SAGE Cygnet Awards
for the SAGE Athena Swan
Accreditation Pathway

Edith Cowan University (ECU)
Application Form

Addressing Diversity in the School
of Nursing and Midwifery

CONTENTS

SAGE CYGNET AWARD APPLICATION FORM

SAGE Cygnet Award Application

Name of Institution	Edith Cowan University (ECU)
Date of Application	30 October 2023
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GLOSSARY

ALEV	Academic level
ALEVA	Associate Lecturer
ALEVB	Lecturer
ALEVC	Senior Lecturer
ALEVD	Associate Professor
ALEVE	Professor
AS	Athena Swan
ASPEO	Academic Staff Performance Expectations and Outcomes Framework
ASBA	ECU's Athena Swan Bronze Application document
ASBAP	ECU's Athena Swan Bronze Action Plan
CaLD	culturally and linguistically diverse
DVC	Deputy Vice-Chancellor
DVC RF	Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Regional Futures)
DVC SEI	Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Students, Equity & Indigenous)
ECU	Edith Cowan University
ECUASCC	ECU Athena Swan Charter Committee
FTE	hours worked by one employee on a full-time basis
HRSC	Human Resources Service Centre
LGBTIQA+	lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, intersex, queer community, asexual
+M (after STEM)	Medicine [includes Schools of Nursing and Midwifery (SNM) and School of Medical and Health Sciences (SMHS)]
ODVC RF	Office of the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Regional Futures)
SENG	School of Engineering
SES	ECU's biennial Staff Engagement Survey
SMHS	School of Medical and Health Sciences
SNM	School of Nursing and Midwifery
SSCI	School of Science
STEM	science, technology, engineering, and mathematics [includes Schools of Engineering (SENG) and Science (SSCI)]
STEMM	science, technology, engineering, mathematics, and medicine
Tracking Dashboard	ECU 's Tracking Dashboard that monitors the *ECU Athena Swan Bronze Action Plan 2018 - 2023*
UE	University Executive – ECU's University Executive team meeting
VC	Vice-Chancellor
WA	Western Australia
wiS	women in STEMM disciplines (academic)

INSTITUTION NAME: SAGE CYGNET 5

Word limit – 2500 words (excluding the institutional context and excluding the action plan)

	ü Current Cygnet	**Barrier** · List the Barrier addressed in this Cygnet · List the Barrier for Cygnets already submitted
Institution-wide barrier		Flexible Working Arrangements (FWA)
Sub-group barrier		Inadequate support systems inhibiting the promotion of women in STEM(M), specifically into academic levels C - E
Sub-group barrier		Decreasing gender disparity in the School of Engineering (SENG)
Sub-group barrier		Gender Balanced Professorial Research Cohort
Sub-group barrier	ü	Addressing diversity in the School of Nursing and Midwifery (SNM)

KEY BARRIER

Lack of women from diverse backgrounds attaining senior levels (Academic Level [ALEV] C and above) is a key barrier to ECU's School of Nursing and Midwifery (SNM) achieving diversity in its leadership. This is an issue for the School because diversity in leadership, including representation from marginalised groups, can help redress unconscious biases in decision making, the lack of role models for diverse employees, and the limiting of different perspectives which can stifle innovation. SNM is committed to promoting career advancement for women from diverse backgrounds to ensure more equal access to opportunities and including new leadership openings.

EVIDENCE OF BARRIER

ECU employs a comprehensive, systematic approach to the advancement of women in STEMM (wiS) and, this has allowed new issues to emerge during, and after, the development and submission of the Athena Swan (AS) Bronze Award and Action Plan (ASBAP) in 2018.

The lack of women from diverse backgrounds[1] attaining senior levels in SNM, was identified through a range of data collection activities, including staff satisfaction surveys and quantitative and qualitative feedback (Table.1).

SNM Status Update Reporting	Annually, formal status updates from schools on their actions in the Athena Swan Institutional Bronze Action Plan (ASBAP).
The Edith Cowan Athena Swan Advancement Scheme	Initiative supporting the career progression of those who have parenting and/or caring roles who may be facing career disadvantages because of the responsibilities. Provided funding aims to facilitate staff attendance at professional development events.
ECU Cygnet Award applications	ECU has achieved two Cygnet Awards, which included numerous qualitative data collection processes, including staff surveys and focus group workshops.
ECU Contemporary Academic Careers Framework	An ECU-wide project, in the engagement with academic staff as part of a People and Culture (P&C) project to develop a Contemporary Academic Careers Framework

Table 1. Feedback from qualitative and quantitate data sources.

Cygnet Rationale

This Cygnet is unique because it aims to address an area of focus not originally identified in the work towards the ASBAP in 2017 but was subsequently identified during ASBAP monitoring.

Since 2021, ECU has identified structural and system changes, within SNM, aimed at promoting the voice of underrepresented groups within an existing monocultural environment.

SNM acknowledged that their leadership group's decision-making did not reflect the growing diversity of staff, for example, in 2023, 23% of the academic women (20 out of 61) identified as culturally and linguistically diverse (CaLD), however, only two were ALEVC, with zero above this ALEV. In the entire staff cohort, only one academic woman, a Professor (an off-campus staff member) and two professional staff members, identified as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander.

It was apparent therefore, that a nuanced understanding of barriers was necessary moving forward and the focus was determined to concentrate on CaLD staff and to recognise the approaches for recruitment and retention of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander staff members as per current ECU strategies (Tables.2&3)

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[1] For the purposes of this Cygnet, ECU is referring to staff who are: 1) Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD), coming from a range of countries and ethnic and cultural groups where English may be a second language, and 2) Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander Peoples.

ECU Strategic Plan 2022 - 2026	Several whole-of-University supporting plans provide a bridge between the ECU Strategic Plan 2022-2026 and ECU's annual operating plans. The Senior Executive sponsor of the relevant below Plans, is the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Students, Equity and Indigenous).
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Plan 2022 - 2026	The overall purpose of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Plan is to articulate a whole-of-institution vision for ECU to further progress its commitment to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students, staff, people, families, and communities. This vision is one where all areas of the University can and should contribute.
Equity and Inclusion Plan 2022 -2026	The overall purpose of the Equity and Inclusion Plan is to articulate a vision for ECU to strengthen its work with, and support for, our diverse students, staff, families, communities, and partners. We recognise the differences and similarities within the ECU community through various intersecting dimensions, such as gender, sex, sexuality, race, ethnicity, language, culture, religion, disability, mental health, socioeconomic status, family and carer responsibilities, and immigration status.

Table 2. ECU strategic documents supporting recruitment and retention of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff.

ECU's commitment to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People	• Engage closely with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and communities; • Fully develop Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students and staff, assisting them to realise their potential; • Ensure that individual differences and diversity are respected; and • Contribute positively to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community development and sustainability through its students, staff, and graduates.
Kurongkurl Katitjin	• ECU's Centre for Indigenous Australian Education and Research, plays a vital role in assisting the University to meet its commitment to Indigenous peoples.
Planning and Reporting on Indigenous Matters	• Like all public universities, ECU receives funding from the Commonwealth Government for important activities that support the participation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in higher education and in employment with our university. • Standing Item at Equity and Diversity Committee – Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Employment Update
Websites	• Indigenous matters webpages and resources

Table 3. ECU addressing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander recruitment and retention.

Action 3.3	*Work with the DVC (SEI) and Kurongkurl Katitjin to continue to attract and recruit Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff and students as per the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Employment Strategy.*

The ECU AS Charter Committee (ECUASCC) originally conceptualised one Cygnet to broadly address gender disparity within SNM and School of Engineering (SENG) (Table.4).

ECUASCC Rationale	Discussion from Cygnets
Pre-work from the preparations for Cygnet Awards in 2021	It was evident from data analysis in 2017 that SNM was female-dominated in its academic profile with 91.5% female and 8.5% male (N=47)[1].
	The reverse situation was seen for SENG which had a significantly male dominated (93% male) academic profile and was identified as a priority for action, with defined targets. However, although there were disparate similarities, the two were not comparable.
	ECU in all honestly could not address 'gender disparity' in the schools without looking at both schools. SENG and SNM both had different reasons for the lack of a specific gender. If ECU and the ASCC addressed one school's issue, it was clear an entire Cygnet should be assigned to each school to give the appropriate focus and attention where needed, as it was foreseen the required actions would be substantially different.

