



Equality Plan 2026–2029

General Upper Secondary School of Turun normaalikoulu

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1. Background and basis for the equality and non-discrimination work at Turun normaalikoulun lukio

The Equality Plan of Turun normaalikoulun lukio is a tool to support the promotion of equity and equality at the general upper secondary school. *Equality* refers to gender equality in Finnish legislation as well as the elimination of discrimination based on gender identity and gender expression. In this Act, *gender identity* refers to a person's experience of one's own gender (Equality Act, section 3). *Non-discrimination* means that different groups of people are of equal worth. The Equality Plan supports the realisation of equality in learning in the organisation of education, in reducing differences in learning outcomes, in the assessment of completed study units, and in preventing and eliminating sexual harassment, gender-based harassment and racism. This work is continuous and systematic, and it forms part of the quality management at our general upper secondary school.

2. Legislation

Section 6 of the Non-Discrimination Act states that “an education provider and the educational institution it maintains must assess the realisation of non-discrimination in their activities and take the measures required to promote it. The promotion measures must be effective, appropriate and proportionate, taking into consideration the educational institution's operating environment, resources and other circumstances. The education provider must ensure that the educational institution has a plan for the measures needed to promote non-discrimination.”

Under the Act, the students of the institution and their guardians must be given an opportunity to be heard on the promotion measures.

The Act on Equality between Women and Men (the so-called *Equality Act*) states that the education provider is responsible for the institution-specific Equality Plan drawn up annually. It is drawn up in cooperation with staff and students (Act on Equality between Women and Men, section 5). The Equality Plan must contain 1) an account of the equality situation at the institution, 2) the measures needed to promote equality and 3) an evaluation of the implementation and results of the measures included in the previous Equality Plan. The Equality Plan must pay particular attention to student admissions, the organisation of teaching, differences in learning outcomes and assessment of study performance, as well as to preventing and eliminating sexual harassment and gender-based harassment. The plan may be drawn up for a maximum of three years at a time.

The purpose of the Equality Plan is to safeguard equal treatment and to prevent discrimination of all kinds (including on the basis of age, origin, nationality, language, religion, belief, opinion, political activity, disability, trade union activity, sexual orientation and other personal characteristics).

Direct discrimination based on gender is defined in the Act (Equality Act, section 7) as treating women and men differently on the basis of gender, treating someone differently for reasons of pregnancy or childbirth, or treating someone differently on the basis of gender identity or gender expression. *Indirect discrimination based on gender*, in turn, means treating someone differently by virtue of a provision, criterion or practice that appears to be gender-neutral in terms of gender, gender identity or gender expression, but where the effect of the action is such that the persons may actually find themselves in a less favourable position on the basis of gender. In addition, indirect discrimination based on gender means treating someone differently on the basis of parenthood or family responsibilities.

The Act defines sexual harassment and gender-based harassment separately. *Sexual harassment* means means verbal, non-verbal or physical unwanted conduct of a sexual nature by which a person's psychological or physical integrity is violated intentionally or factually, in particular by creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive atmosphere. *Gender-based harassment* means means unwanted conduct that is not of a sexual nature but which is related to the gender of a person, their gender identity or gender expression, and by which the person's psychological or physical integrity is intentionally or factually violated and an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive atmosphere is created. (*Equality Act, section 7*)

The action of an educational institution or any other body providing training or education shall be deemed to constitute discrimination prohibited under this Act if a person is treated less favourably than others on the basis of gender in student selections, the organisation of teaching, the evaluation of study performance or in any other regular activity of the educational institution or body, or is otherwise treated in the manner referred to in section 7. (*Equality Act, section 8 b*)

3. Evaluation of the state of equality and non-discrimination at the school

The values of Turun normaalikoulu are equality, community, safety, multilingualism and the joy of learning. In the school's strategy for 2026-2030 ([link to the strategy](#)), an equitable learning environment is defined as a safe and calm place where everyone can learn and be themselves. Everyone is treated according to the same principles and with equal respect, and everyone is heard. Equality is seen as the ability to meet another person as a human being and to recognise one's own sense of belonging. Equality is about respecting diversity.

