



# Center Strategic Plan (2020-2025)<sup>1</sup>

## Overview

The new world order has finally arrived to where real change happens. Universities worldwide are adapting and reforming their internal structures as more awareness around gender equality is being brought to the forefront, and rightfully so. At MUBS, we are following suit in reshaping our policies to ensure gender equality in the workplace and in our classrooms. We recognize the significance of gender diversity among our staff and students, as part of our greater objective to ensure fair treatment among its fellows regardless of race, gender, ethnicity, disability, or religion without privilege, bias or discrimination. Accordingly, MUBS Equality & Sustainability (E&S) Center co-funded by the Free Erasmus+ project was established in October 2020 .

Time and time again, workplace diversity has led to a working environment that is culturally rich, socially engaged and vibrantly creative thanks to valuable contributions from a significant talent pool removed from bias or prejudice. Specifically, it is through the hard work and dedication of women as heads of departments, staff members, senior researchers and lecturers in all fields that MUBS continues to provide quality education to its family of students. Here at MUBS, we are dedicated to ensuring candidates and employees are treated based on their talents, expertise and steadfast commitment to our values, never on their gender or background.

It is among our objectives to educate and raise awareness among our students and staff members on the importance of gender equality, as part of our mission to cultivate a culture of respect to all fellow humans as we share this world together. MUBS seeks to provide equal opportunities to all its staff members and instructors, as well as increase women visibility and engagement in decision-making committees and managerial roles. We are ecstatic to see our campuses and classes, brimming with students and staff from all gender backgrounds as they are allowed to comfortably lead their lives with equal opportunity, and utmost respect.

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**The vision** of the equality & sustainability center is to play a leadership role in endorsing gender equality, diversity, and female empowerment for academic excellence and institutional sustainability.

**The mission** of the E&S center is to ensure MUBS's commitment to gender equality, diversity and female empowerment and to support the University's sustainable pledge to generate and to encourage an inclusive and diverse community of faculty, administrators, staff, and students.

**The objectives** of the center are in line with the Free Erasmus+ project specific objectives and include:

- Empowering female academics and professionals through training workshops organized at MUBS
- Enhancing gender equality and a sustainable egalitarian organizational culture at MUBS.
- Advising faculty, students, staff, and administrators on gender equality and diversity issues as well as on problems regarding discrimination and harassment.
- Communicating with similar centers at partner universities and exchanging best practices in gender equality.
- Implement a consistent and uniform procedure for responding to and resolving internal gender equality complaints
- Serving as an informational resource to faculty, staff, students and the community on gender equality issues
- Developing a generation of female academics characterized by power, higher levels of self-confidence, self-esteem and self-actualization
- Developing research and innovation related to Gender Issues at MUBS and in coordination with other similar centers in Lebanon and in other countries.
- Achieving higher percentages of female academics in MUBS workforce and achieving better representation at the entry, middle and senior levels.



## Five Strategic Priorities

MUBS will focus on five key strategic priorities that would bring the university closer to its goals of providing fair opportunities for all while creating gender-aware working conditions without discrimination or prejudice:

1. **Leadership and Governance**
2. **Employment Conditions**
3. **Mending the Gender Pay Gap**
4. **Safe Working Environment**
5. **Women's Career Advancement**



# 1. Leadership and Governance

## Leadership accountability and governance opportunities for women

Aim	Strategies & Measures of Success
Leadership accountability and commitment to Gender Equality	Create a Gender Equality Committee that will oversee all practices implemented by the University to ensure protection of women's rights in the workplace
	University Council to undertake and endorse the Unconscious Bias Professional Development Program
	Gender Equality Committee to develop, update and report on a gender equality policy to be adhered to strictly by all faculty, staff members, and students.
Ensure Faculty/staff members are aware of gender bias and its threats to a healthy working environment	All Faculty/staff must undergo training in the Unconscious Bias Professional Development Program
	University Leadership to conduct awareness discussions to staff and students on the importance of gender equality
	Fighting gender bias in the workplace by setting strict repercussions for violating the Gender Equality Policy and having it monitored by the Gender Equality Committee



	<p>Conduct annual surveys to be filled by women faculty/staff members to report on their experiences and provide feedback on whether they have received equal treatment by university leadership and other staff members, be it men or women</p>
	<p>Create a safe and open space for women to speak out about any misconduct by other staff members through evaluation meetings or sessions led by the Gender Equality Committee.</p>
<p>Empower women to have more effective roles in governance and decision-making</p>	<p>Ensure the university adheres to the quota of having at least 50% women staff in managerial positions or on decision-making boards</p>
	<p>Ensure that any decisions around work-policies are overseen by women who are dedicated to preserving gender equality</p>
	<p>Allow women to lead in roles previously overlooked, pertaining to Business, Science and Technology.</p>
<p>Increase visibility of women in the workplace and among students</p>	<p>Make conscious decisions to bring more women representation into MUBS communications (website, social media, brochures, posters, or any promotional or informative content produced by the university), conferences, panels, events and in textbooks .</p>
	<p>Invite female speakers who are experts in their field to give talks and lead conferences at MUBS</p>



	<p>Liaise with other universities and external institutions and organizations to conduct more frequent sessions to raise awareness around gender inequality and the practices that counter it</p> <p>Coordinate with women's rights organizations to bring more visibility to their visions and missions through giving them platforms on university campuses (or online) to raise awareness among students and staff</p> <p>Promote Athena SWAN Action Plan initiatives</p> <p>Lead creative and effective campaigns to challenge and transform patriarchal dialogue around working women in coordination with the private sector, civil society, the media, and governmental organizations.</p>
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## 2. Employment Conditions

**Effective action to ensure women’s employment conditions are protected and adjusted to allow mobility and equal opportunity**