Table 4. Rationale for a Cygnet Award in SNM.

Instead, an individual Cygnet was chosen for SNM because specific discipline/School issues were identified through feedback, when examining barriers for women in STEMM in Cygnet 2 (*Table.5*).

Cygnet 2 identified STEMM issues
Historically SNM had lower than average applications for promotion, and lower than average success rates. Given that the school was female-dominated, this needed further investigation to unpack barriers to career advancement for this significant group of female staff.
Feedback from some culturally and linguistically diverse (CaLD) staff also alerted ECU to the absence of an adequate intersectional lens being applied to some outcomes data in the original ASBAP analysis. Further investigation was undertaken for this Cygnet. Subsequently, the need to revisit the School profile and the promotions' outcomes with wider diversity and intersectional attention was acknowledged, and shaped the work that was undertaken. Problems with the People and Culture (P&C) capture, and constraints around sharing this data to protect individual confidentiality were a limitation.

Table 5. Cygnet 2 identified STEMM issues.

Evidence of barriers in 2017

The understanding of intersectional themes/issues was limited in 2017, and specific barriers **not** readily identified. Given SNM's academic profile, it was not explicitly assigned targeted actions to redress its own unique gender equality, diversity, and inclusion (GEDI) concerns. Rather, its related actions fell under broader actions assigned to Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) disciplines[2]. As part of ECU's commitment to AS, it monitored the ASBAP actions with regular status updates reported fortnightly by the AS Lead to the University Executive (UE). As a result of this regular and documented reporting, SNM determined it had wider GEDI issues, specifically relating to CaLD staff members, as had been increasingly highlighted in staff feedback.

Evidence of barriers from 2021 onwards

In 2021, SNM's new Executive Dean (ED) and School Executive adopted a strong leadership GEDI vision, noting the School would be best served by a broader Diversity and Inclusion (D&I) strategy not simply a gender balance focus.

> *The School of Nursing and Midwifery is determined to promote gender equality, diversity, and inclusivity, with a particular emphasis on increasing the number of staff from CaLD backgrounds achieving academic level C and above. By adhering to principles like fairness, diverse leadership, inclusive hiring practices, and staff support, the School aspires to enrich its academic community, improve the quality of education and healthcare delivery, and set a positive example for its students and the wider academic and healthcare sectors. (Professor Karen Strickland, Executive Dean, SNM)*

This School's D&I approach considers the increasingly diverse West Australian community both in terms of teaching, research, and outreach. The previous, narrowly scoped focus of rebalancing male/female ratios was deemed limiting, and with the progression of new SNM D&I resources[3] and committees, it supported the agenda moving forward in addressing specific barriers (*Table.6*). It was developed through a range of sources/qualitative research projects organised by AS and SNM (*Table.7*).

Barriers	
Career experience	Inadequate understanding of the career experience for CaLD women and men and whether it presents different challenges to those of non-CaLD women and men.
SNM Structures	The need for a structure at the School-level for reviewing GEDI data and planning and implementing operational actions for D&I with monitoring and accountability of progress to the school executive.
ECU-wide issues	Having access to granular intersectional and diversity data in ECU systems to track progress and provide regular reporting to the D&I Committee on progress of actions.

Table 6. SNM's specific barriers to diversity.

ECU Cygnet Award applications	ECU has achieved two Cygnet Awards to date, which have included numerous qualitative data collection processes including staff surveys and focus group workshops. A report from an external consultant was provided to SNM for reference.
ECU Project - Contemporary Academic Careers Framework	In the engagement with academic staff as part of People and Cultures project to have a Contemporary Academic Careers Framework.

Table 7. Engagement opportunities for feedback

In 2022, ECU facilitated wiS focus group (wiSFG) discussions to better understand specific needs of STEMM women. As part of this, female staff were asked about their experiences, particularly if from CaLD backgrounds, and how this impacted their perceived ability to progress at ECU. In 2023, further in-depth, semi-structured interviews were held with SNM interviewees. The results reiterated a need for a strategic focus on CaLD staff and the additional support needed for career progression (*Table.8.*).

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[2] As per the Pilot of the Science in Australia Gender Equity Athena Swan, the key area of focus for the ASBAP was to specifically boost the participation of women in STEMM disciplines.
[3] SNM Strategic Plan 2022 – 2026; SNM Operational Plan 2023 – Equity and Inclusion Plan; (DRAFT) – SNM People & Culture Plan 2023; ECU SNM Equity and Inclusion Committee.

2022	2023
• Participants included were from different regions and cultures (including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples) and from staff cohorts across multiple campuses and schools. • While the focus groups reported many positive experiences pertaining to their path to academic promotion and career progression, definite barriers were highlighted which required further unpacking and hence the need for more detailed information from individuals within individual schools.	• Data obtained from 2023, demonstrated that out of 61 academic women in SNM, 14 reported a CaLD background. • Out of 14 women, 12 were ALEVA/B and 2 ALEVC. • Once again, the interviewees reported largely positive experiences, however, there was a clearly highlighted need for a transparent plan to ensure a continuing focus on CaLD and Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander people. • Also, to have targeted objectives that would address both their challenges and positive experiences.

Table 8. 2022 and 2023 Women in STEMM Focus Group and in-depth interviews

Sub-barriers to retention and progression of women from diverse backgrounds in SNM

1) Staff headcount and gender diversity

In 2017, SNM was a female-dominated school with only 8.5% of staff being male (4 males to 43 females), close to the sector average of men in nursing (11%). In 2023, data obtained retrospectively, revealed 23% of female staff were from CaLD backgrounds, with staff identifying from approximately 14 different countries and speaking many languages. Only one academic identified as an Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander. From the ASBAP, it was understood that to focus solely on the recruitment and promotion of men within SNM would limit the potential (and capacity) to truly diversify staff cohorts (*Figure.1.*).

	Number of Staff (No.)	Percentage of female (F) Staff (%)
Females (F)	43	91.50%
Males (M)	4	8.50%
Totals	**47**	**100%**

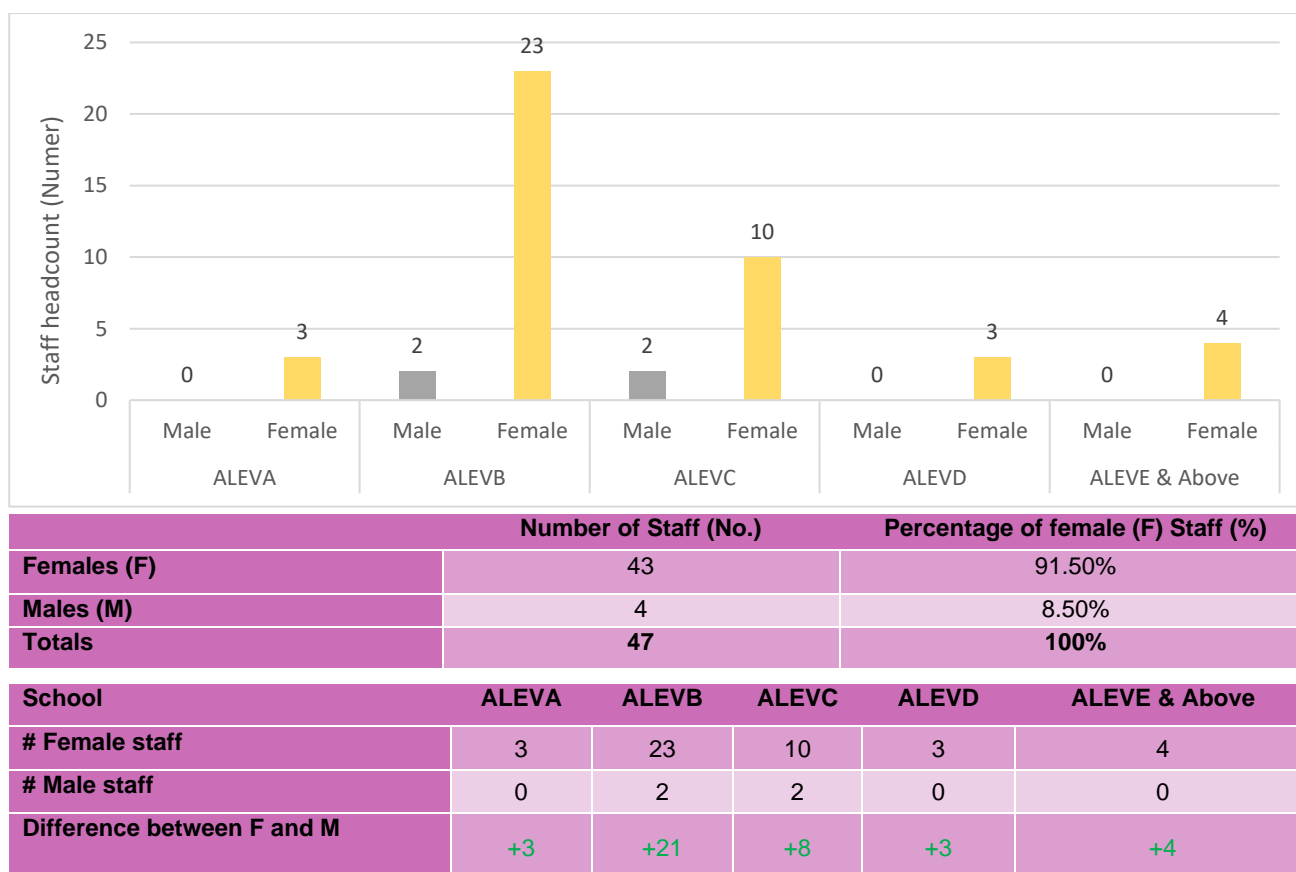| School	ALEVA	ALEVB	ALEVC	ALEVD	ALEVE & Above
# Female staff	3	23	10	3	4
# Male staff	0	2	2	0	0
Difference between F and M	+3	+21	+8	+3	+4

