Athena SWAN

Institution Application

SAGE Cygnet Awards

THE UNIVERSITY OF
NEWCASTLE
AUSTRALIA

SAGE Cygnet Award Application Form

SAGE Cygnet Award Application

Name of institution	University of Newcastle
Date of application	31 October 2023
Award Level	Cygnet
Date joined Athena SWAN	Cohort One – January 2016
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UNIVERSITY OF NEWCASTLE: SAGE CYGNET 5		
BARRIER TYPE	**CURRENT CYGNET**	**BARRIER**
Mandatory Sub-group barrier		STEM Pipeline: Difficulty attracting and recruiting female students and academic staff into the College of Engineering, Science and Environment
Mandatory Institution-wide barrier		Career Development Support
Institution- wide barrier		Indigenous Cultural Competency
Institution- wide barrier		Supporting Carers
Institution- wide/Sub-group barrier	→	Inconsistent work allocation models

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

We acknowledge the traditional custodians of the lands on which our campuses are located:

- The Awabakal and Worimi Peoples at our Newcastle City campus
- The Pambalong Clan of the Awabakal Nation - Newcastle campus at Callaghan
- Darkinung People - Central Coast campus at Ourimbah
- Biripai People - Port Macquarie campus
- Gadigal People of the Eora Nation – Sydney CBD

We also acknowledge and pay respect to the other Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander nations from which our students, staff and community are drawn.

Artwork: Indigenous Education Strategy (2020)
Artist: Jasmine Craciun (Bachelor of Visual Communication 2018)

Alumna Jasmine Miikika Craciun is a proud Barkindji, Malyangapa designer and artist with a passion for telling the stories of, and communicating to, diverse groups of people.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS & ACRONYMS

ASIABA	Athena Swan Institution Application Bronze Award
ASBA	Athena Swan Bronze Award
ASBAP	Athena Swan Bronze Action Plan
ASWP	Athena Swan Working Party
AWAM	Academic Work Allocation Model
HOS	Head of School
HRS	Human Resources Services
ITS	Information Technology Services
SAGE	Science Australia Gender Equity
SAT	Athena Swan Bronze Self-Assessment Team
STEMM	Science, Technology, Engineering, Mathematics and Medicine
T&R	Teaching and Research Academics
WAMS	Workload Allocations Management System
WHS	Work, Health and Safety

Key Barrier

The University of Newcastle's fifth Cygnet addresses **inconsistent work allocation practices and lack of transparency**, which at the time of Athena Swan Bronze Award (ASBA) were found to create a workplace culture in which potential gender bias practices could occur, limiting the career progression of women. (Figure 1)

> *KEY INSIGHTS:*
> - *Inconsistent workload practices and lack of transparency leading to potential gender inequities in workload for women.*
> *Actions: 7.3*

Figure 1. Key Insights on workload from ASIABA (Section 5.4, viii)

The University's objective has been to reduce the impact of this barrier through the following intervention:

1. **Develop a University-wide approach to the allocation of work that is equitable, fair, and transparent, across all Colleges, Schools, and Divisional Units.**

In addition, a number of secondary objectives were introduced to address specific sub-barriers and in support of the primary objective:

2. **Shift from the use of fixed workload formulas to active workload management and shared governance processes;**
3. **Determine agreed consistent Minimum Levels of Research Performance to support performance reviews;**
4. **Provide greater flexibility across academic work profiles, with a focus on supporting career aspirations;**
5. **Introduce a single IT system for managing work allocation to improve data reliability and enhance transparency across the institution;**
6. **Implement a consistent approach to reporting and reviewing workloads to support planning and resourcing needs.**

Evidence of Barrier

In the 2017 **Athena Swan Gender Equity Survey** significantly fewer women, compared to men, felt that workload was equally proportioned based on gender (ASIAB, Section 5.4, i). The Self-Assessment Team (SAT) was unable to pull any reliable workload data, as **'approximately' 13 models** were in use across the institution and **were either not recorded or proved inconsistent and incomparable**.

The SAT was forced to investigate a proxy measure of inequity in work allocation determined by the % of academics associated with teaching classes that had more than 500 students (Figure 2).

Academic level	% Females	% Males
A	23%	7%
B	40%	38%
C	19%	31%
D	15%	10%
E	4%	14%

Figure 2. Large class teaching as proxy measure of AWAM in 2017

This data, however, did not provide evidence of inequitable allocation, even though it was felt by 24% of female staff (versus 9.28% of male staff) that inequity in workload existed (Figure 3). While a majority of staff (55%) thought that workload was equally proportioned in their school, the gender disparity of perceived inequity was a matter of concern for the institution.
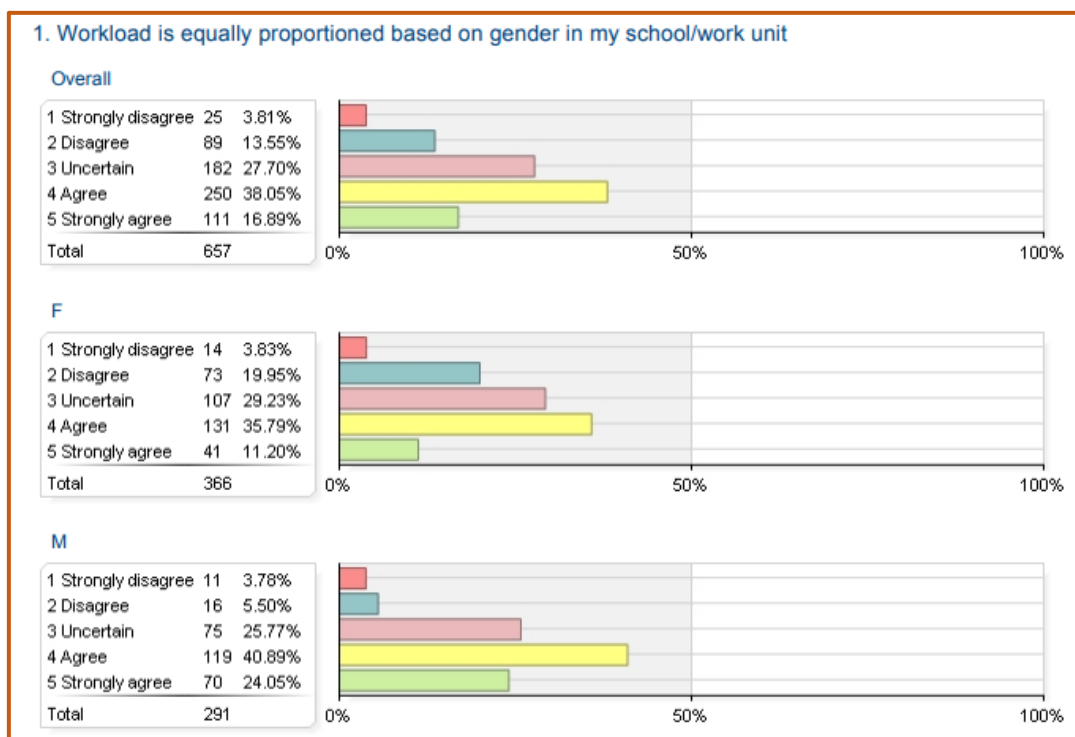
Figure 3. Results Gender from 2017 Gender Equity Pulse Survey (overall and by gender)

Committee overload was also a concern for oganizational culture in the ASIABA (Section 5.4, vi). It was noted that women can suffer "**inadvertent discrimination in career progression**" every time they were asked to take on service roles that were unallocated in workload. In 2018, one person estimated that this would be 10-20% of most academic women's workload which male colleagues simply did not take on. It was also noted that senior committee membership was documented, but most service roles were undocumented in workload models. It was therefore proposed that the new Workload Framework (Action 7.3) **embed the recording of committee and service activities to ensure equitable allocation**.

Theme 7: Data and Data Management						
Action	Description of Action	Justification/Evidence	Start Date	Target Delivery Date	Responsibility	Success Measure
7.1	Introduction of centralised and comprehensive reporting system for key related data: PRD, PEF, Promotions, Recruitment, staff data.	Disparate systems do not adequately provide collection of gender data.	January 2019	July 2019	SPP, HRS	Platform created to extract and integrate disparate sources of gender related data.
7.2	Introduce categorisation of gender related complaints to monitor progress of incidents and efficacy of strategies.	Difficult to report on gender related complaints due to lack of categorisation.	June 2018	August 2018	ER E&D Complaints Office	Categorisation of gender related complaints embedded in Complaints process.
7.3	Introduction of consistent Framework for Workload allocation and transparent reporting to ensure women are not unfairly burdened in allocation of workload.	Unable to report adequately on gender patterns in workload due to inconsistent practices across UON.	January 2019	June 2019	PVC (L&T) PVC (R&I) ER SPP Faculties	Framework in operation and consistent application by all Faculties for analysis/reporting.

Figure 4. ASIAB with Action 7.3 commitment to a consistent workload framework and transparent reporting

As a result, the University committed to Action 7.3 in the Athena Swan Bronze Action Plan (ASBAP) to *introduce a consistent framework for workload allocation and transparent reporting to ensure women are not unfairly burdened in the allocation of workload* (Figure 4). The **justification for taking action** was that the University was unable to report adequately on gender patterns in workload due to inconsistent practices across the institution.

