



ACU's Gender Equality Diversity and Inclusion (GEDI) Progress

- Data highlights
- GEDI Survey Results
- Staff Consultation feedback
- Introducing our new Gender Equality Action Plan

Staff Information Pack

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Introducing this pack

This pack provides an overview of ACU's new Gender Equality Action Plan (GEAP) 2026–2030.

Our GEAP is currently being reviewed by the Victorian Gender Equality Commission and will be published in full when approval is received.

Section 1 unpacks the evidence-based approach used to develop our GEAP, including:

- Workforce data analysis to understand our performance against key gender equality indicators
- Results from our Gender Equality, diversity and Inclusion staff Experience survey conducted in September
- Feedback received from staff during consultation

This highlights where we've made progress and what we need to continue to work on to embed inclusion across ACU.

Section 2 provides an overview of our new GEAP, developed based on consultation, survey results and what the GEDI profile data told us.



Data Breakdown

- Data provided in this section compares ACU's GEDI performance against key gender equality indicators between March 2023 and March 2025.
- This data is important in ensuring we take an evidence-based approach to identifying where there are gaps and barriers to includes that require actions to address them.



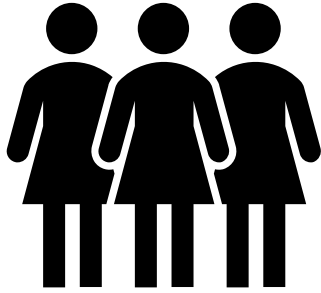
Our Objective

Our aim is to create opportunities for our dedicated and talented staff to optimise their potential and contribute fully to the university's success while achieving their personal and professional goals.

The data tells us that the majority of ACU's workforce are women, but their representation is not consistent across all levels, including leadership and that we have work to do to achieve gender pay equity.

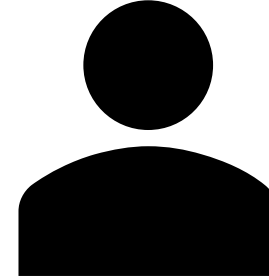


Gender composition in our workforce



Women in our workforce

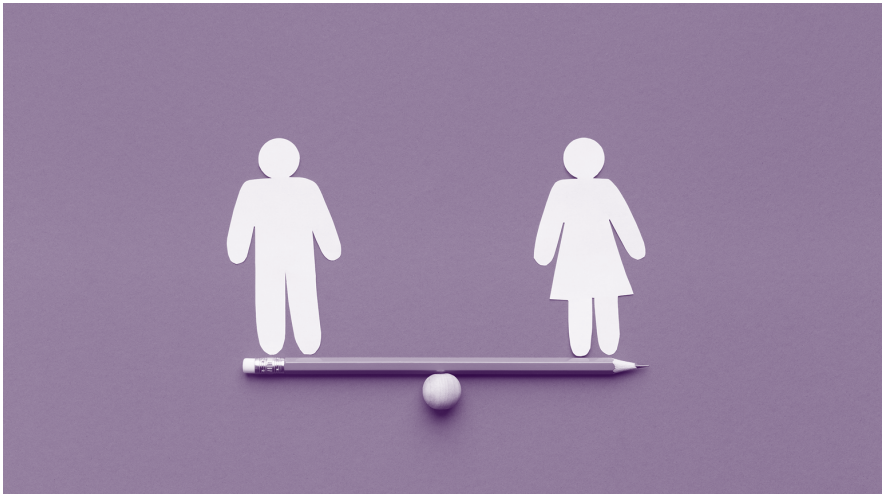
- 68% of FTE – 70% professional and 63% academic which is consistent over time
- 70% of headcount across all staff categories including casual staff
- Representation of women academics improved since 2023
 - Level C – from 55% to 65%
 - Level D – from 55% to 63%
 - Level E – from 37% to 45%
- 61% of ACU's managers are women which is less than their overall workforce representation
- For senior staff, women's representation is at 52%
(increased by 2.3% from 2023)



Nonbinary Inclusion

- Nonbinary employee data is available but not reported here due to small numbers to protect privacy.

Gender Pay Equity



Our overall gender pay gap			
Year	Average Base Salary	Average Total Remuneration	Senior Leader Ave Total Rem
2023	12.7%	13.9%	12.5%
2025	11.8% 0.9% improvement	12.6% 1.3% improvement	6.6% 5.9% improvement

The reduction in average base salary and total remuneration GPG from 2023 to 2025 is likely to be related to the decrease in the senior leader staff GPG. Key contributors would be the annual senior staff remuneration review conducted that focussed on gender equity. Further reduction in our GPG requires a multi-faceted approach that addresses a range of barriers to equality.