Figure 1. 2017 SNM Staff headcount Data

This Cygnet acknowledges that gender itself as a sole-demographic descriptor does not provide insight into SNM's support of D&I, nor career advancement for women into senior levels. It does, however, examine the intersectional considerations SNM has embraced over the past 5 years.

2) Limited Equity and Diversity (E&D) Data for SNM

Only limited CaLD staff data from 2017 is available for SNM, as they didn't have access to, nor was the School reporting on, CaLD profiles at that time. The monitoring of E&D data was not routinely reviewed, and the lack of historical data is acknowledged as a limitation[4].

At ECU, all school leaders have access to the AS Data Dashboard which provides metrics to assist decision-making and actions that impact GEDI (See Institutional Context). Access to such appropriate data, makes tracking and monitoring of actions, evidence-based and straightforward. This also affords the ability to understand the intersectional experiences of individuals within SNM.

Research shows[5] that being a woman from a CALD background presents unique challenges and this was confirmed by ECU staff members through its internal wiS Focus Groups (wiSFG) as part of the work towards Cygnet Award 2 (*Figure.2*). For this Cygnet, other intersectionality differentiators have not been included, but research indicates that for example, CaLD women with disabilities are further impacted through greater accessibility barriers to disability support and services.

'I didn't study in Australia so I don't have the links for my research that others may have' (Participant)

'I'm quite well known internationally for my research, but with young kids or if you are about to embark on starting families, with no family support here – that makes it hard".

Notes: Women with international study backgrounds, and where English was a second language, spoke of barriers to progression. With the absence of qualitative information about their lived experiences, it was difficult to assess the career trajectories of those with CALD backgrounds and their lack of visibility at senior levels.

Figure 2. Selection of quotes from the Women in STEMM Focus Groups 2022

Action 1.1.1	Development of Institutional Equity and Diversity Dashboard for staff and students.
Action 1.1.2	Increase regular diversity reporting to School leadership including an Annual report from Equity and Inclusion committee to the SNM Leadership Executive
Action 3.2	Review and development of SNM Equity and Inclusion Plan - Target setting
Action 3.2.3	Target setting within SNM for D&I measures.

3) Formalised gender equality, diversity, and inclusion frameworks within SNM

SNM Executive has committed to ensuring the alignment of the University's GEDI planning cascades directly through to SNM strategies and approaches. ECU's Strategic Plan[6] 2022-2026 – *(Figure.3)*, refers to the University working towards an employee profile that better reflects the composition of the Western Australian population. It refers to its commitment to gender equality and achieving the AS Silver Award accreditation as an indicator of deep organisational GEDI cultural change. Furthermore, ECU has a comprehensive suite of policies and guidelines relating to grievances, discrimination, harassment, and bullying, with further support reflected in anti-discrimination initiatives.

University Level

- **_ECU Strategic Plan 2022-2026 Towards the University of the Future_**
- **_Athena Swan Institutional Bronze Action Plan 2018 - 2023_**
- **_ECU Equity Plan 2022 - 2026_**
- **_ECU Ally Network_**

School level
In 2022, the Executive Dean appointed member of the SNM Executive as leads to each of the sub-plans of the ECU Strategic Plan. As such the lead for Equity and Inclusion in 2023 developed an Equity and Inclusion Committee.

SNM E&I Committee – Commenced in 2023

People and Culture Plan for SNM – currently in development in 2023

Figure 3. Examples of ECU and SNM initiatives for GEDI

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[4] The data is difficult to utilise as small staff numbers make the reports easily identifiable and therefore do not protect confidentiality.
[5] Example of resources - https://www.dca.org.au/research/culturally-diverse-female-leadership
[6] ECU Strategic Plan 2022-2026 - Towards the University of the Future

SNM refers to E&D in its School planning[7], however before 2022 there was no specific diversity and/or inclusion actions for the School beyond AS participation. Currently, SNM has an Associate Dean Lead for its Equity and Inclusion Plan, and in 2023 formed an Equity and Inclusion Committee.

Action 3.2	Review and development of SNM Equity and Inclusion Plan

Staff Engagement Survey Feedback

In 2016, ECU conducted a biennial Staff Engagement Survey (ECUSES). Data was included as part of the work towards ECU's ASBAP. Together with GEDI reviews conducted over the past 3 years, and increasing AS data collection activities, emerging trends are evident.

Compared to the overall ECU scores for the D&I themed questions (*Figure.4*), SNM's Questions 10 and 13 were on par with the University ratings, however the other 4 questions had lower ratings than ECU's average.

ECU and SNM whole of School Diveristy ECUSES Results

Redacted

Detailed SNM Diveristy ECUSES Results
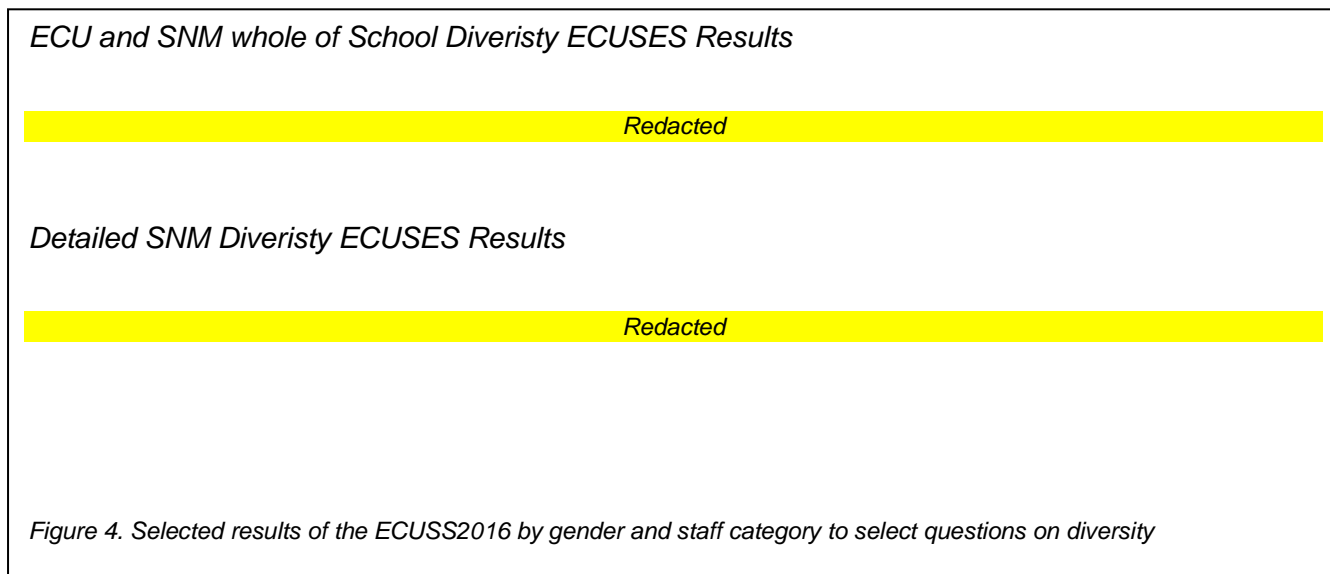
Redacted

Figure 4. Selected results of the ECUSS2016 by gender and staff category to select questions on diversity

In SNM's ECUSES 2016 (Figure.4), the diversity question (Q10) prevention of harassment was highly rated, yet discrimination (Q11) and bullying (Q12) had only moderate agreement, with all scores substantially lower for the 'gender unspecified' academic staff group (gender is unable to be collected due to the low number of men and the possibility for responses to be identified).