Review of **Human Resources Services (HRS) records** revealed that 23 different AWAMs had been considered by the Staff Consultative Committee and approved by the Deputy Vice-Chancellor Academic between 2015 and 2022 (Table 1). Some schools had more than one model operating simultaneously, while Teaching and Research (T&R) academics working in the University's Pathways and Academic Learning Support Centre (PALS) and the Wollotuka Institution, based in the Academic Division, had no AWAMS in place at all.

Table 1. History of various Workload Models used by Faculties/Schools (HRS records)

Faculty/School/College	AWAM considered by SCC	AWAM considered by DVCA
BUSINESS & LAW	2015	Approved for implementation in 2016
	2016	Approved for implementation in 2017
EDUCATION & ARTS	2015	Faculty to continue develop AWAM in consultation with staff Existing 2014/15 model will continue to apply
	2016	Faculty to trial EFTSL model in 2017 Existing 2014/15 model will continue to apply
ENGINEERING & BUILT ENVIRONMENT		
School of Electrical Engineering & Computer Science School of Engineering	2015	Approved for implementation in 2016
	2016	Approved for implementation in 2017
School of Architecture & Built Environment	2015	Approved for implementation in 2016
	2016	Approved for trial in 2017 subject to mid- year review
FACULTY OF HEALTH & MEDICINE		
School of Biomedical Sciences & Pharmacy	2015	Approved for implementation in 2016
	2016	Approved for implementation in 2017
School of Health Sciences	2015	Approved for implementation in 2016
	2016	Approved for implementation in 2017
School of Medicine & Public Health	2015	Approved for implementation in 2016
	2016	Approved for implementation in 2017
School of Nursing & Midwifery	2015	Approved for implementation in 2016
	2016	Approval to trial in 2017 subject to mid- year review
FACULTY OF SCIENCE & IT	2015	Approved for implementation in 2016
School of Psychology	2016	Approved for implementation in 2017
School of Mathematics & Physical Sciences	2016	Approved for implementation in 2017
School of Environmental & Life Sciences	2016	Approved for implementation in 2017
ELFS	2015	AWAM approved for implementation in 2016 as a "transitional" model to be reviewed annually
FACULTY OF SCIENCE	2020	Approved for trial in 2021
COLLEGE OF HEALTH MEDICINE & WELLBEING	2022	Approval to trial in 2022

Further **cultural evidence** of this barrier to equity was confirmed in the institution-wide staff consultations around the development of the University's new strategic plan in 2019. As a result of the consultations, a **key initiative** of the Inspiring People pillar of **Looking Ahead Strategic Plan 2020-2025** was introduced which committed the University Executive to reviewing and reshaping workload models to reflect institutional values. (Figure 5).
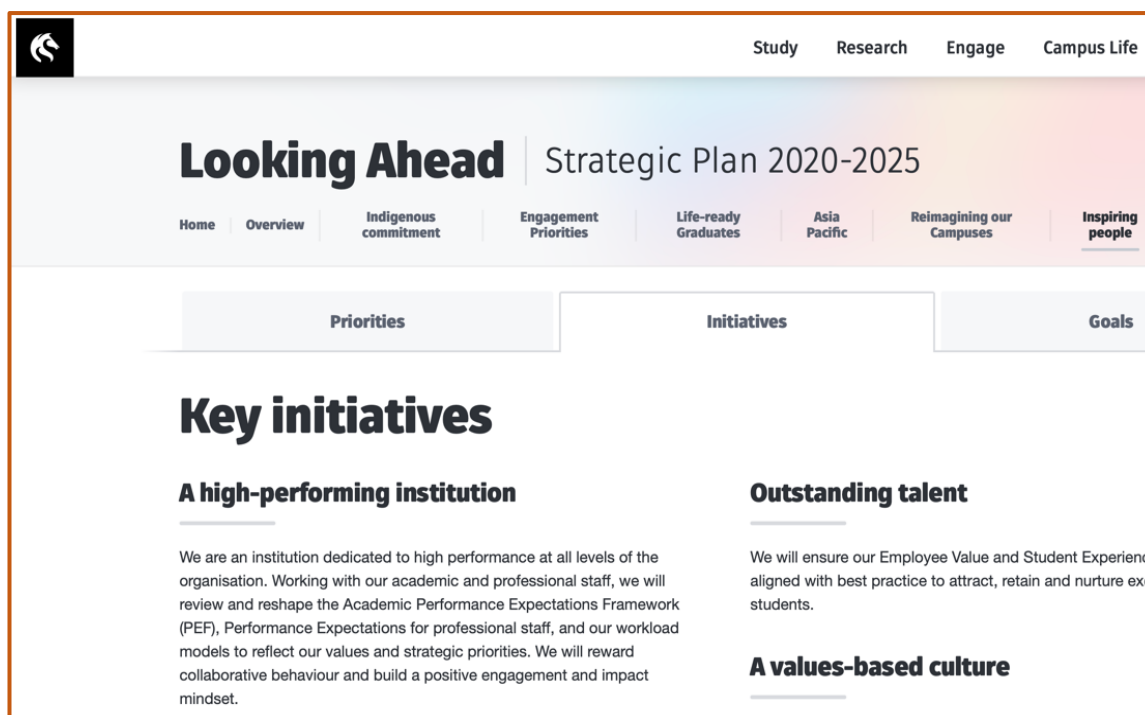
Figure 5. A key initiative of *Looking Ahead*, the University's 2020-2025 strategic plan, was to work with academic and professional staff to review and reshape the institutions workload models.

Actions and Outputs

In 2020, when the University started to progress ASBAP Action Item 7.3, there were at least 15 different work allocation models in operation across the University, providing leaders, line managers, and staff with **limited visibility and understanding** of how the AWAMs were applied and managed. All the current models were pulled from the 13 Schools and 2 Divisional Units, and then compared. Not all of the areas had models in place, but for those that did, it was found that the various models included a **range of different workload formulas** based on hours-based activity inputs, points for research achievements to be traded off against teaching responsibilities, and EFTSLs. Some used performance achievements from the previous year to inform allocations, while others were applied retrospectively in the year following the allocated work.

To **resolve inconsistent work allocation**, the University Executive committed to the **development of a consistent framework for work allocation** and **transparent reporting** (ASBAP 7.3) in an effort to ensure women (and other equity cohorts) are not unfairly burdened. While the ASBAP target delivery date of this initiative was June 2019, it quickly became apparent that this was a major change for the University that would necessarily involve extensive consultation with staff and negotiations with

unions. Actions also coincided with the launch of the strategic plan, onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, subsequent restructures, a formal change process, and enterprise bargaining, which set the project timeline back by two to three years.

Use of SAGE Matrix and International Research in the field to inform the action

In 2020-2021, in addition to compiling all the internal documentation related to AWAMS, research was undertaken to gain a national and international perspective on the problem of workload in higher education post-COVID. Resources included: journal articles with time-and-motion studies of 40-40-20 academics (Figure 6); a report equity-minded workload reform, funded by the National Science Foundation and published by the American Council on Education (Figure 7), and the SAGE Workload Allocation Principles Matrix (Figure 8). Findings from this research was shared with the University Executive, Academic Senate, and through all-staff consultation forums.
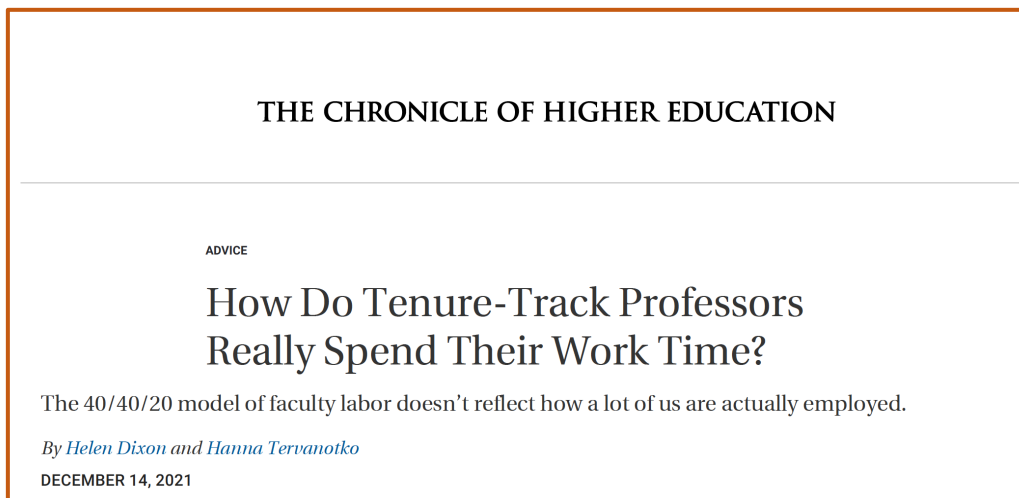
Figure 6. Time-and-Motion studies and other research to inform project
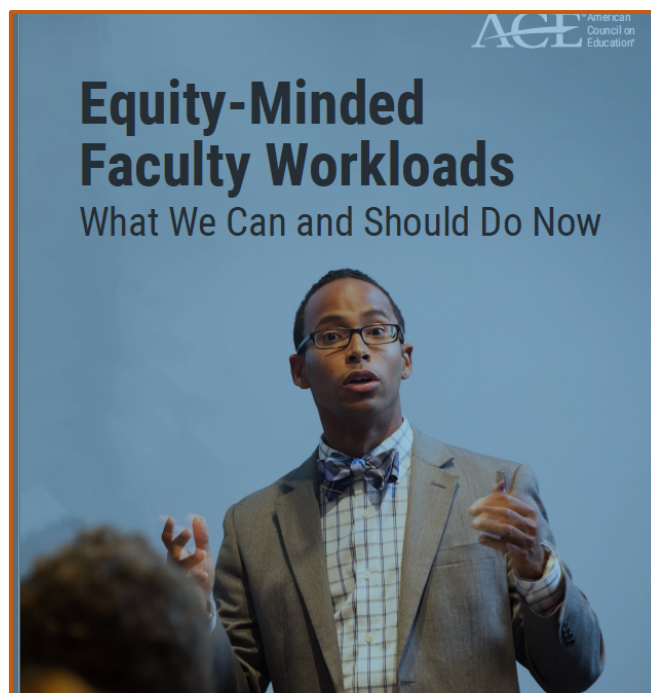
Figure 7. International peak body reports on equity and workloads

