

VICTORIA UNIVERSITY GENDER EQUITY STRATEGY

2017-2020



FOREWORD

Victoria University is the *University of Opportunity and Success*. We pride ourselves on our commitment to offering opportunities to people from all backgrounds, creating a diverse, future-focussed workforce that enables our staff to feel respected, included and empowered to thrive and succeed.

We know that historically women have not always had equal access to workplace opportunities, particularly in areas of leadership, influence and decision-making. While much progress has been made, we acknowledge that there is still much that needs to be done to ensure gender equality, both as a University and as a society.

At Victoria University, we want to be a leader in promoting gender equity. The Gender Equity Strategy 2017 - 2020 details some of the ways we will address gender inequity across all areas of the University.

We know that gender equality creates better workplaces, better communities and better societies, and is a key influence in the prevention of violence against women. This Strategy complements the work we are doing through the Respect and Responsibility Ten Point Plan, and will help create a more diverse and inclusive workplace with an increasingly positive culture, for all of our staff.

Professor Peter Dawkins AO

Vice-Chancellor and President

BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT

Victoria University aims to create and maintain a sustainable, future-focused workforce (Victoria University Strategic Plan, 2016-2020).

As part of its vision towards 2030, the University is also focused on together making Victoria University a great place to work. The Gender Equity Strategy is a mechanism that will help the University achieve both these aims - creating and supporting a more diverse workforce where equality is paramount.

The Gender Equity Strategy outlines a range of objectives and actions designed to enable women to thrive and succeed at the University. It provides resources and activities for female staff aimed to facilitate their progression to more senior levels at the same rate as their male counterparts. The Gender Equity Strategy also aims to achieve gender equality through revising our policies and practices and developing a culture of gender equity. Equity measures outlined in the Strategy will help the University achieve equality in terms of representation, pay and developmental opportunities.

As part of the University's social justice commitment, we are also taking steps to prevent violence against women. Achieving gender equality is a vital step in realising this goal and it is the first point of the University's 10-point action plan for the prevention of violence against women, Respect and Responsibility, launched in August 2016.

The University recognizes that people's identities and social positions are shaped by several factors, which create unique experiences and perspectives. These factors include, among others: sexuality, gender, race, disability, age, and religion. The University also recognizes that the intersection of these factors can increase disadvantage. The University commits to considering the intersection of gender and other factors wherever possible in implementing the Gender Equity Strategy.

The University also recognizes that the category of women includes staff members who identify as women regardless of how they were defined at birth or their transition status. For the purposes of this Strategy, references to women are also inclusive of non-binary staff members and staff members who do not identify as men.

Research has shown the importance of leadership at the highest levels in achieving gender equality. At Victoria University, the Vice-Chancellor chairs the Gender Equity Committee, comprised of the Senior Executive Group and key leaders of the University. The Gender Equity Committee will monitor the implementation of the Gender Equity Strategy. As outlined in the Strategy, implementing and being part of the change to achieve gender equality is, however, the responsibility of all staff members.

The Gender Equity Strategy has six objectives, with targeted actions under each objective, designed to achieve gender equality across the University. The objectives are also designed to enable the University to attain a Workplace Gender Equality Agency Citation as an Employer of Choice for Gender Equality. Meeting the criteria for the Citation will embed best-practice gender equity practices across the employment life-cycle at Victoria University to place greater emphasis to gender equality in the way we work together and in our workplace culture.

The University acknowledges that sustainable change is not easy and that it takes time. The Gender Equity Strategy provides a platform for further improvement in the coming years for now, and for the future.

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LEAD AND SPONSOR THE UNIVERSITY'S COMMITMENT TO GENDER EQUITY FOR WOMEN