In everyday school life, a sense of community means that all members of the school are on the same side. Others are supported in everyday challenges, and everyone is included. At school, everyone should feel that they are part of the school and be aware that they can influence school matters. Everyone is included in shared events and things are done together. Safety is seen and felt at school in the fact that everyone can feel safe and accepted as themselves. Safety at school is created by trust in the members of the community, shared rules and the acceptance of difference. Everyone is met openly and

discriminatory behaviour is addressed. The school ensures that the physical and psychological working environment is safe for everyone, as a safe atmosphere allows everyone to focus on learning

The Equality Plan of Turun normaalikoulun lukio has taken shape over several years, by recording and refining matters we share. The Equality Plan has taken shape over several years through documenting and clarifying matters that concern the whole school community. Students, teachers, subject-teacher trainees and the school's other staff keep an open mind towards new knowledge and learning. At our school, non-discrimination means that everyone must be treated equally and without discrimination. For every member of the school community, equal treatment means that we get along with everyone and can work with everyone. If something related to equal treatment or non-discrimination is unclear, members of the school community know whom to turn to, or whom to guide a friend to, among the teaching staff who can then take the matter forward. The challenge in equal treatment and equality lies in putting shared practices into words and practice. The general upper secondary school aims to create practices that are easy to adopt, regardless of different cultural backgrounds.

3.1 Measures to promote equality

3.1.1 Student admissions

At Turun normaalikoulu, students study both the national curriculum and the international IB Diploma Programme curriculum. Both programmes are, as a rule, three years long. For both programmes, students are selected through Opintopolku. Each year, 52 new students are admitted to the national programme (minimum entry average: 7.5) and 30 students to the IB programme (minimum weighted average: 8.0, with mathematics and English given additional weight). Applicants may also apply to the IB programme through discretionary admission in Opintopolku if they do not have a school-leaving certificate from a Finnish comprehensive school. In that case, they must take an entrance examination in both English and mathematics. Applicants seeking a place during the academic year may be admitted if there is space and the student can demonstrate the skills and competence needed in general upper secondary studies.

3.1.2 Assessment of study performance

Every student has the right to fair and equal assessment. Teachers discuss shared assessment principles with the other teachers who teach the same module. At the beginning of each period, the teacher agrees on assessment together with the students. Teaching methods and assessment aim to be varied, flexible and to offer choice, so that students with differing needs have an equal opportunity to demonstrate their competence. Assessment must be transparent and understandable. The objectives of assessment are discussed with the students

throughout the study unit. In all assessment discussions, students take part in assessing their own work and learning progress.

If shortcomings are identified in the assessment, the student first discusses the matter with the teacher who assessed the study unit. If the student feels that they have been assessed unfairly, they may turn to the principal of the general upper secondary school. If they also consider the principal's decision unfair, they may appeal to the head principal of Turun normaalikoulu. A decision by the head principal may be appealed to the Dean of the Faculty of Education at the University of Turku.

3.1.3 Diverse learners at Turun normaalikoulun lukio

Turun normaalikoulun lukio takes diverse learners into account from the outset when planning teaching and in lessons, through a range of pedagogical choices. Every student has the right to receive support and help with learning difficulties, regardless of the underlying causes. A wide range of learning methods and materials is used, and differentiation is applied in both directions. Students can obtain low-threshold support for their studies, for example at the weekly homework club, from a peer tutor, from student teachers, and as remedial teaching from their subject teacher. Remedial teaching may also be done proactively. Students have access to full-time support by a special education teacher in all matters relating to their studies. Where appropriate, a student may be given extra time to complete assessed tasks and a separate room for examinations and working. The school also provides textbooks in plain language, dictionaries, headphones and screens for classrooms.

If a student, or the guardian of a student in compulsory education, notices shortcomings in how diverse learners are treated:

- they can contact a subject teacher, the homeroom teacher or the special education teacher at a low threshold.
- The teacher raises their observations with the student (and, where relevant, the guardian) and, if necessary, discusses the matter with the subject teacher and the special education teacher.
- If the student or the guardian does not feel that the shortcoming has been remedied, they may turn to the principal of the general upper secondary school. If the shortcoming is still not remedied after the principal's decision, they may appeal to the head principal of Turun normaalikoulu. A decision by the head principal may be appealed to the Dean of the Faculty of Education at the University of Turku.

