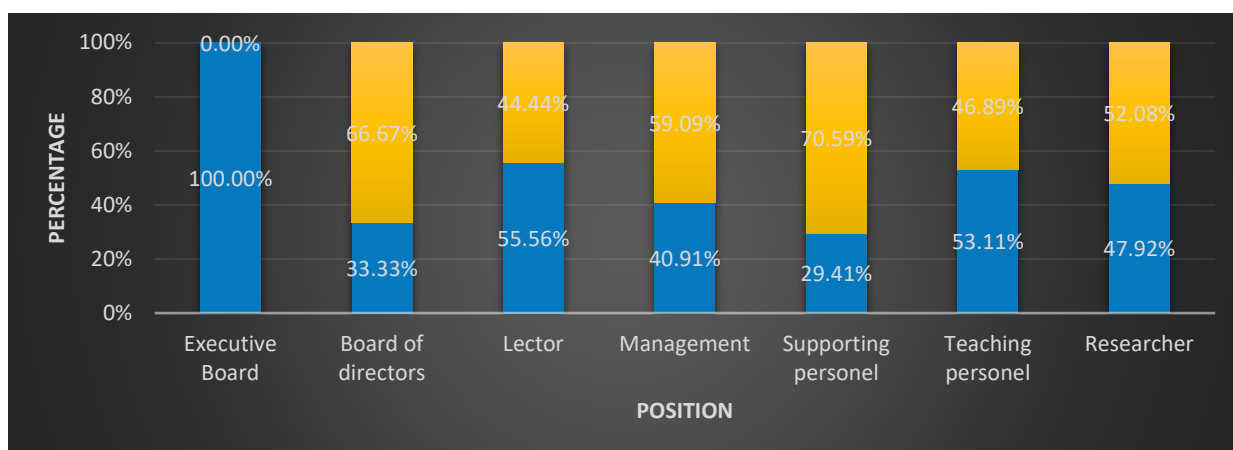


Figure 1: Percentages of female and male employees for different positions within Aeres UAS. Blue = Male, Yellow = Female, Red = Gender neutral

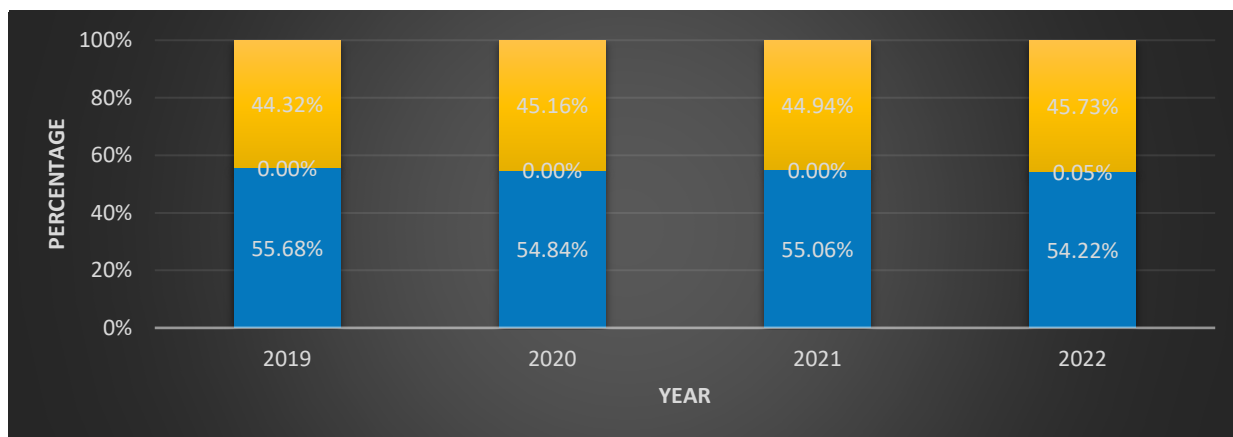


Figure 2: Overview of female and male students over the past years at Aeres UAS. Blue = Male, Yellow = Female, Red = Gender neutral



## 6 Gender balance in leadership and career progression

Aeres UAS is wholeheartedly committed to the Dutch law, including the AWGN (Algemene wet gelijke behandeling)<sup>2</sup>. This law states that, as an employee, we will not discriminate on the grounds of religion, belief, political opinion, race, gender, nationality, heterosexuality or homosexual orientation or marital status. In the context of gender, we therefore state that no distinction will be made at Aeres UAS on the grounds of gender during recruitment and selection for a position, acceptance and termination of a position, terms and conditions of employment, promotion and education and training. We may, however, give preferential treatment to the under-represented gender in case of equal suitability, based on the unbalanced composition of a team.

The above is also described within our protocols on recruitment and selection that are in line with the Dutch code of conduct of the 'Nederlandse vereniging voor personeelsbeleid' (NVP)<sup>3</sup>.

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<sup>2</sup> <https://wetten.overheid.nl/BWBR0006502/2020-01-01>

<sup>3</sup> <https://kmt.nvp-hrnetwerk.nl/download/?id=28144>

## 7 Integration of the gender dimension into research and teaching content

The Aeres UAS aims at being a social responsible organisation in which gender awareness and -equality within research and education are successfully integrated. As a consequence, there is no situation in which gender (or any other demographic characteristic) plays a formal role in a decision process. Even more, in line with our gender policy this is not allowed and employees are also urged to be mindful of any subconscious biases on that matter.

One of the focus points of Aeres UAS is the strong mutual social connection between students and staff. This is structurally embedded within the organisation by means of small classes, a dedicated coach per class and social gatherings within and between groups of students. This strong social network, together with professional supervision from teachers ensures that students feel safe, are adequately supported when in need and are taught to develop their social skills.

## 8 What will Aeres UAS do to further improve gender equality?

Gender equality will continue to be one of the key objectives of Aeres UAS. Consequently, we will further embed and update gender equality within the policies and regulations. By doing so, and expanding on the current possibilities regarding training and awareness on gender equality, Aeres UAS will secure a safe environment for all genders.

A Gender & Diversity Roadmap is being developed at Aeres UAS. The aim of the roadmap is to structurally develop gender awareness throughout the organisation. One concrete example of an operationalisation is the integration of gender awareness- and gender equality will become part of the quality assurance cycle. Data monitoring of specified indicators will be part of that implementation. In addition, Aeres UAS realises that having formal procedures and organisational structures in place regarding gender equality, does not ensure actual gender equality within the organisation or between persons. Consequently, Aeres UAS will also include structural plans to improve awareness regarding gender equality within the Gender & Diversity Roadmap.

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