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Figure 8. SAGE Workload Allocation Principles Matrix

In addition, a case study was prepared using a sample of available data from formula-driven models in use across the three Colleges. 21 T&R academics with a 40% research - 40% teaching -20% work allocation were analysed. Normalised to focus on the teaching allocation the across the different formulas, using course-related and enrolment data, the findings demonstrated considerable variation of workload at an institutional level, confirming the high potential for inequity (Figure 9).
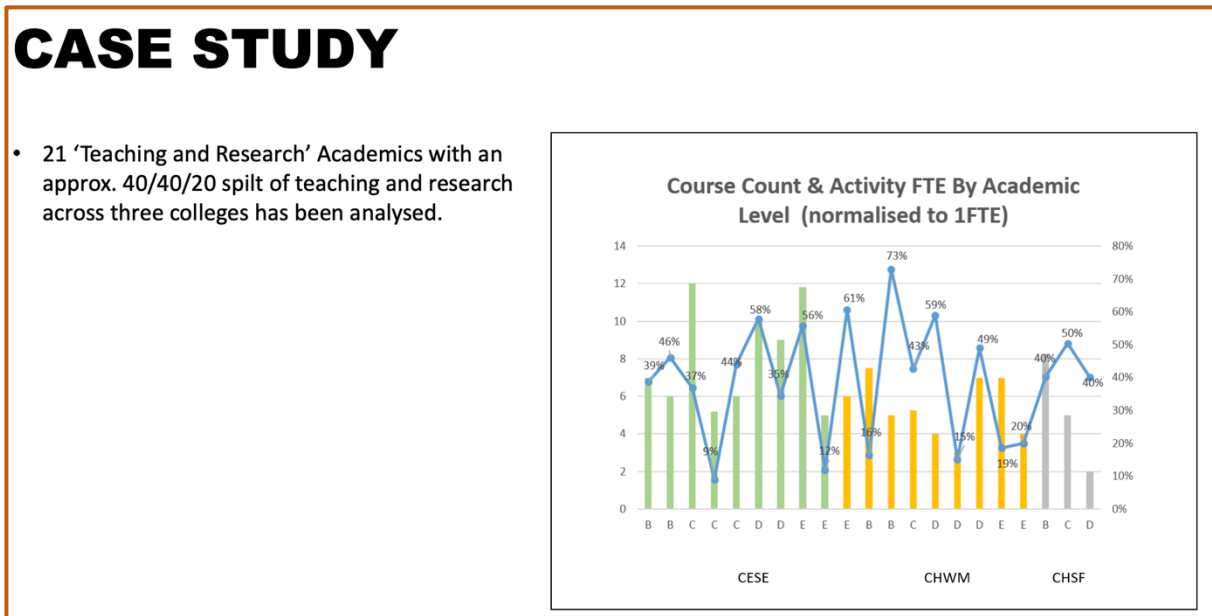
Figure 9. Case study from March 2021 of course load and activity for 21 T&R academics with local models normalised and compared demonstrating variability of workload leading to inequity

Academic Work Allocation Strategic Project

To address the inconsistent practices across the institution, and in response to the research and sample data analysis, an Academic Work Allocation strategic project was **established in 2021** under the leadership of the Pro Vice–Chancellor Academic Excellence, Athena Swan Lead, and the Chief People and Culture Officer. The project team reported to a Steering Committee chaired by the Vice-Chancellor, with two key advisory groups comprising both academic and professional staff members to guide the design and implementation of the project (Figure 10).
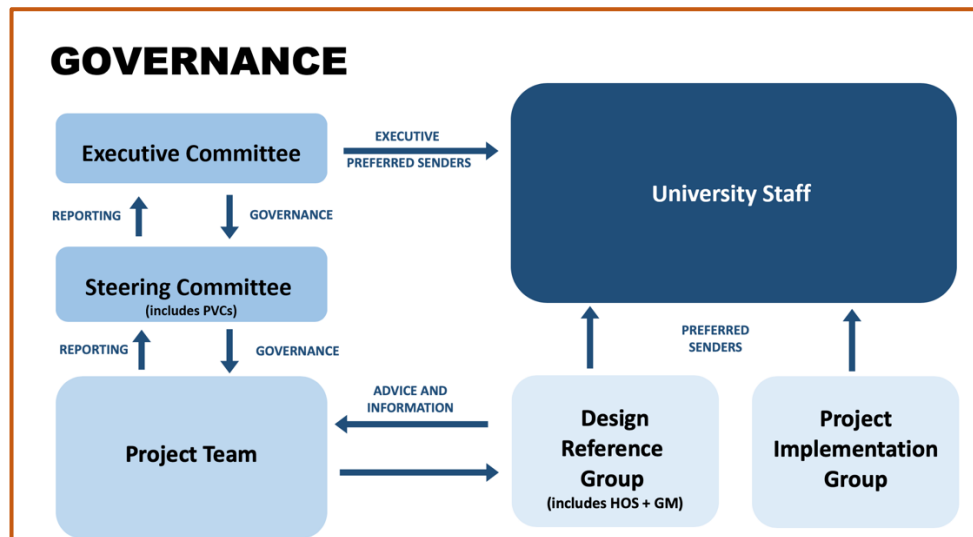
Figure 10. AWAM project governance and reporting structure

The project aim was to establish an **institution-wide, principles-based approach** to the distribution of academic work, **aligned with the University values** of excellence, engagement, equity and sustainability (Figure 11), and **underpinned by a new policy**. In line with ASBAP Action 7.3, it was charged with delivering a **workload allocation framework** supported by a **single IT system** (WAMS), with regular **reporting and review protocols** and **shared governance processes**.
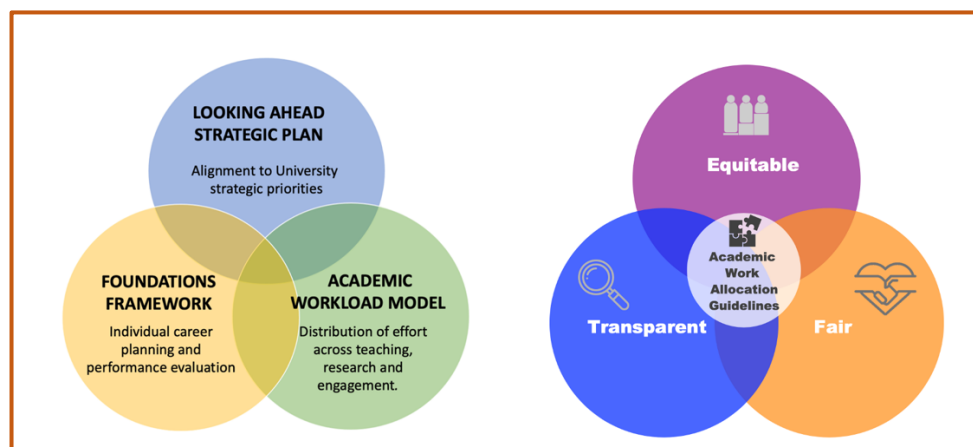
Figure 11. Relationship between AWAM, University strategic priorities, and Career planning and performance evaluation which have EDI KPIs embed within them.