ACTIONS	ACCOUNTABILITY	TIMELINE	PERFORMANCE INDICATOR
1.1 The Vice-Chancellor will convene the Gender Equity Committee responsible for development of a University Gender Equity Strategy	Vice-Chancellor	September 2016	Committee established
1.2 The Vice-Chancellor will establish a network of gender equity champions at senior leadership level to support and drive gender equity activities across the University and act as a consultative mechanism for the Gender Equity Committee	Vice-Chancellor Vice President, People and Culture	2018	Network of champions established
1.3 The Vice-Chancellor will lead the University-wide consultation on the Gender Equity Strategy supported by People and Culture	Vice-Chancellor Vice President, People and Culture	1st and 2nd quarter 2017	Meetings held, open consultation concluded, Strategy revised
1.4 Vice-Chancellor to formally communicate and promote VU's commitment to inclusive leadership incorporating gender equity (and gender pay equity) and its key priorities to all employees and relevant external	Vice-Chancellor	Ongoing (at least four times per annum)	Communications via a variety of media
1.5 Women's achievements at the University to be formally promoted through public fora	Senior Leaders	Ongoing	Women's achievements are appropriately represented in internal and external media; women are appropriately represented on panels, external engagements and public events representing the University Representation to include a diversity of women
1.6 The Gender Equity Committee undertake pilot training in Unconscious Bias as part of Inclusive Leadership, prior to it being rolled out for senior leaders and to staff across the University	Vice-Chancellor Vice President, People and Culture	December 2017	Communications via a variety of media
1.7 Terms of reference for key University committees to contain an aspiration of at least 40% female representation	Chair of Academic Board; Research and Research Training Committee; Teaching and Learning Committee;	Annually, commencing in December 2017	At least 40% female representation
1.8 Investigate the development of a qualitative measure of inclusive leadership and behaviours as part of the YourVoice Survey	Vice President, People and Culture	2017	Measure developed, included in YourVoice survey 2017

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DRIVE ACCOUNTABILITY FOR SUPPORTING AND ACHIEVING GENDER EQUITY GOALS AND PRIORITIES

ACTIONS	ACCOUNTABILITY	TIMELINE	PERFORMANCE INDICATOR
2.1 KPIs regarding pay gaps, female representation in senior positions and other gender equity matters, (to be determined) be included in senior leaders' performance plans	Vice President, People and Culture	2017	KPIs developed and assessed
2.2 The institutional commitment to gender equity to be included in the University strategic and corporate plans	Vice-Chancellor Chief of Staff	2017	Included in next iteration of all Strategic Plans
2.3 Managers to monitor the completion of workplace discrimination and harassment training by all staff on commencement and every two years subsequently	All Managers People and Culture to monitor and report on outcomes achieved quarterly	From October 2016 then quarterly	50% improvement on 2016 completion rates
2.4 The staff code of conduct and student charter to be reviewed to ensure the inclusion of a clear statement that all employees and students will be treated with fairness, dignity and respect and that sexism, racism or violence in any form will not be tolerated	Vice President, People and Culture, Vice-President, Planning and Registrar	2017	Documents reviewed and revised as necessary
2.5 Material that is sexist, racist or discriminatory is publicly prohibited from being placed in University facilities	All managers and staff in conjunction with Security and Facilities personnel	2017 - ongoing	Increased awareness of University standard and no inappropriate materials displayed on campus
2.6 Marketing and promotional materials to be monitored to ensure imagery or messaging are appropriate and reflect the diversity of the VU community	Vice President, Marketing, Engagement and International, in conjunction with Vice President, People and Culture	Ongoing	Imagery inclusive of gender equity and diversity

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ACHIEVE EQUAL REPRESENTATION OF WOMEN AND MEN IN SENIOR LEADERSHIP POSITIONS

ACTIONS	ACCOUNTABILITY	TIMELINE	PERFORMANCE INDICATOR
3.1 Develop mechanisms to address the under-representation of women in senior research roles in the Health and Medical Sciences and in other disciplines	Vice-President, Research Vice-President, People and Culture Deans of Health & Biomedicine; Sport and Exercise Science Deans Directors, Flagship Research Institutes	December 2017	Targets, timeframes and action plans set by Deans and Directors where there is under-representation of female researchers to be included in Institute and College annual plans
3.2 Improve female representation in senior roles (defined as HEW10+, Level D, Level E, Deans, Executive 1)	Vice-Chancellor	2020	Female representation to increase by 2.5% annually to 40%.
3.3 Conduct annual workshops for women encouraging career development to increase applications for promotion to Levels D & E	Senior Deputy Vice-Chancellor People and Culture	Annually from 2017	Workshop conducted
3.4 Shortlists for positions at or above HEW9 and Lecturer C to include 50% women candidates	Vice-President, People and Culture	2020	All shortlists and appointments reported quarterly
3.5 A shadowing program for senior women be implemented	Vice-President, People and Culture	2017	Program conducted & evaluated
3.6 A formal mentoring program be developed for women researchers and professional staff	VU Research People and Culture	2017	Program conducted & evaluated
3.7 Establish professional development activities to enable progress and promotion for professional staff Ensure gender equity is considered in VU. Develop processes including performance plans, development, ratings and review; succession planning and talent identification	Vice President, People and Culture Senior Manager, Capability and culture	2018 2020	Increase in internal appointments to senior roles Mitigation of gender bias in planning and promotion processes
3.8 Analyse staff exit data to identify gender-related issues and take action to address appropriately	Vice-President, People and Culture	Annually from 2017	Report provided for GEC
3.9 Analyse academic promotions and SSP data by gender and report every six months	Vice-President, People and Culture	Twice annually	Report provided for GEC
3.10 Research indicating gender bias against women in SET and SEU scores to be monitored and investigated with a view to developing ways to redress bias	Vice-Presidents, Colleges Deans Learning, Innovation and Quality Quality Information and Planning	2019	Improved promotion rates for women
3.11 Internal and external research funding application and success rates analysed by gender and imbalances addressed by introduction of equity measures	VU Research	Annually from December 2017	Improved research funding success rates for women