When the data for SNM was disaggregated by professional and academic staff for questions relating to diversity, two issues were highlighted for academic staff in relation to equal opportunity (Q9) and bullying (Q12). Due to small numbers in SNM, no breakdown for School diversity indicators is available[8].

Action 2.1	Awareness raising and education about intersectionality and how it can be used to improve the work experiences of CaLD staff.
Action 3.2.4	*Actively encourage staff to self-identify so that they can enable improved benchmarking, analysis, and action.*

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[7] SNM has a SNM Operational Plan 2023 and a SNM Strategic Plan 2022 – 2026 which guides annual operations at the School level.

[8] Due to this survey being conducted with number of groups less than five, the data is not reported to ensure anonymity.

ACTIVITIES AND OUTPUTS

As noted, SNM weren't assigned specific ASBAP actions for D&I, however, SNM has been actively recruiting and supporting academic women from diverse backgrounds at the entry and early career level. SNM undertook the actions below (*Table.9*) to support this strategy and undertook simultaneously activities to build a D&I culture.

D&I activity/output	Description
Leadership	
Reference to diversity and inclusion in ECU's Strategic Plan	• Places high value on racial and cultural diversity and supportive of a diverse and inclusive workplace and SNM prides itself on being relevant to the real world. • Celebrates diversity of both staff and students and acknowledges the talent, knowledge, and skills from around the world may come from settings not like our own.
Created an Equity and Inclusion Plan in 2023 as part of the SNM's annual operational planning activities	• Appointed Lead for the Equity and Inclusion Plan within the School. • Details a targeted approach to equity and inclusion activities and initiatives including designated funding for equity, access, and inclusion initiatives. • Includes the increasing of diverse student enrolments through targeted entry pathways.
Created a School of Nursing and Midwifery Equity and Inclusion Committee in 2023	• A diverse forum was considered, inclusive of both academic and professional members. • Aims to make SNM a more equitable, accessible and inclusive environment. • Terms of Reference were developed and endorsed at the School Executive level with feedback sought from the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Students, Equity and Indigenous).
Women in STEMM Focus Groups in 2019 and 2022	• SNM staff participated in AS focus group activities which aimed to capture the lived experiences of women in STEMM disciplines. • Explored issues on career advancement and promotion of female staff at the school level.
In-depth interviews with SNM female staff from CaLD backgrounds	• In 2023, ECU facilitated Female staff from SNM with CALD backgrounds were interviewed about their career journeys and time at ECU to inform the development of this Cygnet Award. • These interviews identified what actions might be needed across all cultural backgrounds to modify the School's organisational environment to be more inclusive.
Bespoke education session for SNM on the topic of Equity & Inclusion in 2023	• Intersex training is available to all staff free at no cost. • One Senior Lecturer has received a Teaching and Learning Grant for Students with Disability which will support a future evidence-based workshop.
SNM staff given opportunities to 'act up'.	• SNM are working to develop strategies to improve leadership development opportunities for Staff. As such, SNM have introduced a new system whereby junior staff members have opportunities to 'act up' into a senior position within the School.
University-wide processes	
Supporter of 'Racism. It Stops with me'.	• ECU has pledged support to this campaign. It provides tools and resources to help the University learn about racism and how to take actions to create change.
Cultural and ceremonial leave for Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander People.	• ECU has a number of cultural and ceremonial leave provisions built into its Enterprise Bargaining Agreement. • Ensures staff who identify as members of Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander communities, will be entitled to additional leave arrangements.
Recruitment	
Actively recruiting and supporting academic women from diverse backgrounds.	• Similar actions were set out for a 'grow our own' strategy by identifying and supporting talented women in STEMM to achieve Higher Degree by Research (HDR) qualifications (Bronze Action Item 2.4), to employ a higher number of women into senior roles (Bronze Action Item 1.6 and 1.7), and improve their career progression (Bronze Action Item 3.1 and 3.2) by ensuring they had both the support structures in place to be promoted and the support systems to support their journey (ASBAP 3.6 & 3.7). This 'support' was described in detail within the latest qualitative data collection. It included for example the support from School leadership for a workload allocation that allowed time for completion of PhD. • This was underpinned within the ECU academic career framework by a specific teaching-focussed role type. Flexibility from local supervisors in how the workload and teaching scheduling requirements were met and managed was also cited by these women as critical to achieving the completion of their PhD qualification.
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employment opportunities webpage	• Committed to attracting, recruiting, retaining Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees. • Focussed on creating a workplace which is culturally aware, providing support to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff in order to maximise their potential.
Ongoing promotion of inclusive recruitment strategies	• Continues to promote flexible work approaches in position advertising and during interview dialogue (i.e., flexible start and finishing times, availability to work from home, the purchasing of extra paid leave and unpaid leave. • Of the 57 permanent ongoing academic staff in SNM, 6 female staff have been supported with part-time work requests.
Review SNM recruitment advertising materials	• For example, checking that promotional material does not only contain images of white men or women. OR contains images of women only.
Consideration of male nursing recruitment	• SNM's Associate Dean (Work Integrated Learning) has engaged with the Australian College of Nursing on the 'Men in Nursing' initiative.