A 2022 timeline was established to monitor the progress the development of a consistent framework for the allocation of academic and single IT system to support transparent reporting (Figure 12).
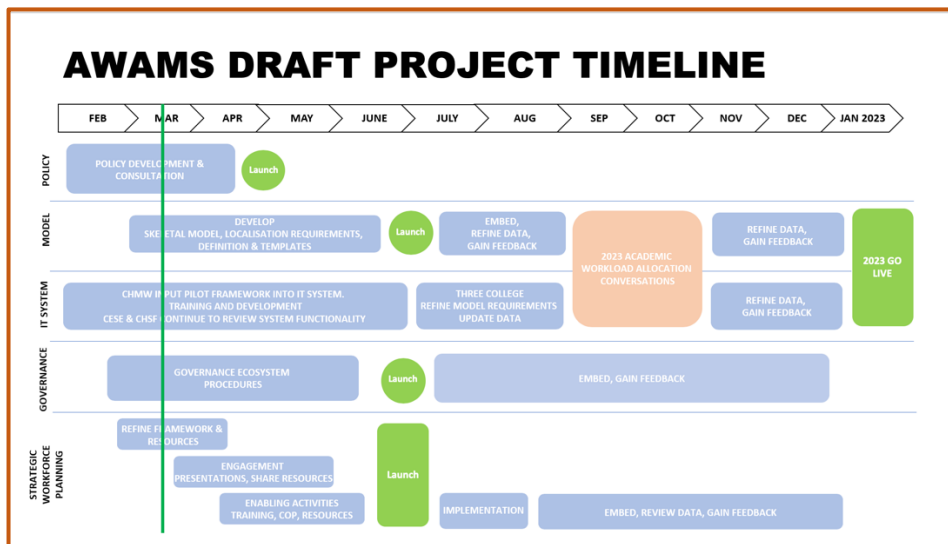
Figure 12. 2022 timeline established in for the development of consistent framework for workload allocation and transparent reporting to go live with a 2023 AWAM Pilot

The program of work for 2022 was designed to establish and communicate the purpose of a University-wide approach to improve equality and transparency across the institution, with consultation of stakeholders, involving leaders, staff and students across the institution, and with payoffs that would support performance excellence and a positive academic culture (Figure 13).

Figure 13. AWAM Program designed to communicate Purpose, Particulars, People and Payoffs to staff

The subsequent streams of work focused on the development of AWAM governance instruments, a skeletal model that focuses on principles (as opposed to formulas), a central and supported record keeping system (known as WAMs), people management providing flexibility and focused on outcomes relative to opportunity, and a governance framework to support regular review of AWAM against the principle of equity (Figure 14).
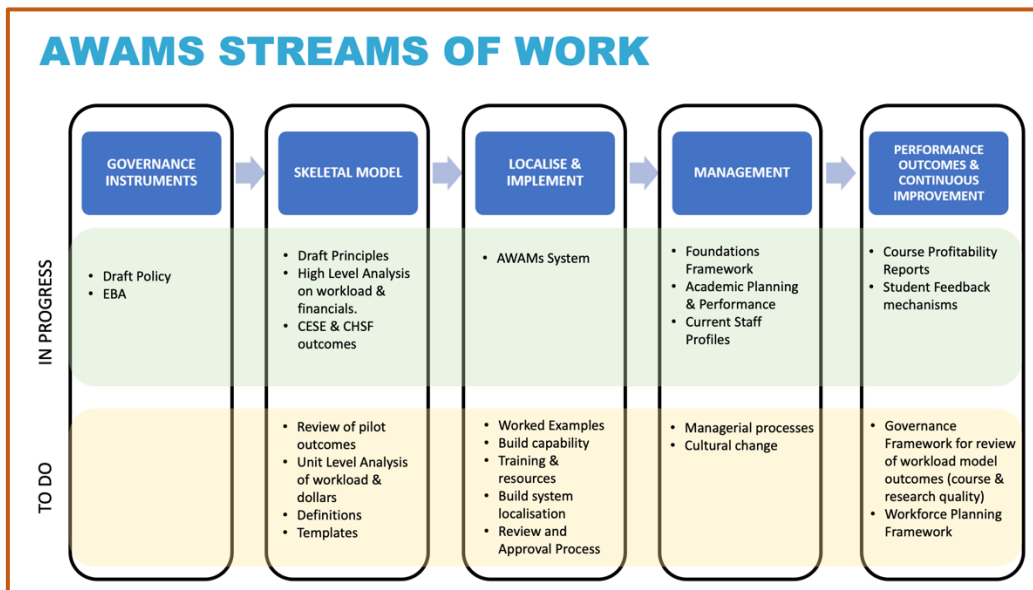
Figure 14. AWAM Streams of Work developed around the pillars of governance, skeletal model, local implementation, management, and outcomes

Staff were surveyed about the most important principles in work allocation, with the identification of equity, fairness, and transparency as the three most important across the institutions (Figure 15).
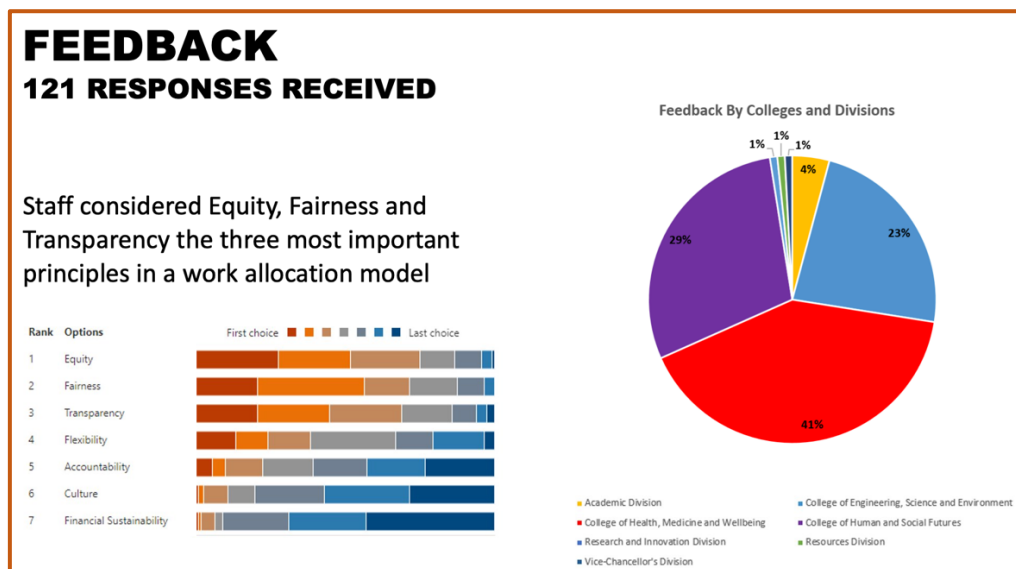
Figure 15. Feedback from first all-staff survey on AWAM project

As part of the all-staff survey, there was also the opportunity for additional comments that were grouped into emerging themes to guide the development of AWAM, which found support for an insitution-wide approach with a number of concerns related to increased workloads, research expectations, and leadership role allocations (Figure 16). These themes underscored the ASIABA concerns that previous AWAMs had not properly captured service allocations in the past. This pointed to the need to ensure that **service allocations were embedded** into the **new academic work allocation framework**.

ROUND 1 & 2 CONSULTATION THEMES

1. Desire for an institutional wide approach is strong.
2. Concern that the approach may increase teaching loads for some staff.
3. Desire for further details on the School level Minimum Research Performance Standards.
4. Further review of some key leadership role allocations (Discipline lead and Program Convenor).
5. Concern that larger allocation of leadership & engagement roles will pull from research rather than teaching allocation.
6. Staff want to see how the approach will be implemented. i.e. how will large courses be allocated, team teaching, professional practice, end on honours.

Figure 16. Emerging themes in the first all-staff feedback in July/August 2022

In response to consultation theme 4, a more detailed analysis of service roles was undertaken (Figure 17) with the recommendation that School Governance and Program Convenor responsibilities be undertaken to understand fully the workload involved.

SCHOOL GOVERNANCE

Deputy Heads and Discipline Leads
• Variation in number and scope of Deputy Heads and Discipline Leads across Schools
• Usually 2 (Research and Teaching) appointed at Level D or E on a fixed term basis (2-3 years)
• Currently allocation varies dependent on scope of role description.
• *Policy Governing Schools*, does not recognise Disciplines as functioning academic organisational units.

Program Convenors
• The Program Management Procedure Manual outlines responsibilities for Program Convenors.
• Given changes to approach ie/ Program Management reports, review of this policy is needed.
• Scope of position in manual may exceed allocation of 10%.
• There are 508 Programs across the University (ELICOS, Enabling, Non Award, Undergrad, Postgrad and Higher Degree Research).

RECOMMENDATION: Review of School Governance approach and Program Convenor responsibilities to be to be undertaken with Academic Division Leaders.