Aim	Strategies & Measures of Success
<p>Create compelling working conditions for women to attract a larger pool of female talent at MUBS</p>	<p>Gender Equality Committee to conduct research on current employment conditions at MUBS, focusing on attracting and retaining female employees</p>
	<p>Conduct a series of interviews with HR representatives on current women employee attraction and protection policies at MUBS</p>
	<p>Create surveys for women employees at MUBS to evaluate their satisfaction and receive feedback on implementing new policies that would benefit them at MUBS</p>
	<p>Conduct surveys that would analyze the female demographic at MUBS to create all inclusive policies for care-takers, pregnant women, and women with more than one child</p>
	<p>Set a quota for attracting working mothers at all levels of employment (leadership, managerial, academic, etc.)</p>
	<p>HR to ensure future employment candidate lists include 50% women representation</p>
	<p>Gender Equality Committee to analyze and evaluate all conducted research on female employment trends at MUBS and suggest amendments where necessary</p>



### 3. Mending the Gender Pay Gap

**Auditing remuneration trends, investigating and compensating any pay gaps between male and female staff members**

Aim	Strategies & Measures of Success
Ensure women and men are paid equally for the same services	Audit and analyze current remuneration trends (basic salaries + benefits) and compare them among men and women
	Reevaluate remuneration policies to ensure utmost justice between male and female staff members
	Conduct surveys that report on any unexplained pay gaps between female and male staff members
	Offer compensations for women who have been getting paid less than men staff members for providing the same services
	Identify instances of discrepancies between male and female staff members and open investigations around such instances
	University Leadership to promote and implement Workplace Gender Equality Agency (WGEA) Pay Equity policies.





## 4. Safe Working Environment

**Implement policies that would ensure women are respected and protected in the work environment**

Aim	Strategies & Measures of Success
<p>Implement policies that would support pregnant and nursing women and mothers at MUBS</p> <p>(maternity resources)</p>	<p>Allow women who have returned from parental leave to adjust working hours to better suit her family needs</p> <p>(i.e. completing work from home for 4 more weeks, working in the afternoon or at night, taking extra days off as long as job objectives are being met, etc.)</p>
	<p>Increased remuneration by 10% for women with children</p>
	<p>Increased remuneration by 15% if the woman is the only income provider in the family</p>
	<p>Discounted tuition fees (by at least 60%) for students of female employees working at MUBS.</p>



Aim	Strategies & Measures of Success
<p>Raise awareness among managers working with women to ensure sufficiently flexible working conditions</p>	<p>Develop training sessions to educate managers on flexibility measures with care-takers</p>
	<p>Develop training programs and provide realistic time management aid for caretakers after parental leave</p>
	<p>Foster a culture of sensitivity and respect among staff members when working with returning caretakers after parental leave, considering the significance of such an event in a care-taker's personal life.</p>
<p>Create working environments that are free from any form of discrimination, prejudice, belittling, sexual harrasment and bullying</p>	
	<p>Provide explicit guidelines to all staff members and students on measures of professional conduct in classrooms and offices, meetings, conferences etc</p> <p>Ensure there is a zero tolerance policy regarding discrimination against female staff and students</p> <p>Take severe action (explusion/ contract termination) against students or staff who engage in sexual harassment against female staff or students</p> <p>Conduct yearly surveys to be distributed among students and staff to gather data regarding their understanding of what constitutes sexual harassment, discrimination, belittling remarks or behavior, and bullying</p> <p>Implement strict policies that delineate what constitutes each of the offenses mentioned above to be distributed among students and staff</p>



<p>Lead campaigns against domestic violence to raise awareness among students and staff members</p>	<p>Ensure staff members educate their students and colleagues on such incidents while clearly specifying the dangers of ignoring any such incidents, whether major or minor</p> <p>Effectively respond to any case of discrimination, sexual harassment, belittling, bullying or any disrespectful misconduct against women in the MUBS family .</p> <p>Create action plan against domestic violence discussing forms of domestic abuse (from minor to major), resources around local organizations that can intervene in such cases, provide shelter and safety to any female staff member encountering such abuse, offering counseling and legal services to staff members in families suffering from domestic turbulence .</p>
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## **5. Women’s Career Advancement**

**Advancing women’s career through providing aid with applications for promotion, research grants and networking/mentoring events**

<b>Aim</b>	<b>Strategies &amp; Measures of Success</b>
Offer equal opportunities for male and female staff members regarding academic and professional promotion	Analyze current and past promotion applications and success rates based on gender in all departments
	Compile detailed statistics on past trends in promotion applications and offers by gender
	Identify key areas for improvement or possibility of women promotion.
	Provide female candidates for promotion with detailed analysis of why their applications were not successful
	Run training sessions and support programs for women aiming to apply for promotions at any level
	Ensure managers are trained to guide and aid women staff members around their performance and the necessary requirements for them to be considered for promotion.



<p>Offer financial support and working hours flexibility for women in research</p>	<p>Offer at least 10 grants per semester for women working on research projects to support female staff research contribution</p>
	<p>Allow at least 4 of the aforementioned grants to be in either the Science or Business fields .</p>
	<p>Offer at least 2 grants for women researchers whose work has been interrupted due to familial responsibilities to encourage working mothers to return to the workplace</p>
	<p>Allow for flexibility in working hours for female instructors who wish to conduct academic research in their field of expertise.</p>
<p>Coordinate engaging sessions to enable women networking opportunities</p>	<p>Lead mentoring programs by women who have contributed significantly to society by liaising with external organizations</p>
	<p>Conduct yearly networking events for women visibility, promoting collegiality and mentoring sessions for women seeking to advance their careers</p>
	<p>Report on women’s participation rates in these events and sessions so as to create similar sessions with increased female participation and engagement.</p>