Table 9. SNM Activities and Outputs

D&I activity/ output in SNM	Description
Improving the SNM Executive committee gender balance.	One male staff member has been invited to join the SNM School Executive committee. While not at a senior level, this provides the Executive with the gender diversity it was lacking.
Unconscious bias training	100% of staff on the School Executive Leadership group have attended and completed the Unconscious Bias Training at ECU.
Academic Promotion	An SNM committee established to provide feedback on promotion applications before they are submitted. Cited as a very positive development by staff in wiS Focus Groups in 2022.
Engagement activities	
Staff diversity and inclusion events: • Social events Regular meetings' • School-wide circulations	• WA Harmony Week multicultural lunch by the SNM Social Committee. • Are You OK Day in partnership with the ECU Student Guild. • Australian College of Nursing's National Nurses Breakfast for International Nurses Day and International Day of the Midwife. • 'Wear it Purple' morning teas in support of the LGBTIQ+ community. • Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander student networking morning teas.
	• SNM Equity and Inclusion Committee. • The Associate Dean (Midwifery) in SNM has been appointed co-Chair and Lead for the Equity and Inclusion portfolio which has been incorporated into SNM Strategic Plan.
	• Dean's Digest o The Executive Dean recognises days of cultural significance in an email newsletter sent to the whole of School e.g., Ramadan. • Promotion of the intersex training across the School. • Full and open support for SNM staff to have pronouns added to their name badges and to their email signature.
Student diversity &inclusion	• International Clinical Placements program - International student drop-in sessions to meet with the School's International Student Coordinator.
Mentoring	
iMATE	• The School has a mentorship scheme in place for teaching staff through 'iMATE' where new staff are assigned a 'buddy'. Interview feedback from CaLD staff (2023) confirmed that this has been a significant support influencing their success and retention. • These can be catch-up sessions to encourage shared experiences
Peer learning	• For research, all new staff meet with the SNM ADR and supported to join a research group and assigned a research mentor. • Support in place for all SNM EMCRs through research assistant support, publication fees support, seminars and training
Equity and Diversity initiatives	
Staff Networks	• SNM have several Ally representatives in the School who have been trained to accommodate and provide support to their peers including CALD and Aboriginal Torres Strait Islander peoples. • The School have supported staff to complete the Mental Health training and have had a Mental Health First Aid Instructor in the School who has been seconded to be the Mental Health, Access and Equity Lead for two years.
Inclusive Language Guide	• ECU has an Inclusive language guide with a specific section on Race, Ethnicity and Culture which refers to cross-cultural communication and avoiding stereotypes.
Visual profiling	
Sharing stories of success through media releases and social media posts –	• SNM set up social media (Facebook, LinkedIn) in 2019 to celebrate and share the success and work of the staff and students in the School.
Scholarship Development	
Staff scholarships to improve gender diversity in nursing.	• In 2023, SNM hosted an event in honour of a male ECU alumnus and former academic at ECU who previously worked for the School as the International Nursing Clinical Coordinator. • With an instrumental role in setting up the existing international program, he has provided funding to establish a scholarship to support male students studying nursing.
Scholarship for Refugee Nurses	• In 2022, SNM collaborated with WA Department of Health (Chief Nursing and Midwifery Office) and MercyCare on a pilot program aiming to support nurses who were forced to flee their homeland.
For students: 1. ECU Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander Scholarship 2. ECU Equity Scholarship - Dorothea Swift Nursing Scholarship	• To assist Australian Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander students with the costs associated with University study and to support future and current undergraduate students from designated equity groups with the costs associated with university study. • Applications are sought from students from low socio-economic backgrounds, Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander's, people with a disability or ongoing illness, people with significant caring responsibilities and those from rural or regional area of Australia.
Student International Clinical Placements	• Enable students to expand their knowledge and understanding of cultural awareness within the health care arena. In 2023, placements were available in Nepal, Cambodia, Bhutan, The Philippines, Tonga, India and Vietnam for students.

Table 9. SNM Activities and Outputs - continued

OUTCOMES

The barriers to career progression for women from CaLD backgrounds in SNM is reducing because specific barriers are being addressed (*Table.10*):

Description of issue being addressed	Appraisal
SNM leadership team has an increased understanding of the career experience for CaLD women (and men) is within the School and whether it presents different challenges to those of non-CALD women and men.	Through the Cygnet 2 Feedback Report and this Cygnet, SNM will be able to receive direct feedback from women in SNM on what the found to be enablers and barriers to their career progression, establishing what they need to be able to move into senior roles.
Through positive feedback from SNM staff and quantitative evidence there is a strong foundation in SNM for further cultural change to support increased diversity through all levels of the staff profile.	
Increased access to granular intersectional and diversity data in University systems to track progress and provide regular reporting to the D&I Committee on progress of its actions.	While there are no standards, no accreditation, and no consistent approaches to CaLD issues across tertiary institutions, SNM's Equity and Inclusion Action Plan is an evolving approach, requiring review, evaluation, and monitoring to ensure effectiveness and ongoing validity.
A structured arrangement at the school-level for reviewing GEDI data and planning and implementing operational actions for D&I with monitoring and accountability for progress to the school executive.	Data monitoring and reporting is improving and there is new systematic processes being developed within the School.

Table.10. Ways SNM is addressing the lack of knowledge of women from diverse backgrounds.

This Cygnet has provided opportunities to engage with SNM CaLD women at a deeper level and consider equity through an intersectional lens. Additionally, ECU assessed qualitative and quantitative data to review SNM's outcomes including ECUSES staff satisfaction results (*Figure.5.*), human resources information from P&C relating to CaLD profiles, and feedback from 2023 in-depth staff interviews.

- ECUSES results have improved.
- Although ECU has a biennial staff survey which assesses a range of staff-related issues including equity and diversity, the reporting back is not granular enough to assess sentiment of gender in many cases let alone intersectional cohorts, at the school level due to confidentiality protocols.
- Therefore, the project team has collected, refined and analysed its own qualitative data between 2019 and 2023 to identify the key factors that were associated with career advancement and success along with those factors that constituted barriers starting at the ECU-STEMM level and narrowing down to the specific school context.

Figure 5. Data from ECUSES

However, as this barrier was not identified previously, it is difficult to measure success from quantitative data alone. Given there were no specific actions for SNM in the ASBAP, there is an absence of baseline data to formally assess movement of academics through the career trajectory. A baseline has now been established through the collection of 2023 CaLD data, SNM staff satisfaction surveys and the quantitative CaLD data.

Action 1.1	Create data collection and reporting approaches which apply an intersectional lens to equity
Action 3.1	SNM D&I committee to coordinate SNM actions and drive the initiative within the school

1) Staff profile and gender diversity data within SNM

The SNM academic cohort is predominately women (88%), with 80% of the female academics at ALEVC or below. All 8 males are ALEVB. This reinforces the purpose of this Cygnet that aims to improve diversity in all forms to positively impact gender balance.

2023 data collection demonstrated: SNM has a moderately culturally diverse academic cohort with 23% of female academics reporting 'English as a second language'. Of the 8 male academics, 6 (90%) have English as a second language. This is a high proportion and suggests that strategies designed to support staff from CaLD backgrounds could also support male representation and distribution in the profile.

As noted, the predominant focus of ASBAP was to increase women in underrepresented disciplines. No targets were created for SNM to increase the numbers of men, although the SNM Executive had acknowledged this challenge during the ASBAP journey (*Figure.6.*)

2017 V 2023 SNM Staff Gender Headcount
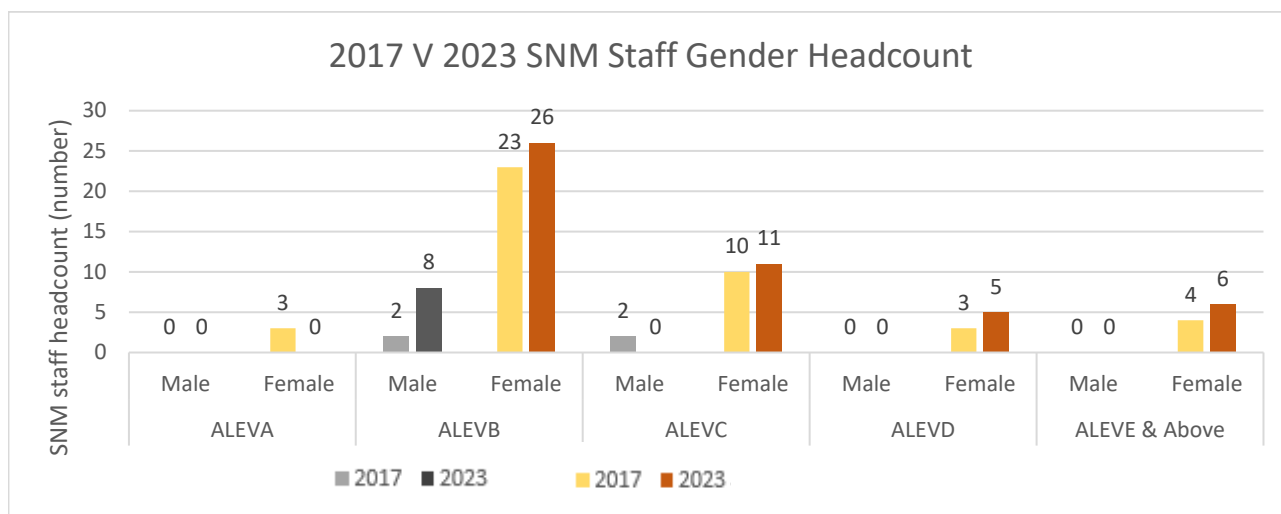
	Number of Staff (No.) 2017 V 2023	Percentage of female (F) Staff (%)
Females 2017	43	91.50%
Females 2023	61	
Males 2017	4	8.50%
Males 2023	8	
Difference F and M		

School	ALEVA	ALEVB	ALEVC	ALEVD	ALEVE & Above
# Female (F) staff	3	23	10	3	4
# Female (F) staff 2023	10	26	11	5	6
# Male (M) staff	0	2	2	0	0
# Male (M) staff 2023		8			
Difference between F and M	3	21	8	3	4

Figure 6. SNM Academic staff headcount 2023 (disaggregated by gender and academic level for ongoing & fixed-term staff)

In 2023 in line with the barrier of gender disparity in SNM, and to assist with the recognition of women from CaLD backgrounds progressing to senior levels in SNM, it's helpful to the University's cause to have two additional males joining the SNM staffing profile from 2024. In the coming year [text redacted], the gender disparity in the School will be reduced in line with ECU's GEDI values.