Figure 17. Review of School Governance roles in response to feedback

The workload of Program Convenor roles were compared with the determination that the model should have the flexibility to reflect program size, with Heads of School given the ability to increase and record a higher allocation (Figures 18).
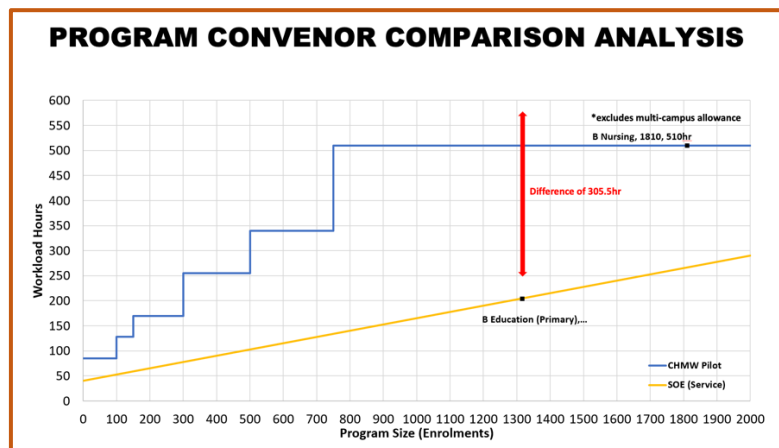
Figure 18. Program Convenor Comparison Analysis of two the University's largest programs

Following this analysis, and with additional consultation across the institution, designated service roles and with agreed allocations were introduced into new AWAM to bring greater visibility to expectations at the base allocation level of 10% and specific roles with more significant accountability. (Figure 19)

Table 4: Leadership and Engagement Key Leaders hip Roles			
Base 10% Leadership & Engagement	**'+up to 10%**	**+up to 20%**	**+ up to 30%**
Activities that have been explicitly assigned and/or are recognised by the Head of School (or equivalent) such as: a. participation in University governance (i.e. committees), administration, graduations, recruitment events and activities at the School, College and/or University level; b. participation in industry and community engagement activities relevant to discipline/profession expertise - including, media interviews / commentary, involvement in the education or governance of community organisations. c. Discipline and School meetings, workshops, working groups, and retreats, graduation, open day, other student recruitment and retention activities, exhibitions, Industry advisory panels and student consultative committees, etc.	Chair / Member of University Committee SACO HDR Coordinator Placement Coordinator (inc., PEU Convenor) Special Projects (Accreditation, Major course redesign)	Discipline / Cluster Lead Program Convenor (inc. Clinical and Deputy Program Convenor)	Deputy Head of School

Figure 19. Leadership and Engagement Roles in the AWAM

The resulting Academic Work Allocation Policy includes a clearly articulated purpose of providing a framework for planning, allocating, and reporting of work allocation for academic staff to support excellence in the three domains of academic work: research and innovation, teaching and learning, leadership and engagement (Figure 20).

Figure 20. New Academic Work Allocation Policy

The relationship between different governance documents related to AWAM was shared with leaders and staff, demonstrating the connections between the Enterprise Agreement, Policy, Procedures, and Supplementary Documents (Figure 21) which were tailored to discipline-level needs in the Schools, including Guidelines for Heads of School and Minimum Levels of Research Performance.
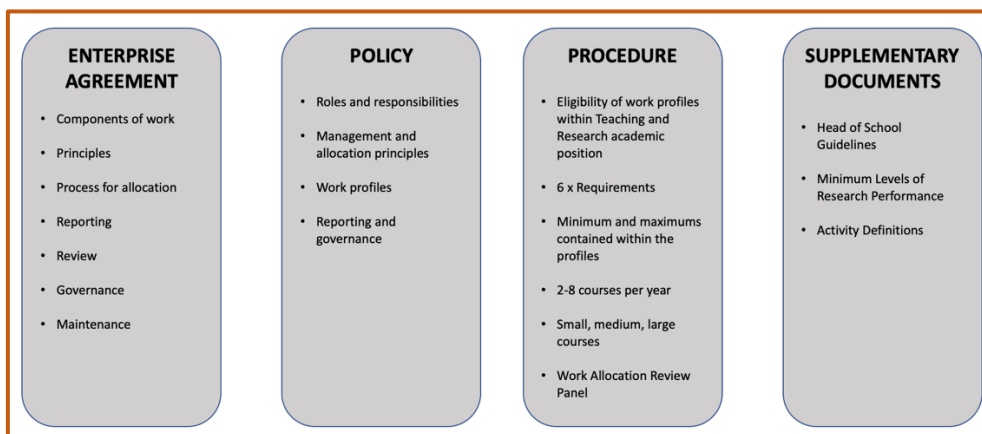
Figure 21. Governance Documents Supporting the New Academic Work Allocation Framework

The draft AWAM policy, procedure, and guidelines were shared with staff as part of an institution-wide consultation process between March and November 2022. This included:

- **3 all-staff consultation rounds;**
- **3 all-staff forums reporting on the feedback (March, June, November);**
- **38 College, Division and School-level workshops;**
- **2 NTEU Staff Consultative Committee meetings.**

Changes made in response to consultation were communicated back to leaders and staff (Figure 22).

Figure 22. Changes made in response to staff feedback

Simultaneously, a **single IT system** (WAMS) was procured and with academic and professional managers with the Colleges and Schools trained to enter the AWAM data in a consistent way. (Figure 23) A WAMS User Guide and Checklist were written to ensure data integrity and reliability, and School Executive Officers were trained and supported throughout the pilot year both to deliver equity and to document variation within the system.

Figure 23. WAMS User Guide Checklist for data-entry consistency and sample individual allocation

A **shared governance structure** was embedded into the design of the new academic work allocation framework and shared widely with staff (Figure 24).
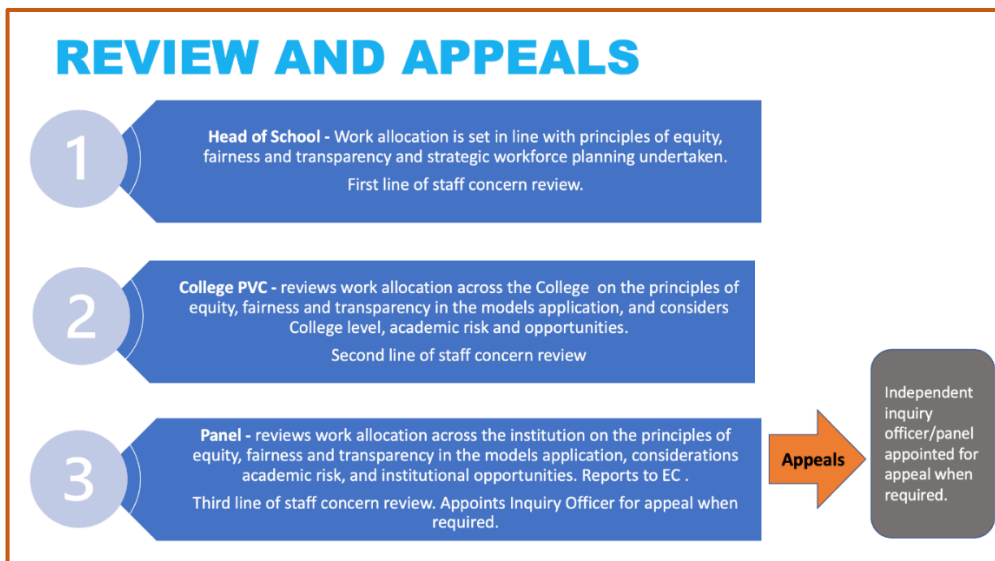
Figure 24. Shared governance structure embedded into the new academic work allocation framework

Outcomes

It is important to note that while the primary action (7.3 ASBAP) is complete with the new academic work allocation framework in place and greater transparency delivered through the reporting and review procedures at every level enabled with the institutional use of the single IT System, the University is aware that we are moving into the final stage of progression, which involves embedding the AWAM over the next two years (Figure 25).
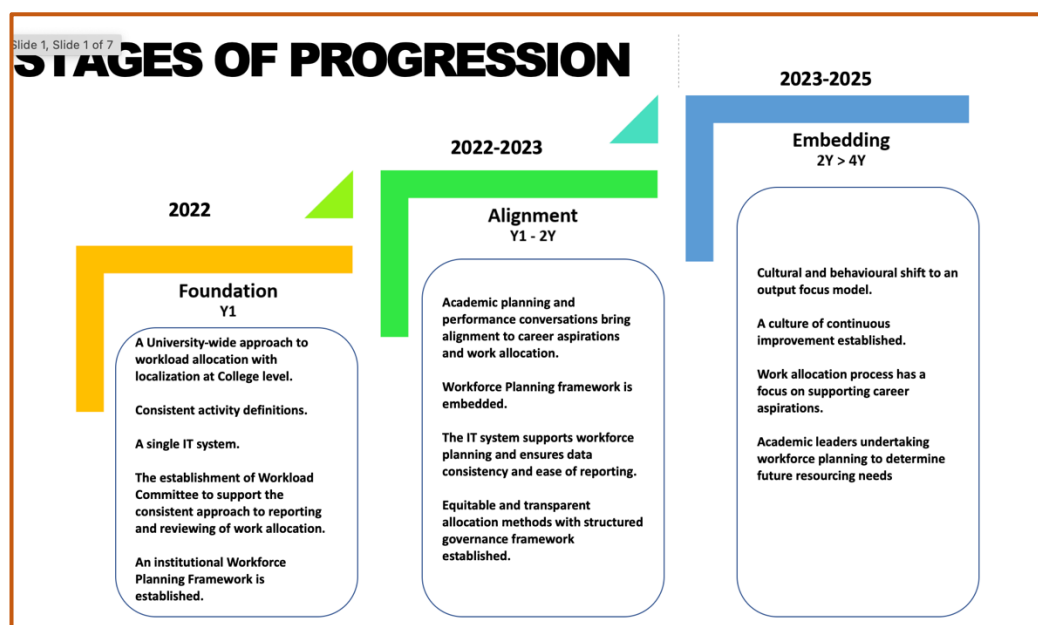
Figure 25. Stages of Progression of the new AWAM.

