

Work Environment Strategy:

Objectives and Means

Department of Peace and Conflict Research, Uppsala University, 2021-02-11

Introduction

The Department of Peace and Conflict Research at Uppsala University is an academic environment that produces research and education of the highest class. An important reason why the department has been able to do this is that the work climate that has characterized the department has been perceived as positive and creative. A good working environment is essential for continuing to generate internationally viable research and offer education at a high international level. To achieve this, it is important to maintain and protect the parts of the work environment that are perceived as positive and strengthen the parts that are less good.

Overall goals

The overall goal of the department's work environment strategy is to offer a good work environment. This is seen as essential for conducting high-quality research, education and administration. By work environment we mean both physical and psychosocial environment. A crucial part of creating the work climate we strive for is that the department has a clear plan for its organization and its information flows. Keywords for achieving this overall goal are:

- Professionalism
- Commitment
- Influence
- Creativity

Systematic work environment work and implementation of measures

The head of the department has the overall responsibility for the work environment. The work of promoting a good working environment must permeate all activities at the department and each individual employee contributes to shaping the working environment.

Rules for the employer's obligations can be found in the Work Environment Act and the regulations issued by the Swedish Work Environment Authority (www.av.se). Centrally, Uppsala University has a work environment policy that guides actions for a good work environment. There are several bodies and documents at the department that support systematic efforts to improve the work environment. Since 2005, the department has had a work environment group with representatives appointed by the various corporations (TA, researchers/teachers and doctoral students, and there should preferably also be one

employer representative in the group). One of the group's tasks is to work with the department management to develop a work environment plan that runs over three years. The work environment plan contains a checklist for ongoing work environment considerations and is updated annually after a safety inspection. The work environment group also includes safety representatives. The safety representative's term of office is 3 years.

The department also has a research strategy, an educational strategy, and an equal opportunity plan. It is of great importance that the work environment is well-integrated into these two strategies and has a common basis with the equality plan. In addition to this, the department also has an organizational plan that is updated annually.

The work environment strategy must be evaluated and updated continuously. Evaluation and updating are provided when a new work environment plan is drawn up (i.e. every three years).

Sub-Area 1: Organization

Sub-goal 1.1: Clear and efficient organizational structure and division of labor

Examples of means to achieve this:

- Regularly update organizational plans so that work task areas are specified.
- Develop and continuously update job descriptions for all roles at the department, as a base for structuring and prioritizing tasks.
- Formalize routines for all work tasks. Those who are responsible for each area should make the routines generally available in the form of e.g. detailed descriptions or brief manuals (lathundar). Those responsible also handle introductions for new people in the area, for example introductions for new teachers.
- Appoint managers who can formalize and update routines for other tasks, such as a policy for guest researchers and guidelines for interns.
- Continuously inform all employees about changes/news via the appropriate information channel (weekly newsletter, MP, etc.). Ensure that information reaches all employees through e.g. a shared email list.
- Maintain inventory of work tasks which are not covered by job descriptions or by external staff (e.g. cleaning staff) but which must be performed (e.g. maintenance of common areas and storage).
- Consider equal conditions and gender equality in the organizational structure and division of labor.

Sub-goal 1.2: Creativity and efficiency in daily work

Examples of means to achieve this:

- To the extent that the system allows, always promote long-term and strategic planning within the organization in accordance with the basic education strategy and the research strategy, and provide information in good time to managers/employees who are affected by the planned business.
- Strive for one-person investigations in cases where committee investigations are not necessary/desirable. Clarify costs by showing what meetings etc. cost in the loss of research and training time.
- Keep meeting days (Mondays and Thursdays).
- Encourage information dissemination via the weekly newsletter on everything related to the business.
- Keep "reception times" for administrative staff.
- Arrange a seminar on ongoing research at the department at the beginning of the academic year.
- Encourage an inclusive and tolerant climate open to diversity and diversity of ideas.
- Create different types of meeting spaces that promote creativity and efficiency for the different types of meetings that take place at the department; for larger meetings as well as smaller ones, for formal meetings as well as informal ones, for scheduled as well as spontaneous meetings.
- Encourage forums for exchanging ideas and experiences about research, fieldwork, professional development etc.
- Actively invite guests and encourage exchanges.
- Actively plan and enable competence development for all employees.
- Pay attention to and inform about activities that contribute to the benefit of the department's research and education, such as publications, grants and public appearances.

Sub-area 2: Physical work environment

Sub-goal 2.1: Good physical working environment

Examples of means to achieve this:

- Ensure an adequate workplace for all employees with suitable equipment (furniture, computers, etc.) and good working conditions (ergonomics, sound, air, temperature, etc.) with individual adaptation if necessary.
- Ensure adequate and sufficient meeting spaces with good working conditions.
- Ensure good working conditions in common areas.
- Strive for flexibility and adaptation to individual needs (disabilities, allergies, etc.); formalization of routines to meet common special needs.

Sub-area 3: Psycho-social work environment

Sub-goal 3.1: Promote common identity and solidarity

Examples of means to achieve this:

- Protect existing platforms for information exchange and social gatherings in suitable premises (Thursday fika and staff day).
- Encourage informal social "events".
- Ensure free coffee and tea.
- Encourage broad and active participation in the department's operational meetings of relevance to various employees (research seminars, staff days, etc.)
- Encourage an inclusive work environment.

Sub-goal 3.2: Ensuring influence

Examples of means to achieve this:

- Strive to spread general knowledge about the organizational plan and division of labor to clarify where the opportunity for influence is.
- Inform about decisions for increased transparency.
- Encourage broad and active participation in corporate meetings.
- Strive for important documents to be available in both Swedish and English.

Sub-goal 3.3: Promote healthy work environment and reduce stress

Examples of means to achieve this:

- Strengthen the department's system regarding PAM (psychosocial work environment).
- Further develop mentorship programs for junior staff.
- Encourage employees to have, and emphasize the importance of, a healthy work-life balance.