

GENDER EQUALITY, DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION CONSULTATION - SUMMARY OF FEEDBACK AND ACTIONS/PRIORITIES

Introduction

Consultation with a range of staff was an important component in the development of the ACU Gender Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (GEDI) Framework and Gender Equality Action Plan (GEAP). Consultation will also inform the Athena SWAN Self-Assessment Project currently in progress to support an integrated, whole of university approach to progressing gender equality and inclusiveness.

All staff were invited to engage in consultation through a range of communication channels. Direct contact was made with the convenors of the Ally Network and Aboriginal Torres Strait Islander Staff Network to encourage inclusive participation.

Feedback was collected through the Gender Equality Diversity and Inclusion Survey conducted in June 2021, an online form on the Gender Equality Website, which could be completed anonymously, and focus groups held in September 2021 and February 2022.

This table summarises the key issues raised by staff during consultation, and actions/priorities that have been included in the GEAP, aligned with the GEDI Framework, that address the feedback and suggestions provided.

Focus Area	Key Issues raised in Consultation	Actions/Priorities
Career Development and Progression	Improved process for offering internal career development opportunities to staff <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Short term appointments to backfill leave in other work areas • Opportunities to join committees/project teams 	<p><i>GEAP Priority 4: Career Development</i></p> <p>Review modes of learning and participation rates in learning and development programs, to identify potential barriers to success.</p> <p>Pilot Radiate Confidence (Women in Leadership) program.</p> <p>Review and enhance staff career development program(s) using Progress Plan data and staff consultation to identify potential barriers to career development and progression.</p> <p>Supervisors and managers implement actions to enhance career development and progression opportunities.</p>
	Consider forums to support teaching and research career development for academic women staff More visible, structured mentoring program	
	More defined career paths for professional staff – similar to academic promotion process	
	When organising development activities consider timing relating to impact on staff with family responsibilities	
	Consider barriers to career progression for women – where representation at senior levels decreases and actions to address this	

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		<p><i>GEAP Priority 4: Succession Planning and Career progression</i></p> <p>Undertake staff consultation on the implementation of the Achievement Relative to Opportunity Guide for relevant processes such as recruitment</p> <p>Review and evaluate current internal appointment practices, make recommendations, and implement actions to enhance internal career development and progression opportunities for all staff.</p> <p>Supervisors and managers implement actions to enhance internal career development and progression opportunities for all staff.</p> <p>Implement actions from the 2021 Academic Promotions Review project, monitor annual promotion outcomes by gender and consider further actions where required.</p>
Recruitment and Selection	<p>Consider more training on how to attract and employ the best candidates through an equity lens</p> <p>Address unconscious bias that can impact recruitment outcomes</p> <p>Concerns about transparency – variations in application of best practice in internal and external recruitment processes that can be time consuming but provide opportunities for internal progression</p> <p>Consider review of advertisements regarding statements encouraging candidates from diverse groups</p>	<p><i>GEAP Priority 4: Appointment and Career progression</i></p> <p>Gender composition of applications and shortlists will be monitored, reported and options recommended to address identified gaps.</p> <p>Hiring managers implement recommended actions to enhance gender representation in applications and shortlists.</p>
Flexible work	<p>Concerns about inconsistent application of policy and process – dependent on work area and supervisor, student-facing v back-end roles; perception that staff working off campus are not productive</p>	<p><i>GEAP Priority 5: Flexible Work Practices</i></p> <p>Review and analyse the utilisation of formal flexible working arrangements and</p>

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	<p>Perception of staff with Flexible work arrangements that there is stigma due to lack of understanding that people have diverse personal circumstances that require flexibility. It was also felt there can be a negative impact on future career opportunities.</p> <p>More positive promotion of the availability of flexibility could improve this</p> <p>Consider more training for managers and supervisors</p> <p>Suggest clearer guiding principles could be helpful – create more understanding of flexible work options; communication from senior leadership about flexibility</p>	<p>personal/carer’s leave types and make recommendations to improve guidance and support as required.</p> <p>Supervisors and managers engage with development activities and resources that will enable a proactive and consistent approach to conversations with staff relating to flexible work and personal/carer’s leave requests.</p>
Staff with Caring responsibilities	<p>Enhance education and showcasing of the full range of caring responsibilities, including eldercare, family members with illness and disability as well as parental responsibilities.</p> <p>Consider providing more education of supervisors and staff build understanding of the challenges faced by staff with caring responsibilities and decrease stigma. More education for supervisors about the impact of career breaks and how to more effectively support staff who have these breaks</p> <p>More communications targeted towards men encouraging them to access flexible work arrangements and carers leave to share the caring burden</p> <p>Simplify resources to inform staff about entitlements, options and processes and promote to increase awareness</p>	<p><i>GEAP Priority 5: Support for staff with Caring responsibilities</i></p> <p>Review and update policies and practices to improve support for staff with caring responsibilities, including working parents, grandparents and staff with family members with a disability, medical condition and eldercare responsibilities</p> <p><i>GEAP Priority 4: Succession Planning and Career progression</i></p> <p>Use of the Achievement Relative to Opportunity Guide in promotion, recruitment, etc referred to above in Career Development and progression will also impact this area.</p>
Diversity and Inclusion Workplace Culture	<p>Visibility of diversity in the university could be enhanced in communications to provide a more inclusive environment People feel more comfortable to be their authentic selves when there is more visibility of colleagues they can more easily identify with.</p>	<p><i>GEAP Priority 1:</i></p> <p>Diversity is celebrated through visible acknowledgement and communication of the achievements of our diverse workforce.</p>

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	Consider actions to address workplace bias and inappropriate comments, including diversity awareness training and ongoing communications	<p><i>GEAP Priority 3:</i> Provide a safe and respectful workplace free from discrimination, harassment and bullying.</p>
	Promote more open discussion about cultural safety and inclusiveness through staff news forums and training	
	Enhance embedding of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture through mandatory cultural awareness training	<p>Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Cultural Capability Framework and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Employment Strategy. Mandatory training at Induction will be embedded in the next ACU staff Enterprise Agreement.</p>
	Consider seeking more information about the cultural diversity of our workforce	<p><i>GEAP Priority 1: Diversity Group representation</i> A working group is formed, staff are consulted, and recommendations made on the implementation of a voluntary workforce diversity data collection process consistent with attributes identified in the Victorian Gender Equality Act 2020.</p>
	Consistent use of inclusive language/terminology e.g., women/men instead of male/female	<p>Language of GEDI Framework and Action Plan was revised to refer to women and men. Further action to be considered in Athena SWAN self-assessment, including introduction of an inclusive language guide for university use.</p>
Barriers to raising concerns about inappropriate behaviour	Concerns about negative impact on career and reputation if complaints were raised.	<p><i>GEAP Priority 3: Workplace Culture</i> Explore, recommend and implement options to support supervisors and managers to develop capability in the management of workplace behaviour issues. Supervisors and Managers at all levels participate in development activities to enhance their</p>
	Perceived lack of action by management to address issues brought to their attention and inconsistent follow up regarding progress and outcomes.	
	Increase manager and supervisor awareness of the policies and procedures and upskill them on how to approach these issues to empower others to address bias	

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	Staff often advise supervisors/managers of an issue but will not agree to the manager raising the concern with the staff member involved on the issue.	capability in managing workplace behaviour issues.
	More visibility of options and complaint processes, including escalation and confidentiality would be helpful	Enhance support mechanisms for staff to safely raise concerns regarding harassment and other inappropriate behaviour/s.
	Consider offering more bystander awareness training	Implement Bystander Awareness training