2) Promotion progression within SNM

Action 1.1	Create data collection and reporting approaches which apply an intersectional lens to equity

By tracking academic promotion outcomes over the past 5 years, even as a female-dominated school, women in SNM show a lower success rate in promotion than other schools and no women have applied for promotion after ALEVD. There were increased numbers of applications to ALEVC/D in 2019/20 but success rates weren't high, and this may have contributed to lower applicant numbers in subsequent years. Career progression in SNM seems to 'hit a ceiling' at ALEVC for CaLD and progression from here may not be seen (by women at lower levels) as a viable advancement pathway option. Academic promotion success rates for men have been zero. However, it is important to note there is a current academic promotion round but as yet, the outcomes have not yet been announced.

3) CaLD Staff within SNM

Women from CaLD backgrounds are also under-represented at ALEVC and above. In parallel, the CaLD demographic in the SNM over the past 5 years continues to grow, with notable clustering at ALEVB. In summary, the number of women in the SNM whose country of birth is not Australia is increasing and their progression to senior levels is slow (*Figure.7 and Table.11.*).

Total CaLD Indicator

	Headcount
Yes	20
No	46
Unknown	3
Total	69

- **Of the 69 academics in the school**
- **61 are female academics**
- **20 are CaLD (29%), 3 unknown (4%), 46 not CaLD (67%)**

Female CALD Indicator

	Headcount
Yes	14
No	44
Unknown	3
Total	61

Male CaLD Indicator

	Headcount
Yes	6
No	2
Unknown	0
Total	8

- **Out of the 61 female academics, 14 females identified as CALD:**
  - **14 CaLD (23%), 3 unknown (5%), 44 not CaLD (72%)**
  - **3 X ALEVA, 9 x ALEVB, 2 x ALEVC**

[Some diversity data redacted for confidentiality]

Figure 7. Demographic information for female academics i.e., English as a second language and/or CaLD staff members in the SNM.
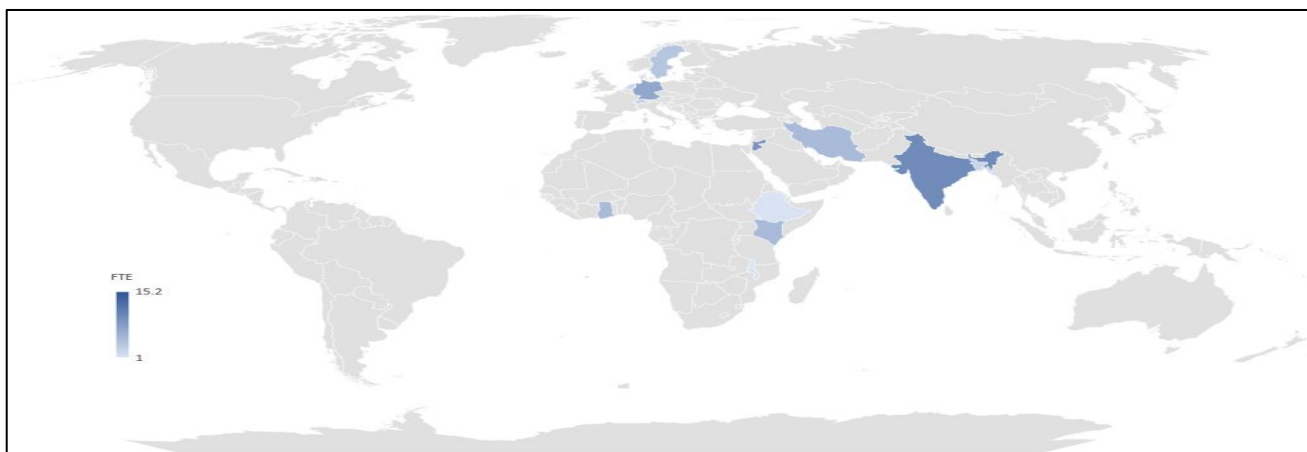
Redacted

Table 11: SNM 2018 and 2022 Country of Birth

The data below shows that the number of women who speak a language other than English at home[9] is rising each year and therefore the support needs of the staff will consistently be changing (*Figure.8 and Table 12.*).
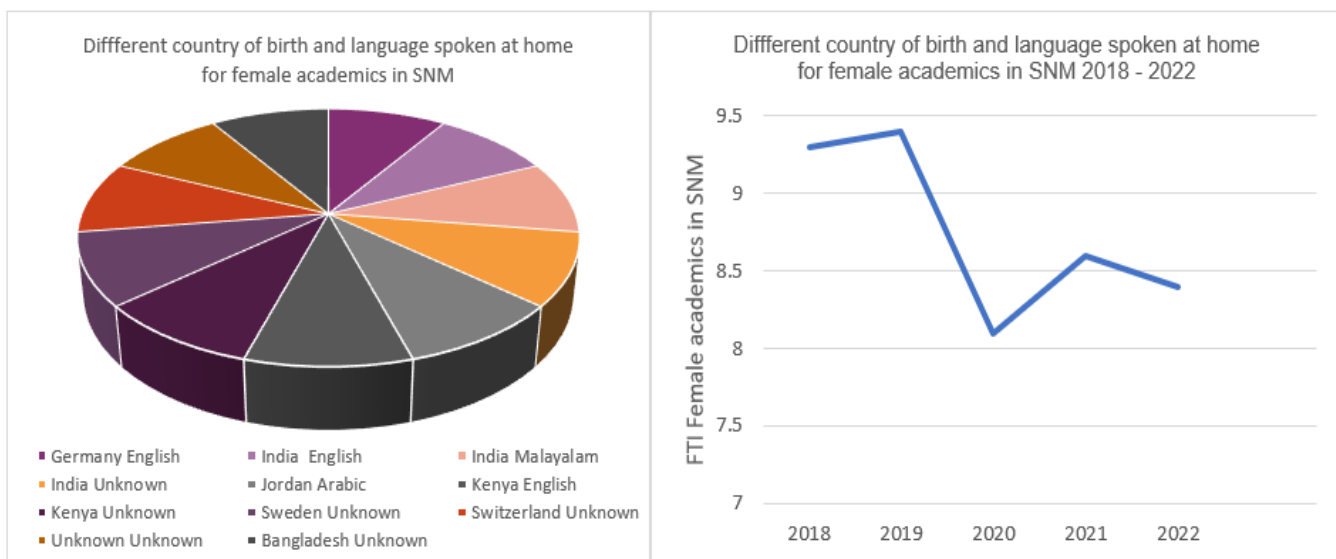

Figure 8. Graph of women who speak a language other than English.

Table 12. Number of SNM women who speak a language other than English

This data shows benefits for SNM maintaining clear oversight as to where their staff are from and what languages they speak. In doing so, SNM will be able to promote and initiate staff events and engagement activities that encourage cultural sharing and enhance mutual understanding (cross-cultural awareness raising). This was suggested by interviewees as a strategy for enhancing respect and inclusion between staff to reduce stereotype-based assumptions.

> *"Referring to tailoring targeted strategies, specifically to support all staff working towards higher academic level".*
>
> *Female Academic -School of Nursing & Midwifery*

Staff Engagement Surveys

In 2022, the ECUSES data (*Figure.9.*) shows that on the 5 selected diversity questions, SNM is performing well, and academic staff show a 10-percentage point increase from 72% to 82% overall in relation to the average satisfaction rate. ECU is unable to determine a direct causality for this, however, with numerous activities underway, the School culture is moving in a positive direction. In terms of directly assessing the experiences of CALD staff, more granular data are required as the ECUSES data does not provide targeted information.