Nevertheless, there have been significant outcomes for the institution, specifically related to the transparency enabled through accurate reporting (Figures 26-27) and a cultural shift towards people managing the workload of people with data-informed governance (see **Impact section** below, for the first evidence of this shift).

In response to the ASBAP Action 7.3 the following outcomes were achieved to reduce the impact of this barrier and related sub-barriers:

BARRIER	JUSTIFICATION / EVIDENCE	OUTCOME	DELIVERY DATE
Lack of transparent reporting to ensure women are not unfairly burdened in the allocation of workload.	Evidence from the 2017 Gender Pulse Survey indicated potential inequities in allocation of workload by gender.	**Development and implementation of an IT system (WAMS) to report on workload allocation across the institution.**	September 2022

SUB-BARRIER	JUSTIFICATION / EVIDENCE	OUTCOME	DELIVERY DATE
Lack of governance mechanisms to support institutional strategic priorities related to workload allocation.	Difficult to report governance and accountability issues related to gender equity and workload allocation without the existence of a policy.	**Development and implementation of a new Academic Work Allocation Policy.**	September 2022

Inconsistent framework for workload allocation.	15 disparate workload allocation models across the institution leads to inconsistency in workload allocation for academic staff	**Institution-wide consultation to develop a new institution wide, principles-based approach to Academic Work Allocation**.	March – Nov 2022
Limited transparency of workload allocation within Colleges and Schools.	Results from the 2017 Gender Equity survey showed significantly fewer women than men felt that workload was equally proportioned on gender.	**Establishment of Shared Governance Structure to provide institutional oversight to the application of the model**	December 2022
Lack of delegation of responsibilities to senior female academic staff**.**	Female academic staff require leadership opportunities that are recognised in Workload for career progression.	**Establishment of Academic Work Allocation Panel to provide institutional oversight to the application of the model.**	December 2022
Inconsistent practices to recognise outreach activities and non-traditional research outputs.	Women and other equity groups make important contributions through outreach, service or non-traditional outputs that should be recognised in workload.	**Introduction of qualitative evaluation of AWAM focussed on criteria related to issues of transparency, fairness and equity, accountability, reward and recognition.**	April 2023

The AWAM is supported by the consistent use of an IT system, Workload Allocations Management System (WAMS), across each school and academic unit, which has improved transparency and reporting capabilities across the institution and has significantly enhanced the University's ability to meet its reporting obligations under the current Enterprise Agreement. Based on the data (available on 6 April 2023), the University's academic work allocation is generally distributed on a "40/40/20" basis, where 40% is Teaching and Learning, 40% is Research and Innovation, and 20% Leadership and Engagement (Figure 23).

When considering work allocation by gender, we see minor differences between female and male staff at the institutional level (Figure 24). Work allocation when considered by academic level (Figure 25) indicates that early and mid-career academics have a greater focus on teaching responsibilities, while senior academics have greater time allocated to research work. Data presented here includes all ongoing and fixed-term academic staff irrespective of staff function (research intensive, teaching intensive, and teaching and research) and has been adjusted to reflect a notional Full-Time Equivalent (FTE) allocation for part-time staff. These data sets are reviewed on a quarterly basis by the Academic Work Allocation Governance Panel.

Figure 23. Overall institution academic work allocation
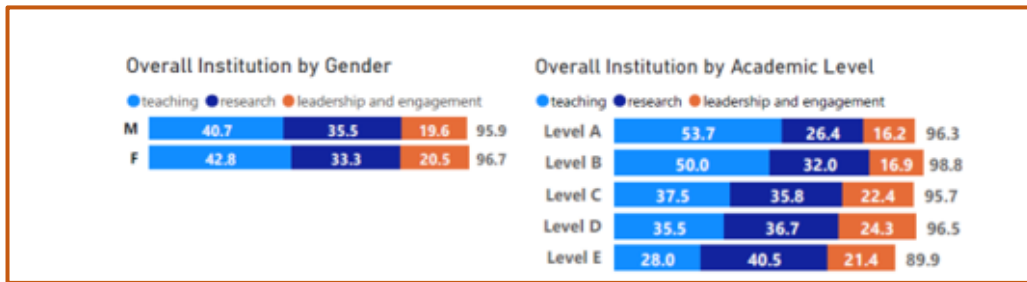
Figures 26 and 27. Academic Work Allocation, Overall Institution cut by Gender and by Academic Level

It is now possible to produce data-informed reporting by gender and academic level, broken down by College, School, or individuals.
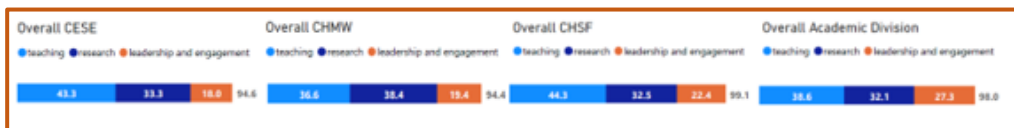
Figures 28. Academic Work Allocation across the three domains by College
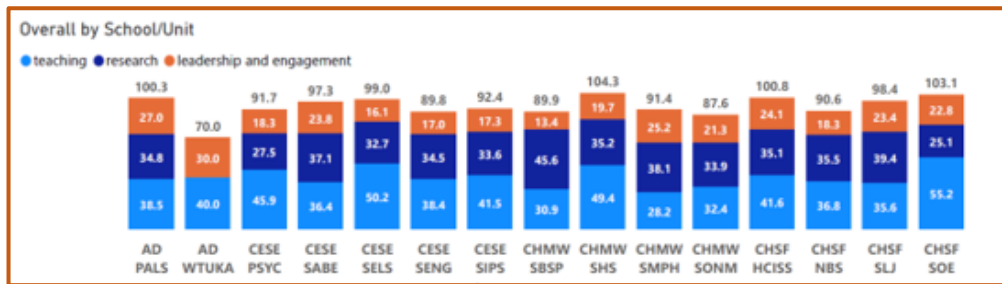
Figure 29. Academic Work Allocation across the three domains by School/Unit

Data analysis is now also able to be carried out relating workload to number of courses taught and number of enrolments via a live dashboard, noting that the proposed allocation must be used as a general guide to assist discussions, with the opportunity for staff members and the Head of School to discuss allocations more suitable for their own context (Figure 30).
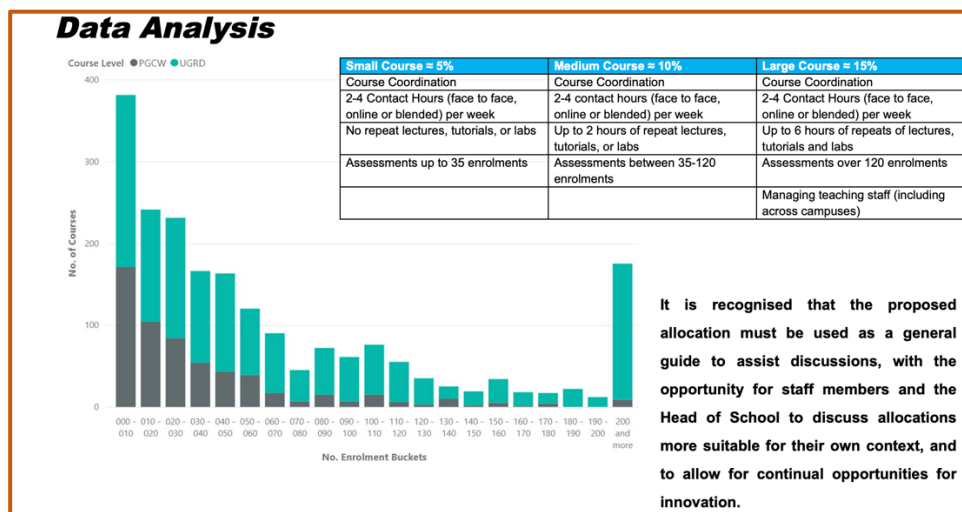
Figure 30. Dashboard for comparative data analysis with textual reminder of allocation principles and shared governance that deliver equity

As inconsistent workload allocation practices were shifted to the new Academic Work Allocation Framework in 2023, leaders and staff were referred to academic outcomes and performance standards defined in the Foundations for Inspiring People (the University's framework for academic appointments, as well as planning and performance reviews), which had been reformed and ratified in 2021 (Figure 31). In promotions, and in annual performance review process, staff are encouraged to use the framework in relation to their proportional work allocations (now visible in WAMS) to draft Relative to Opportunity statements (See the University of Newcastle's Cygnet 2 – Career Development Support).