Recruitment and promotion



Recruitment mirrors overall gender representation (70%)

Women received:

- 61% of permanent promotions
- 68% of higher duties
- 74% of internal secondments

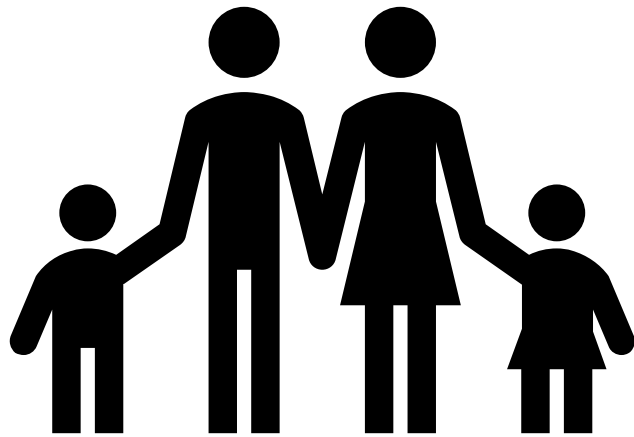
72% of career development training participants were women

However, GEDI Survey Results tell us:

- 48% of respondents were satisfied their learning and development needs are being met
- 55% were satisfied with recruitment and promotion processes

Flexible work and caring responsibilities

From 2023 to 2025....



- Flexible work arrangements have increased by 8% for women and 6% for men
- Men's uptake of primary carer parental leave increased by 15.7%
- Men's use of carer's leave increased by 6%

GEDI Survey results are positive..

- 85% of women and men satisfaction with access to Flexible work
- 93% of staff satisfied with support for staff experiencing family and domestic violence

ACU's GEDI Survey 2025 – informing our future GEDI progress

- The GEDI staff experience survey required by Victorian Gender Equality Act supports the development of our approach to GEDI; including our GEDI Framework and Gender Equality Action Plan
- There were increased completions from previous years after combining it with the myVoice Survey
 - 2023: 549
 - 2025: 1256
- The GEDI survey includes 17 five-points satisfaction scale questions and statements that allowed multiple responses regarding their experience of barriers to inclusion, such as inappropriate workplace behaviour.
- The following data provides an overview of key areas and category and question level results, and data from multiple response questions relating to experiences of workplace behaviour.

GEDI Survey | what's working well

Your Manager	Your Workgroup	Flexibility
Employees feel they are treated with dignity and respect by their manager. Staff satisfaction decreased by 6% since 2023.	Employees feel that work is allocated fairly, regardless of gender and colleagues treat each other with respect. This remained consistent with 2023 survey results.	Employees feel that a flexible work arrangement would be given due consideration, and they would be supported if they needed to take family violence leave. This remained consistent with 2023 survey results.
83%	85%	89%

GEDI Survey | areas for improvement

Belonging	Learning and Development	Recruitment and Promotion
I feel as if I belong at this organization. There was an increase from the previous survey, but still room for improvement this key engagement indicator.	I am satisfied in how my learning and development needs have been met in the last 12 months and satisfied with opportunities to progress at ACU. This remained consistent with the previous survey results	I believe recruitment and promotion processes at ACU are fair and I have equal chance of promotion.
73%	48%	55%

GEDI survey Category results

Question	Fixed term/continuing staff % favourable (agree/strongly agree)	
	2025	2023
Number of completions	N=1256	N= 549
Belonging	73%	65%
My Manager	83%	91%
My Workgroup	85%	87%
Learning and Development	48%	48%
Flexibility	89%	88%
Recruitment and Promotion	55%	51%
Respect	81%	76%
Voice Climate	79%	74%

GEDI survey Question Results

Question	Fixed term/continuing staff % favourable (agree/strongly agree)	
	2025	2023
Number of completions	N=1256	N= 549
My manager/supervisor treats employees with dignity and respect	84%	89%
My Manger/supervisor supports working flexibly	83%	90%
In my workgroup, workload is allocated fairly, regardless of gender	82%	84%
People in my workgroup treat each other with respect	88%	91%
I am satisfied with the way my learning and development needs have been addressed in the last 12 months	53%	56%
I am satisfied with the opportunities to progress in my organisation	43%	40%