Turun normaalikoulun lukio is partially accessible. Students with reduced mobility need assistance with the internal doors between different sections of the upper secondary school.

3.2 Evaluation of the implementation and results of the measures included in the previous Equality Plan

The Equality Plan of Turun normaalikoulu has been drawn up and updated in cooperation with general upper secondary school students and teachers. The school's Equality Plan was drawn up in the 2023 academic year. It was based on a survey conducted by the City of Turku among its general upper secondary schools. The realisation of non-discrimination is assessed annually on the basis of surveys carried out by various organisations (the City of Turku's recurring survey, the School Health Promotion Study by THL, the Upper Secondary School Student Barometer and the school's own surveys). Based on the results, we update our practices in order to promote equality and eliminate discrimination. The University of Turku's Equality Plan (<https://www.utu.fi/en/university/programmes-and-policies/equality-plan>) applies to teachers and other staff.

In spring 2025, students responded to THL's School Health Promotion survey. Based on the results, the implementation of our Equality Plan and any measures that might be needed were evaluated together with the teachers and the student council. In the survey, our students raised the practice of religion and equal treatment of languages as the central issues. Our school has no facilities available for prayer, which causes upset, especially during Ramadan. Running a Finnish-language general upper secondary school alongside an English-language IB programme creates challenges for everyday communication. The aim is to communicate continuously in both Finnish and English, to the young people and to their guardians. In addition, absences and their impact on assessment have prompted discussion among students, trainee teachers and teachers alike, and teachers have been given guidance on this. Shortcomings in accessibility have also led to certain measures, but the owner of the property has not fitted the internal doors with electric openers.

Students had paid attention to various visible cultural matters. Because of the multicultural nature of our school, students have hoped for greater visibility of national celebrations on the school premises. We have given students, and especially the student council, opportunities to decorate the upper secondary school floor during the various festive seasons. In addition, students have had the opportunity to paint a world map on the wall, display the flags of all the countries they come from, and paint the flags of their home countries in the shape of flowers on one of the walls. The Day of Cultures, organised by the students every year on the last Friday of the academic year, is another concrete example of new traditions created on the basis of feedback.

We promote the realisation of equality and non-discrimination by following the general upper secondary school's [Opiskelijana Norssissa guidelines](#). The page contains practical instructions as well as a link to the school rules, which have been approved by the Dean of the Faculty of Education. In unclear and potentially emotive situations, it is easier to look at what has been agreed together. If an unclear matter is new and unprecedented, it can be discussed between the various parties at our general upper secondary school (the student council, teachers' meetings). A direct

discussion with a teacher, the homeroom teacher and/or the vice-principal or principal of the general upper secondary school can also be a starting point for resolving an unclear matter.

4 Measures to promote equality and non-discrimination in 2026–2029 and their monitoring

In matters of equality and non-discrimination at the school, everyone must feel that they are treated fairly and with respect. Our school's primary objective is to safeguard equal treatment and to prevent discrimination of all kinds (including on the basis of age, origin, nationality, language, religion, belief, opinion, political activity, disability, trade union activity, gender, sexuality or other personal characteristics). Our work to prevent bullying and discrimination will continue. It is important that teachers, students and student teachers are aware of what discrimination means and of the different forms it can take. We must also have the ability and courage to intervene in cases of discrimination. Every adult at the school has an educational responsibility. Teachers, staff and student teachers intervene effectively in hate speech and mockery, and seek open discussion. Events that create team spirit and a positive atmosphere (for example the Well-being Day on the first day of the third period and the Day of Cultures on the last day in spring) will be continued, and active participation in them is encouraged. Homeroom teachers actively ask their students how they are doing and seek to build a strong bond and make it easy for students to talk to them. Each year, we use the Timeout (Erätauko) dialogue to support young people's ability to listen to others and discuss matters relating to their lives in an appreciative and respectful manner.