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[9] ''English as a first language' - this is determined according to the definition for the WA Public Sector Commission annual data collection and is based on data collected in Ascender Pay. "Those born in countries other than those categorised by the ABS as mainly English speaking - Australia, Canada, England, New Zealand, Northern Ireland, Republic of Ireland, Scotland, South Africa, United Kingdom, USA and Wales"
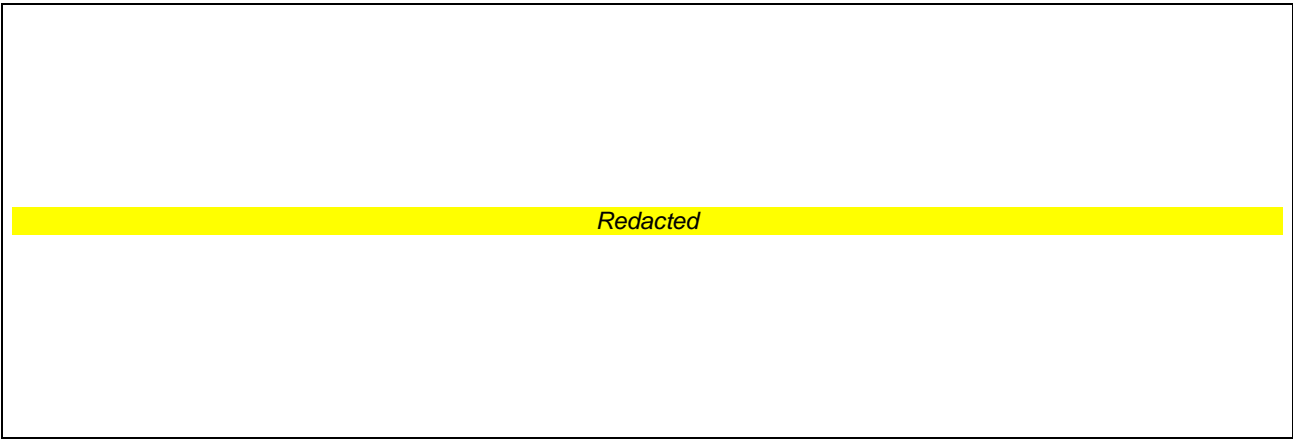
Figure 9. Selected results of the ECUSS2016 and 2022 staff category to select questions on diversity

Data collection and limitations

In collating diversity data, ECU relies on staff self-reporting[10]. In conducting confidential SNM staff interviews, anonymity was assured with the aim of securing honest feedback. An intensive intersectional approach was developed based on qualitative data collected and through qualitative feedback, and will be helpful when removing/ reducing barriers, as consideration will be given to diverse perspectives driving targeted actions.
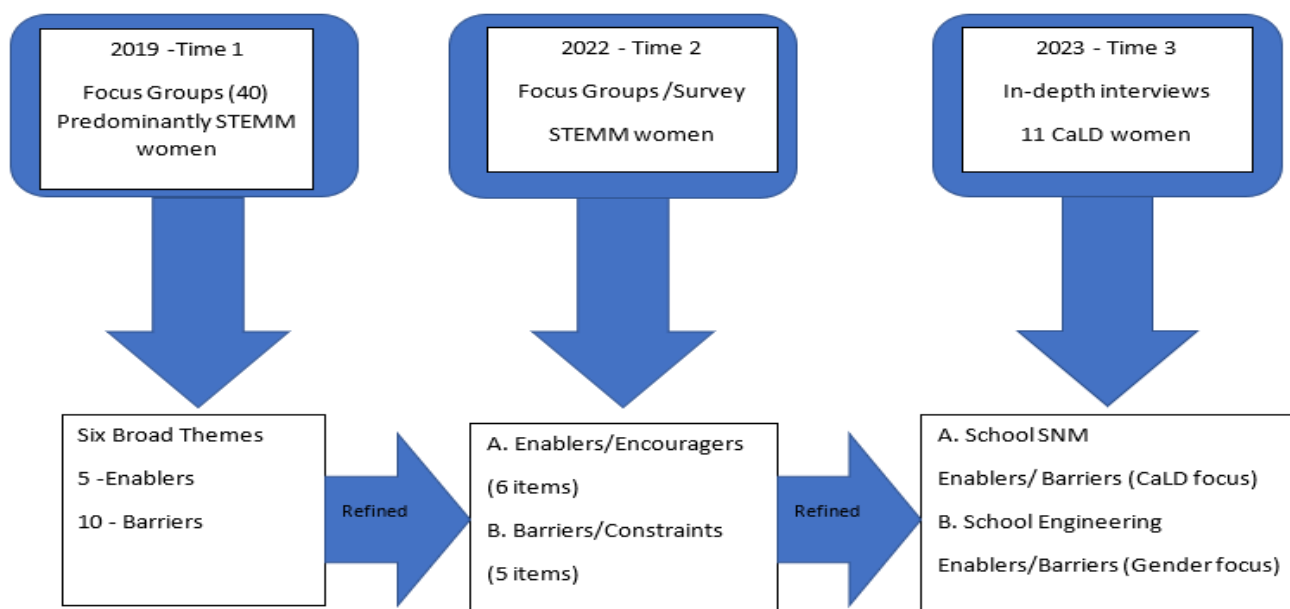
Action 1.1	Create data collection and reporting approaches which apply an intersectional lens to equity.
Action 1.1.3	Explore development of an internal staff feedback mechanism such as a confidential online Cultural Survey, to ensure the lived experiences of staff are captured within the School.

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[10] Additionally, data such as disability data is collected from staff when at first commencement and changes may not be updated as issues/changes arise.

IMPACT

Historically, ECU's approach to capturing intersectionality was limited, however, ECU is beginning to further explore intersectionality issues through current in-depth semi-structured interview processes, a thematic analysis will equip SNM to address issues specific to their context.

This approach[11] (*Figure.10*) supports a more nuanced and intersectional[12] examination of the data than the ASBAP[13]. It also reinforces some original actions as being instrumental in improving gender balance in STEMM.

2019 -Time 1	2022 - Time 2	2023 - Time 3
Focus Groups (40) Predominantly STEMM women	Focus Groups /Survey STEMM women	In-depth interviews 11 CaLD women

| Six Broad Themes 5 -Enablers 10 - Barriers | Refined | A. Enablers/Encouragers (6 items) B. Barriers/Constraints (5 items) | Refined | A. School SNM Enablers/ Barriers (CaLD focus) B. School Engineering Enablers/Barriers (Gender focus) |

The interviews and demographic section of the interviews (survey) wanted to take account of intersectionality and recognise that a person's identity is shaped by a range of factors including age, cultural and linguistic background, disability status, gender identity etc.

Below are some of the questions used to gather that information for this project (all questions were optional and not linked to interview answers and was anonymous):

Intersectional themes questions asked:	
How do you describe your gender?	Do you identify as an Australian Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander person?
How do you describe your sexuality/sexual orientation?	What is your main language, i.e. the language you think in and know best?
Do you have a disability?	Do you have caring responsibilities

Figure 10. The qualitative data development model

Staff feedback has shown that efforts by SNM to have a diverse and inclusive culture are having a positive effect. An analysis of the lived experience of staff has identified that because SNM has several engagement events, promotes women from diverse backgrounds in public forums, and has strong leadership, the staff believe that SNM is working towards a diverse and inclusive school.

When you come as a new permanent staff you are given a mentor and you've got your colleagues to support you ... so, I found it very inclusive and positive.

Female Academic -School of Nursing & Midwifery

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[11] This approach was developed based on researching the resources and recommendations on the SAGE AS website and was held with an external consultant working with the Office of the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Regional Futures) AS Team.

[12] Thomas C, MacMillan C, McKinnon M, Torabi H, Osmond-McLeod M, Swavley E, Armer T and Doyle K (2021) 'Seeing and overcoming the complexities of intersectionality', *Challenges*, 12(1):5.

[13] It has supported a more nuanced and intersectional examination of the data profiles and areas than was available for the original AS bronze application for accreditation.

The challenge ahead remains, to achieve progression of staff from a CaLD background into senior roles and leadership roles over the coming years. The recently established E&D committee in SNM will work to address this. Strategies to support research and leadership development and opportunities for this staff cohort are recommended (*Figure.11*).