Foundations for Inspiring People Framework

Level	Research	Teaching	Engagement
A Emerging profile in teaching and in disciplinary research	• Formulating a coherent research program, working within a research group (where relevant), participating in applications for competitive research grants and publishing or exhibiting in high-quality outlets, often in collaboration with colleagues, consistent with their discipline.	• Achieving teaching quality as indicated by internal and external surveys and outcomes for students that will improve or innovate in response to feedback. • Preparing and delivering lectures, presenting tutorials, seminars, practical classes, demonstrations, workshops, student field excursions, clinical sessions, and studio sessions	• Demonstrating efficient performance in allocated internal roles, sharing academic service responsibilities, contributing to outcomes of internal committees, and beginning to develop external collaborations
B Growing profile in teaching, research, and engagement	• Established record of publication or non-traditional research output in high-quality outlets. • Achieving national recognition in their discipline and taking a chief investigator role (often in conjunction with more experienced researchers) in applications for external research funds.	• Contributing at undergraduate, honours and postgraduate levels, taking responsibility for the preparation and delivery of course modules and coordinating one or more courses, including collaboration in curriculum design and delivery where appropriate. • Diverse teaching portfolios, covering several units of study and sometimes over several courses.	• Demonstrating efficient performance in allocated internal service roles and actively building external collaborations.
C Established record of achievement in research, teaching, and engagement	• Demonstrating a capacity for independent research; contributing as a chief investigator including collaborations which create new insights and opportunities and successfully managing significant external research funds. • Developing international profile for research in their field through publication or non-traditional research output in high quality outlets and, where relevant, by the impact of their research on policy, practice and/or commercialisation. • Active and effective record of primary supervision of Higher Degree by Research students with timely completions.	• Demonstrating leadership in learning and teaching activities, having a central role in course and curriculum development, and peer mentoring.	• Demonstrating outstanding performance in a range of higher-level internal duties, providing a strong contribution to external activities, and developing international collaborations.
D Demonstrate excellence in research, teaching, and engagement. Sustained record of outstanding impact and achievement that is internationally recognised in either research or teaching	• Demonstrating quality and impact of their work through publication or exhibition in internationally recognised outlets, and, where relevant, through its impact on policy, practice and/or commercialisation. • Record of successful applications for external research funding in a chief investigator role and mentoring more junior academic staff and researchers. • Active and effective record of supervising Higher Degree by Research students successfully to timely completion as the primary supervisor.	• Demonstrating strategic leadership in the planning and delivery of curriculum, which where relevant may include clinical teaching. • Recognised as a 'content specialist' within their College, teaching in specialist areas across courses and disciplines as appropriate	• Making a strong contribution to the governance of the University, including successful mentoring of more junior academic staff. • Leading and forming strategic partnerships between the University and industry/government and other stakeholders nationally and internationally
E Demonstrate excellence and a high level of leadership in research, teaching, and engagement. Recognised internationally for their scholarly contribution and for its impact on policy or practice	• Demonstrating outstanding outcomes and leadership. Guiding the development of more junior researchers, leading major funding initiatives, making significant contributions to knowledge and the beneficial application of knowledge, and intellectual leadership beyond the specific area of research or creative activity.	• Distinguished record of scholarly teaching and leadership across all levels and appropriate contexts, including clinical teaching where appropriate. • Actively developing educational policy and curriculum areas within the discipline.	• Making a significant contribution to the governance of the University, including developing policy and providing leadership in community activities, in professional, commercial, and industrial sectors at a national and international level

Figure 31. Performance Standards by Academic Level for each domain of academic work

Impact

In October 2023, using a snowball sampling approach, an **independent qualitative researcher** interviewed 14 University Staff; ten with a role in the implementation of AWAM (i.e., Head of Discipline, Head of School or School Executive Officer). The sample provided a range of perspectives across various career stages, disciplinary backgrounds, Colleges/Schools; as well as diversity in gender, Aboriginal identity, and cultural and linguistic background.

The findings demonstrated the multifaceted nature of work allocation as it touches upon operational and cultural aspects within the University. There were elements of the new AWAM that were appreciated and perceived to support equity where it did not previously exist, with several examples of positive impact when implemented well (Tables 2 and 3 below).

Challenges and complexities of AWAM implementation were also emphasised and will need to be addressed to ensure its goals of equity, fairness, and transparency in work allocation are realised more broadly. Overarching recommendations for improvement are provided in Table 4 at the end of this section.

Table 2: Examples of positive impact for implementers (Heads of School, School Executive Officers, etc)

Implementer quotes: examples of positive impact
P07: *[We, School Leaders] have to make sure that any exceptions are consistently inconsistent so that no one is overdoing that or underdoing that or Heads of School actually realize they do have some discretion. I'll give it a good example…* **We have a colleague in our college who has had a major [health concern]***… we're going to adjust around her needs…* **we're going to look out for her.** *She wants to get back to it. She has a [career goal] in place for next year - I want her to be able to do it; if she doesn't, we'll delay that. If she can't teach as much, we won't… What I mean is I don't mind that* **we put equity first** *and that's not unfair to others.*
P01: *We have regular academic catch-ups…* **making sure that we had this ongoing process of making staff aware of what was happening, inviting them to be part of the discussion… that's been really positive…** *I think it was really useful to take away the kind of special considerations because it gave people some really concrete tasks to aim towards… we've sort of tried as we've gone along to* **keep people informed, allow them to give feedback, and then also making sure that there was a real transparency** *so that… there's a greater sharing of the service workload.*
P02: **Women and people of colour tend to take on** *program convenorships or those* **Leadership roles** *that some people don't see as Leadership, they see them as administration… before [AWAM] people were getting the same amount of Engagement and Leadership percentage to do not the same level of work, not the same kind of work. And* **now that's very transparent.** *If you're a program convener, you get X. If you're Head of Discipline, you get X. If are a Deputy Head of School, you get X. It's very clear. We also have position descriptions for each of those roles.*
P06: *So some of us staff are not meeting those... they're below what's been called the minimum levels of research performance. So those conversations are part of the formal meeting. And it's not like, "Oh, you are in trouble." It's more like,* **"Okay. How can we support you so that you can meet the research performance** *across the three domains?"*
A03: *I'm trying to do it* **as equitably as I can** *and where we have identified we need to make a big change to something and that's going to mean this and that, and you think through expertise and you go, okay, this staff might be appropriate, and you go and look at what their workload is and then you're like, well, how can we fit it? What can we take out? What works? Where there's a big change proposed,* **I'll discuss this** *and* **I'll find out what they [the staff] would like to do** *rather than just bring it to a big meeting in front of a whole bunch of people where they may not feel comfortable really discussing it.*

Table 3: Examples of positive impact for academic staff members

Staff quotes: examples of positive impact
P01: *Well, just to give you an example, for the last five years, I've taught summer - summer one and summer two. [i.e., no break in teaching throughout the year].* **Because we've got the workload allocation model, the two of us that have been the heavy lifters** *for summer,* **we're having this summer off.**
A05: *My teaching has been... much more fair than it ever was throughout the other [number] years that I'd been here...* **I can actually do some research and help other people with their research which is part of my role***... that's actually a really great opportunity. So* **it aligns with my goals***... and I haven't taught any course that I have to study and then teach so far. –A04 (staff perspective)*
A03: *I am certainly aware in some other Schools, in some other areas, that this introduction of the* **AWAM has made things really clear that some people were being massively overworked***.*
A04: *He [Head of Discipline] takes care of me. If I'm working too much, he's like, "[A04], how are you managing that? Stop this and do that, and don't let them use you." Things like that, they have done, so* **I'm really grateful to have such people, such leadership in the School***... they have a new course on [discipline topic] and that's my PhD area. My PhD research was on that and originally, they were not going to give that to me. I was supposed to do other courses, but* **my Discipline lead communicated with the Head of School.** *"It should be given to [A04] because that's her expertise."* **That's very much of a positive, because they understood where my expertise lies** *and I haven't taught any course that I have to study and then teach so far.*
A05: *I've seen other staff, other colleagues sort of push back a little bit and just go, "Actually, I can't because that's something that will not be counted anywhere." I think [the AWAM] has given people a little bit of* **space to say no to those external demands** *and things. So that's actually pretty useful because I think those* **other academics now understand because they've got the same pressures and they've got the same measurable kind of outcomes** *that are required.*
A01: **I think our School has a pretty good system.** *I mean, the workload allocation was done by Head of School and the admin team and then was distributed for comment and we had a two-week period in which we could provide feedback. And a panel was put together to assess that...* **ultimately I think everyone's being treated equally***.*

Results of thematic analysis: Key factors influencing implementation of the AWAM

Culture and mindset

The culture within schools and the mindset of staff impacted on AWAM implementation. Some staff saw the AWAM as a tool for **fair and equitable** allocation of work, welcomed it as an opportunity for career progression, and reported greater awareness of their role and responsibilities as a result of the **transparency** and **accountability**. Participant P01 discussed how the AWAM had led to more team-teaching and collaboration within their School, enhancing the quality of education and positively affecting student experience. The AWAM also carried challenges and emotional attachment for some staff, at times leading to negative perceptions and/or experiences. Participant P06 summarised: *There's a lot of emotion attached to workload allocation... not everyone believes it's an equitable workload model.* Importantly, there was indication of progressive improvements relating to the culture and mindset around work allocation at the University. Many participants acknowledged that staff were becoming accustomed to the new model; participant P02 for example: *It's not a comfortable space for some staff who are just used to that [allocated] percentage without explaining what the impact of their time and efforts are [i.e., previous models], but we are still in transition.* The previous approach to work allocation at each college and/or school also appeared to impact on implementation of the new AWAM. One the one hand, some staff believed their previous model was effective and did not understand the need for a change. Participant P03 for example: *The*

new one [AWAM] was retrofitting what we currently had... what we had worked... we didn't see the need for it [AWAM]. On the other hand, staff from schools that were previously lacking in an operational model welcomed the introduction of a more formalized approach to work allocation.