GEDI survey Question Results

Question	Fixed term/continuing staff % favourable (agree/strongly agree)	
	2025	2023
Number of completions	N=1256	N= 549
I am confident that if I requested a flexible working arrangement, it would be given due consideration	85%	84%
My organisation would support me if I needed to take family violence leave	93%	93%
I believe the recruitment processes in my organisation are fair	66%	60%
I believe the promotion processes in my organisation are fair	50%	45%
I have an equal chance at promotion in my organisation	49%	48%

GEDI survey Question Results

Question	Fixed term/continuing staff % favourable (agree/strongly agree)	
	2025	2023
Number of completions	N=1256	N= 549
My organisation takes steps to eliminate bullying, harassment and discrimination	73%	68%
My organisation encourages respectful workplace behaviours	84%	82%
I feel culturally safe at work	84%	82%
I can be myself at work	82%	78%
I feel safe to call out inappropriate behaviour at work	71%	63%
I feel as if I belong at this organisation	73%	65%

GEDI Survey | Staff reports of experiencing inappropriate workplace behaviour

Key Indicators			
sexual harassmt experienced in the previous 12 months For example, sexually suggestive jokes and comment, intrusive questions about their private life and comments about their physical appearance	2025	2023	2021
	4%	7%	8%
Workplace Bullying experienced in the previous 12 months	17%	18%	16%
Discrimination experienced in the previous 12 months	7%	13%	10%

While the percentage of survey respondents reporting inappropriate behaviour showed some reductions over time, this remains a key area of focus for the university

Key themes from GEDI Consultation sessions held in March 2026

CATEGORY	Issue/opportunity
Respect	Staff reported experiencing inappropriate workplace behaviour based on gender, cultural background and/or disability/ neurodiversity that impacted their wellbeing and was not addressed. Disclosure and reporting pathways are not visible and more support for disclosers is required This was consistent with GEDI survey findings
Belonging	More focus is required on encouraging everyday behaviours that support a culture of inclusion and belonging, visibly championed and modelled by executive leaders.
Belonging	Support for staff experiencing barriers to inclusion, including people with a disability/neurodiversity is not visible or structured.
Flexibility	Access to flexible work and support for parenting and caring responsibilities varies, dependant on the approach taken by leaders (indicating inconsistency).
Recruitment and promotion	Internal career progression opportunities are perceived as being limited by leadership preferences for external hiring and use of informal networks rather than fair and transparent processes or focusing on internal talent development.
Voice Climate	Workload is under-represented through unseen work, often falling to women (e.g. additional administrative tasks) with people often working when unwell and out of hours to meet constant pressures.

Our approach to developing ACU's Gender Equality Action Plan (GEAP) 2026-2029



Develop evidence-based, measurable actions based on our GEDI profile data, GEDI survey results and consultation with staff



Take an integrated approach aligned with our People plan that supports our GEDI progress and meets our regulatory obligations including National GBV Code, WGEA and SAGE Athena Swan program



Address the seven gender equality indicators (GEIs) required in the VIC GE Act to embed inclusion and provide opportunities for all our people to flourish.



Engage our university community in a whole of institution approach where we continue to consult and focus on continuous improvement.

***We welcome your feedback
Please email GEDI@acu.edu.au if you would like to get involved
or have any questions or comments***

Introducing ACU's Gender Equality Action Plan (GEAP) 2026–2029

ACU's Gender Equality Action Plan (GEAP) 2026–2029 has been submitted to the Victorian Commission for Gender Equality in the Public Sector.

1

Submitted

Our plan has been lodged with the Commission for review under the Gender Equality Act 2020.

2

Under review

The Commission is currently assessing the GEAP against the Act's requirements.

3

Published

The final version will be published in full once approval is received.

The following slides provide an overview of the GEAP key actions and success measures for each gender equality indicator informed through consultation and analysis of our workforce GEDI profile data.

GEAP 2026-2029 key actions to achieve GEDI outcomes

GEI 1. Gender composition at all levels of the workforce

- Senior leadership visibly champion GEDI internally and externally and demonstrate their commitment to addressing barriers to inclusion that enables all our people to flourish.
- Establish a GEDI governance structure to embed a whole of university approach to inclusion.
- Annual Portfolio/operational plans express commitment and include actions to support gender equality, diversity & inclusion with measurable outcomes. (leadership KPIs/targets)
- Celebrate diversity through visibly acknowledging and communicating the achievements of our diverse workforce.
- Enhance processes for collection of intersectional data, enabled by the introduction of ACU's new Enterprise data system, informed by consultation with stakeholders from diverse backgrounds and lived experiences to effectively integrate an intersectional approach to GEDI.