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IDENTIFY AND ADDRESS GENDER PAY INEQUITY WHERE IT EXISTS

ACTIONS	ACCOUNTABILITY	TIMELINE	PERFORMANCE INDICATOR
4.1 Consider pay equity data to identify any gender gaps in remuneration and develop strategies to address identified gaps	Vice President, People and Culture	December 2017	Ongoing monitoring, review and implementation of strategies to reduce gaps
4.2 Monitor pay equity and gender balance by SEG member portfolio and develop appropriate strategies to address	Vice President, People and Culture Senior Executive Group	2017	Ongoing monitoring and review to create gender balanced workforce and reduce gaps

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IMPLEMENT PROGRESSIVE APPROACHES TO BUILDING A FLEXIBLE WORKPLACE TO SUPPORT EMPLOYEES TO BALANCE WORK AND LIFE RESPONSIBILITIES

ACTIONS	ACCOUNTABILITY	TIMELINE	PERFORMANCE INDICATOR
5.1 Determine how the University can better support staff (particularly female research staff) before, during, and on return from, parental leave	Vice President, People and Culture VU Research Vice-President, Research Vice-Presidents, Colleges Directors, Flagship Research Institutes	2017	Consultation conducted, process improvements in place, return rate monitored and reported
5.2 Develop and implement mechanisms to enable women researchers to continue research and attend conferences whilst managing carer responsibilities	Deans Vice-President, Research Vice-Presidents, Colleges Directors, Flagship Research Institutes	2017	Transparent mechanisms in place
5.3 Managers to be trained in the use of the Parental Leave and the Flexible Work Arrangements Toolkits in order to inform staff about and discuss access to flexible work arrangements	Vice President, People and Culture	2017	Training conducted, use of flexible arrangements increases (particularly by men) Monitor and report return rates post parental leave annually
5.4 Staff to be trained in the use of the Parental Leave and the Flexible Work Arrangements Toolkits in order to manage their parental leave and consider access to flexible work arrangements	Vice President, People and Culture	2017	Training conducted, return rate increased

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MONITOR, EVALUATE AND REPORT (INTERNALLY AND EXTERNALLY) SUCCESS OF GENDER EQUITY OBJECTIVES AND INITIATIVES

ACTIONS	ACCOUNTABILITY	TIMELINE	PERFORMANCE INDICATOR
6.1 Prepare annual gender equity report for the Vice-Chancellor and Gender Equity Committee	Vice President, People and Culture	Commencing December 2016	Reports considered, issues arising identified, Strategy revised
6.2 Monitor progress towards Workplace Gender Equality Agency "Employer of Choice for Gender Equality" citation in order to ensure successful application being lodged in 2018	Vice President, People and Culture	Quarterly	Application successful in 2018
6.3 Consultation undertaken with staff via the University (YourVoice) employee engagement survey, which assists to identify and measure trends in the satisfaction and engagement ratings of all staff, particularly women.	Vice President, People and Culture	2017	Improved satisfaction rating evidenced in the 2017 (YourVoice) staff engagement survey
6.4 In following up the results of the YourVoice survey, consultation is conducted with staff to clarify issues having a differential impact on staff from diverse backgrounds, including women	Vice President, People and Culture	2017	Issues and actions identified