Governance and leadership

Good governance and School leadership was essential for implementation of the AWAM, especially in terms of **flexibility** and **fair/equitable** allocation of work. Participants recognised the powerful influence of School Leaders as the point-of-contact and final decision-makers. Participant A07, a School leader, described their approach for ensuring **equitable** workload: *my job as a boss for any of my team is to make sure that they're not taking too much... It's your life, it's your career, but if it looks like you're overburdened, that course is a little problematic, you need little extra help - that's my job to help you.*

Trust in School Leadership played an important role in staff perceptions of the AWAM: staff with a high level of trust reflected positively while staff with mistrust expressed concerns. Participant A03 summarised: *A good Head of School, you want them to have that discretion to make decisions about things like special projects. But a lesser Head of School, then all sorts of things like nepotism and misusing that power comes up. And I think that [the AWAM] is a tool for good or a tool for evil depending on who is wielding it.*

For many schools, the AWAM had increased discussion around work allocation between staff and school leaders. These discussions provided insight into staff's needs, goals, and concerns (**career planning and progression**); highlighting issues of capacity (**equity and fairness**) and informing changes to accommodate individual staff where suitable (**flexibility**). Participant A03 reflected positively on their experience: *I would speak to the Head of School about that and she's very open to having those discussions. The staff in our team would probably initially talk to me about that. I would be very open to it as well… we want the percentage allocation to match reality as closely as possible, and I think that's the overarching goal. And wherever there's a significant mismatch there, then there's certainly scope for discussion about that.*

University-wide approach

An institution-wide approach was associated with several advantages including reinforcement of shared values and goals, as well as improving staff desire to contribute towards the collective. Participant P05: *We didn't have a formal workload allocation model prior to this... This has formalized it and brought us in line the remainder of the University.* However, there were some participants who expressed concerns with a 'one-size-fits-all' model, in particular where the AWAM was not perceived to fit within the unique remit of their school. More effort may be needed to ensure the AWAM accommodates for diverse academic contexts. In some of these cases, the participant shared positive examples of where the AWAM had been adapted for their school (displayed **flexibility**) in collaboration with AWAM leadership. Participant P03 shared: *I have found some difficulties and complexities given the nature of our courses; they're quite small... There just wasn't enough allocations, what was all left, so that was the struggle we had. We ended up, we found a compromise and we had a meeting with [AWAM leader] about why we were doing things that were over, and she understood.*

Communication and messaging

Participants discussed the importance of open and **transparent** communication and messaging regarding the AWAM. Where effective, this led to reduced uncertainty and built staff trust in the processes. In one school, successful AWAM implementation was attributed to communication

strategies such as discussions with AWAM leadership, regular meetings to keep staff informed, and encouraging staff involvement and feedback. Conversely, insufficient communication and/or ineffective messaging resulted in misinterpretation of intended benefits and outcomes of the AWAM. A notable barrier was staff choosing not to engage with AWAM information, albeit accessible. Participant P01 described: *I've actually had staff say in a meeting, "I don't want to know all the background, just tell me what I have to do." And that's actually really unhelpful because then they want to come back and nitpick.*

AWAM characteristics

Many participants reflected positively on the **transparency** and **accountability** provided through the public sharing of work allocation; however, there were also concerns that this may instigate comparison among colleague(s) and lacked context to justify differences. Participant A03 described: *I know in our school we'll be having a meeting as a Discipline and everyone will be in there to hear everyone's allocations to make sure there is that transparency. And I think that is useful to understand. So there's no murmurings in the background and things like that, but it does then open things up to show everyone, "Oh, this person only has two courses, but this person has three. Is that really fair? And how does that play out?" So I think there's complexities and pros and cons for that but I think the pros outweigh the cons.*

Many participants also praised the **transparency** and **accountability** provided through the clearly outlined procedures. Participant A06 described: *…we have to follow the procedure to make a case and go through the review panel and a recommendation to Head of School. So nowadays, we have a very clear process to follow, this is good… the clear policy or procedure to follow makes everyone feel that the new process is transparent.*

The AWAM was commended for its approach to account for special projects and leadership roles (e.g., Program Convenor) in the allocation of work. According to Participant P02, this ensured **fair** work allocation and due **recognition and reward** for females and staff of other equity cohorts: *By and large, the women doing those things -the outreach, engagement [i.e., previously unrecognised work], and the people of colour who are invested in communities in a different way- their impact is huge and it's not a problem to prove what they're bringing back into the School, the Discipline, the University.*

For some schools, there was also indication of managerial benefits: promoting administrative efficiency through centralising some aspects of work allocation and reducing the need for redundant processes; providing consistent data to inform decisions about resource allocation, faculty development and staffing needs; and ensuring legal compliance (risk management) through alignment with the Enterprise Bargaining agreement.

Finally, the **transparency** and **accountability** within the AWAM served as institutional support for equity cohorts who tended to have greater workload than their counterparts. This includes staff who are junior, women, Indigenous, and/or culturally and linguistically diverse. Participant P02 described: *[pre-AWAM] We had level A's who were intimidated… People who were more empowered, extroverts, tended to argue better, got better workload than others… there are always going to be people who can argue like a lawyer and make a better case, and that can be gender specific in my School. It also can be culturally specific, for example if English is your second language.* The AWAM supported **fair and equitable** work allocation for such staff and ensured **recognition and reward** for additional work. Staff P01, an Aboriginal academic staff member, explained: *AWAM actually forms a kind of protective layer for us to be able to say to another School, "I'm sorry, but that doesn't fit into the new workload*

profile." So for instance, we would just get asked constantly to do guest lectures but not get any [recognition]… It's just given me license to push back. And I have very much appreciated that.

Table 4. Recommendations for improvement

RECOMMENDATION (Themes)
• Improve/formalise communication mechanisms between staff and leadership to ensure that staff preferences and career goals are heard and accounted for in work allocation. Academic Planning and Performance (APP) meetings may provide a useful opportunity to integrate discussions regarding work allocation and staff career goals and progression.
• Improve accountability mechanisms for the discretion provided to Heads of Schools to enhance fair and equitable work allocation, and to increase the trust and support of staff.
• Consider new ways of marketing the AWAM and work allocation to better communicate its processes and key principles to staff; for example, through engaging video-format.
• Ensure that the AWAM is adaptable for Schools/Centres that may not fit the 'typical' school format; in particular, for schools with different teaching purposes and/or approaches.
• Address staff concerns with the current approach for teaching allocation (e.g., based on enrolment); especially for classes with low enrolment but high level of responsibility required for course coordination.
• Enhance implementation processes to account for Schools that work with other Schools/Centres to deliver programs. This includes addressing logistical/ management challenges in implementation that arise for Schools/Centres with staff that have teaching responsibilities in other schools.
• Continue to seek feedback and insight from staff, leaders and School Executive Officers to inform further improvements to the AWAM.
• Emphasise/reinforce the positive impacts of a unified work allocation model. Regarding messaging, consider including successful case studies from other higher education and research institutions that have implemented a similar model, to help alleviate staff concerns and progress normalisation.
Please note: This is not a comprehensive list of all recommendations made by the interviewed participants; rather, this includes the themes that emerged for recommendations (an overview of the key findings), inclusive of all participant data.

Further Actions

Ref	Rationale/Evidence	Actions	Year	Responsibility	Budget	Desired Outcome/Target
1	Further evaluation required with a large sample of academic staff to determine impact at each academic level and to assess consistency of application across schools.	Survey all academic staff on AWAM's using Workload Principles Matrix based questions to supplement current qualitative data.	Nov/Dec 2023	EDI SPP HR Academic Excellence	N/A	Comprehensive data sets that highlight results across different academic levels (by gender) and patterns across Schools.
2	Ensuring key principles are maintained in the ongoing use of AWAM.	Further embed AWAM in Schools with a focus on equity considerations.	2024 2025	EDI Assistant Deans EDI Athena Swan Working Party	N/A	Survey data demonstrates workload principles are being adhered to.
3	Communication channel between academic staff member and Head of School required to link career goals with work allocation.	Promote Academic Planning and Performance process as opportunity to link career goals with workload allocation.	2024	HR Heads of School	N/A	Greater linkage with Academic Planning and Performance annual processes and setting of career goals