In spring 2026, students designed their own school-specific survey on equality and non-discrimination. The survey was carried out in both Finnish and English, and it was answered by first- and second-year students at the upper secondary school. The survey responses are included as an appendix.

In the spring 2026 survey, the responses of students in the national programme and the IB programme differed in some respects. Students in the national programme felt that students at the upper secondary school are treated equally (70% answered "yes"), whereas among students in the IB Programme, 24% answered "yes" and 63% felt that students are mostly treated equally.

1. Lukiomme kaikkia opiskelijoita kohdellaan yhdenvertaisesti. (N = 64) Do you feel that all students are treated equally at this school? (N = 86)

	National programme	IB programme
Yes, always	45	21
Mostly	7	51
Sometimes	2	12
Rarely		2
Total	64	86

Students in the national programme had not experienced or witnessed bullying (89%), whereas IB students reported having seen more bullying: only 36% of respondents felt that they had not encountered bullying, either directed at themselves or at someone else. The bullying they had experienced most often concerned matters related to nationality or ethnicity or to gender.

2. Oletko ollut läsnä (kiusaamistilanteessa) tai onko sinua kiusattu lukiossa? (N = 64)
Have you ever witnessed or experienced discrimination at school? (N = 85)

	National programme	IB programme
Ei/No	57	31
En ole varma/Not sure	5	28
Kyllä/Yes	2	26
Total	64	85

Everyone's experience was that teachers usually, or at least sometimes, intervene in bullying situations, and that they also know who to talk to about it. Most students feel safe at our general upper secondary school, but here too, the responses of IB students were more varied than those of students in the national programme.

6. Tunnetko olevasi turvassa koulussamme? (N = 64)
Do you feel safe being yourself at school? (N= 84)

	National programme	IB programme
Usein/Mostly	18	39
Kyllä, aina/Yes, completely	45	34
Joskus/Sometimes	1	10
Not really		1
Total	64	84

In the open-ended responses at the end of the survey, positive feedback was given on the work done at our school to promote equality and non-discrimination.

3. Haluatko jakaa kommentteja ja/tai kokemuksia yhdenvertaisuusasiasta?
Any other comments or experiences you want to share?

- I think it's nice to be at this school and I haven't seen/noticed or experienced bullying at the school.
- The school never made me feel threatened!
- I feel like this school is way more discrimination free than my old school and I'm happy to be here.
- I had a great year thank you
- I got dead named against my will so many times even though I specified my chosen name before school started and thus got personal identity stuff outed publicly.

Based on this survey, in August 2026, homeroom teachers talked with the second- and third-year students who responded to the survey about what they would like the school to focus on in promoting equality and non-discrimination.

The young people's responses highlighted a desire for joint events involving students from the national programme and the IB programme, where they could get to know one another. It was felt that this would foster a greater sense of unity within the school and thus reduce any disagreements that might exist amongst the young people.

Furthermore, particular attention must be paid to the inappropriate experiences reported by international IB students.

The school encourages the students to recognise their personal values, attitudes and resources. Students are guided towards a range of choices without following gender-bound role models, and towards approaching their future and their own goals with an open mind. Teaching at the general upper secondary school respects the individuality of each person and is gender neutral. The learning community supports everyone's growth and the development of their gender identity. For example, a student can enter the first name they wish to use in Wilma.

If shortcomings or discriminatory behaviour are observed, the matter is raised without hesitation:

- Student: raises the matter with any adult, who will take it forward
- The guardian contacts, as appropriate, a subject teacher, the homeroom teacher, the study and careers adviser, the special education teacher or the principal.
- Teacher: contacts, depending on the situation, the student, the guardian, a teacher or the principal
- Teacher trainee: contacts their supervising teacher, the teacher assisting the principal (ravustaja), the coordinator or the principal responsible for teaching practice.

The Equality Plan of Turun normaalikoulu is updated based on the results of surveys conducted among students or when legislation changes. For example, recognising harassment or bullying can be challenging for young people of different ages and from different backgrounds. Experiences of harassment and bullying are subjective experiences. The aim is therefore to increase the ability of the whole school community to recognise different emotions and situations, and to learn to respond to different situations.