Success Measures

- Increased women's representation in leadership positions
- Increased representation of underrepresented groups at all levels , including key decision-making committees
- Staff satisfaction rates in items relating to Belonging for identified demographic groups

GEI 2. Governing body gender composition

Note: Women's representation in ACU Senate has increased from 47.4% to 57.9% from 2023 to 2025

- Monitor gender composition of the ACU Senate to maintain the positive growth in women's representation.
- Investigate approach to seek intersectional data for Senate members, including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples to meet future legislative requirements.

Success Measures

Senate gender composition meets 40:40:20 requirement

Proposed GEAP 2026-2029 key actions to achieve GEDI outcomes

GEI 3. Equal remuneration for work of equal or comparable value across all levels of the workforce, irrespective of gender

Note: Reducing the gender pay gap will be supported by actions for GEIs 4, 5 and 6.

- Conduct annual gender pay equity reviews and implement actions to address identified gaps, including review of senior staff remuneration.
- Identify gender pay gap “hotspots” and develop actions to address them with the relevant senior leaders

Success Measures

- Reduction in overall gender pay gap (GPG)
- Reduced GPG at senior levels where it is inequitable

GEI 4. Preventing and responding to gender-based violence (including sexual harassment)

Note: This aligns with actions to meet National Higher Education Code to prevent and respond to gender-based violence obligations for consistency.

- Implement the whole of university gender-based violence prevention and response plan, that includes improving trauma informed support for victim/survivors, transparent and safe disclosure processes, and enhanced education and training for all staff members.
- Develop and implement tools and resources that enable leaders to identify and address inappropriate workplace behaviours such as sexist and racist comments and actions.

Success Measures

- Improved staff satisfaction with processes in GEDI survey responses
- Enhanced record keeping regarding local issues to inform policy, program and practices

GEAP 2026-2029 key actions to achieve GEDI outcomes

GEI 5. Recruitment and promotion practices in the workplace

- Continue to enhance the support offerings in the academic promotions process, including an academic mentoring program and investigate
- Develop and implement actions to enhance career development and progression support for professional staff
- Ensure the refresh of the university's performance review and planning program and initiatives to support talent management and succession planning embed a fair and equitable approach that considers achievement relative to opportunity
- Review ACU's Professional Development Policy for alignment with GEDI objectives and develop appropriate toolkits and resources that support leaders and staff to optimise equitable opportunities for career growth.
- Review and strengthen the use of achievement relative to opportunity across ACU

Success Measures

- Enhanced staff satisfaction scores in GEDI survey relating to recruitment, promotion and career progression
- Increased career progression for underrepresented groups

GEI 6. Availability and utilisation of family violence leave, flexible working arrangements, and working arrangements support for employees with family or caring responsibilities

- Develop and implement communication and awareness initiatives that encourage increased uptake of non-birth parent primary carer parental leave.
- Increase flexibility in parental leave provisions to accommodate academic career pathways (*to be introduced with our next EA*)
- Monitor flexible working arrangements to ensure they are applied appropriately and consistently and develop actions to address inconsistencies.
- Review and implement clearer expectations and guidance to strengthen flexible working arrangements that support an intersectional approach that recognises the compounded impact of disability, neurodivergence, chronic illness, caring responsibilities and other intersecting identities on access to flexibility.
- ACU Managers are required to complete Balancing Flexibility and Connection Workshop

Success Measures

- Increased staff satisfaction in relation to flexible work and carer support
- Increased uptake of non- birth parent primary carer leave.
- Increase in recorded formal flexible working arrangements.

GEAP 2026-2029 key actions to achieve GEDI outcomes

GEI 7. Gendered segregation within the workplace

- Conduct annual analysis to understand gendered segregation in our workforce, identify opportunities for improvement and develop a framework for analysis and actions where gaps are identified.
- Develop tools and resources to assist identified work areas with setting targets and taking action to address gendered segregation.
- Foster an inclusive workplace by implementing regular, accessible forums and initiatives that encourage all staff—including leadership—to share, learn, and celebrate the diverse perspectives and lived experiences of our university community, supported by visible leadership commitment and ongoing feedback to drive continuous improvement.

Success Measures

Increased representation of women/men and other under-represented groups in non- traditional roles



Next Steps

Your ongoing involvement and feedback is welcome

Here's what to look out for as we move forward:

- Invitations to express your interest in joining the GEDI staff representative group.
- Contact us any time at **GEDI@acu.edu.au** if you have any questions or feedback.