Case Study Example

SNM are working to develop strategies to improve leadership development opportunities for staff. As such, SNM have introduced a new system whereby junior staff members have opportunities to 'act up' into a senior position within the School. Staff are empowered to act up into the School Executive when the Associate Deans are not at work or not available and this has not been something that has happened before.

This is linked to CaLD staff and supporting the need for an intersectional and CaLD lens, two female staff members from CaLD backgrounds and one male have already had regular opportunities to act up and receive this experience.

Also, there is also now one male member of staff in the SNM School Executive.

Figure 11. Case Study example of the SNM initiatives for increased leadership and CaLD opportunities.

Thematic mapping[14] was used to organise the interview information from 11 CaLD women against the existing model and new issues added as these emerged (*Table.13*). There was strong synergy between the barriers and enablers in the existing data model,

A summary of key barriers/enablers derived from the 2023 interviews are set out below:

SNM Enablers/support	1. Supervisor support - 'open door' plus other key behaviours identified in the mapping. 2. Formal mentor program (iMATE) was a key enabler. 3. Colleagues and peers support not just on task but psycho-social support and help to understand the system incl new starter buddy system. 4. Workload allocation accommodation e.g., allowing time for PhD completion. 5. Workplace flexibility particularly at team level to enable balancing across different roles inside and out of work. 6. Personal attributes such as strong skills, persistence and positivity in the face of problems were commonly cited.
SNM Barriers/challenges	1. Managing workload flexibly but maintain appropriate boundaries within family life. 2. Inadequate research support e.g., knowledge, networks and funding to progress career beyond early-mid career stage. 3. Not seeing role models at more senior academic levels 'like me'. 4. Promotions process and standards to more senior levels appear daunting given existing work demands. 5. No workload accommodation to build research profile.
Personal attributes such as assertiveness and negotiation not a natural part of cultural background for my gender (e.g., negotiating workload academic loads.)	

Table 13. Enablers and barriers to improve diverse women in senior positions.

Key actions such as the creation of the SNM D&I committee have clearly demonstrated the commitment from SNM. The staff are receptive to changes as shown in feedback below (*Figure.11.*).
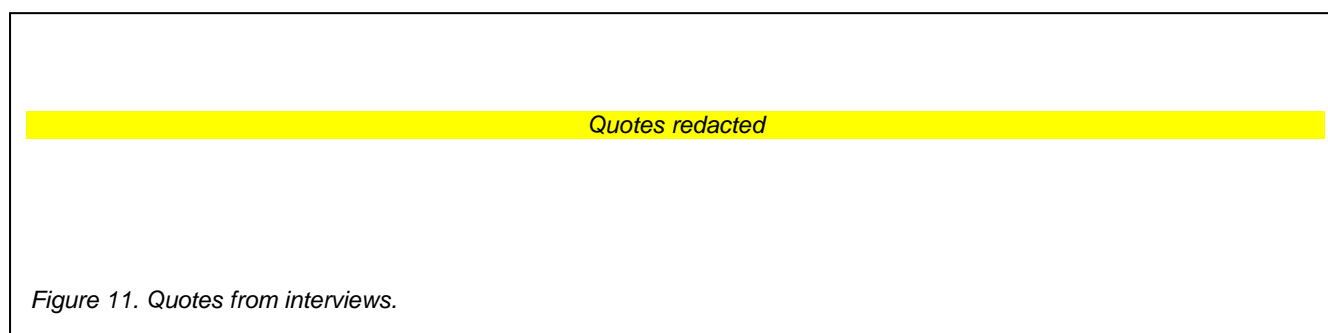
Quotes redacted

Figure 11. Quotes from interviews.

Action 2.1	*Awareness raising and education about intersectionality and how it can be used to improve the work experiences of CaLD staff.*

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[14] *2018 Analysing Qualitative Data – A Guide for University and College Practitioners 2 Dr Kevin Guyan, Researcher, Advance HE*

FURTHER ACTION

Reference	Rationale/ Evidence	Actions & Outputs	Timeframe (start & end)	Person/Group responsible for implementing action	Senior Leader accountable for action delivery	Desired Outcomes/ Targets/ Success Indicators
1.	• Current absence of accessible and transparent data that reflects diversity staff profile. • Tracking and monitoring of diversity actions is necessary to understanding intersectional needs of staff. • Baseline data is required to track and keep oversight of success of School-led activities and initiatives to better tailor strategies.	**Actions** 1.1 Create data collection and reporting approaches which apply an intersectional lens to equity. 1.1.1 Development of Equity and Diversity Institutional Diversity Dashboard for staff and students. 1.1.2 Increase regular diversity reporting to School leadership including an Annual report from Equity and Inclusion committee to the SNM Leadership Executive 1.1.3 Explore development of an internal staff feedback mechanism such as a confidential online Cultural Survey, to ensure the lived experiences of staff are captured within the School. **Outputs** a) Improve tracking of staff demographic profile through standardised reporting mechanisms. b) Annual diversity reporting for the School to inform targeted succession planning for aspiring female academics ALEVC onwards. c) Consistent review through formalised and regular feedback mechanisms which ensure equity and inclusion initiatives are having a positive impact.	Q4 - 2024	• Diversity and Inclusion 'Pillar' Lead, SNM • Chair, Equity and Inclusion Committee, SNM • Director, Access and Equity	Executive Dean, SNM	Improve accessible reporting capability which can provide regular tracking of staff profile including diversity demographics. Set baseline data for selected diversity indicators for CaLD staff and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. Annually conduct 'review and improve' processes for all equity and inclusion activities within the School through standardised feedback processes. Maintain or improve ratings on biennial ECUSES diversity questions.
2.	• Increased visibility and transparency of the gender equality, diversity and inclusion data at ECU allows decision makers to be better informed. • The processes such as recruitment, reward and recognition and promotion can be evaluated and improved.	**Actions** 2.1 Awareness raising and education about intersectionality and how it can be used to improve the work experiences of CaLD staff. 2.1.1. Provide training of Equity and Diversity Institutional Diversity Dashboard for the SNM Executive Leadership Team. 2.1.2 Raise awareness about and encourage participation in SNM activities for diverse and/or marginalised groups with all School staff to ensure the diversification of socialising events and activities. 2.1.3 Conduct a review of staff processes, policies, and guidelines to ensure inclusivity and	Q 4 - 2024	• Diversity and Inclusion 'Pillar' Lead, SNM • Chair, Equity and Inclusion Committee, SNM • Athena Swan Team	Executive Dean, SNM DVC(RF)	Increase staff satisfaction across all ECUSES diversity questions for SNM: Qu 9, 10,11,12, 13 and 14 to above 80% (green). Embedded use of the Equity and Diversity Institutional Diversity Dashboard across all SNM's recruitment, recognition and reward processes. Insertion of formal clauses in all the School's policies and guidelines, referring to the diversity of staff and

Reference	Rationale/ Evidence	Actions & Outputs	Timeframe (start & end)	Person/Group responsible for implementing action	Senior Leader accountable for action delivery	Desired Outcomes/ Targets/ Success Indicators
		consideration of the needs of CaLD and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff.				the value-add of their unique lived experiences and professional expertise.
		Outputs a) 100% of SNM Executive Leadership Team trained on Equity and Diversity Institutional Diversity Dashboard. b) Review and audit SNM's processes and polices ensuring they are inclusive of CaLD and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander provisions, giving consideration to diversity and inclusion principles.				

3.	• Relationship building
	
	• Drive the CaLD initiative in the school.
	
	• Continue along the pathway supporting the wide-University strategies for Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander staff members while being cognisant of the issues they face not being a part of the current monocultural culture of the School.
		Actions
		3.1 SNM D&I committee to coordinate SNM actions and drive the initiative within the School.
		3.2 Review and development of SNM Equity and Inclusion Plan
		  3.2.1 Lead collective action.
		  3.2.2 Influence processes including recruitment.
		  3.2.3 Target setting within SNM for D&I measures.
		  3.2.4 Actively encourage staff to self-identify so that they can enable improved benchmarking, analysis, and action.
		3.3 Work with the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Students, Equity & Indigenous) [DVC SEI] to continue to attract and recruit Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff and students as per the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Employment Strategy.
		
		Outputs
		• Have culturally diverse membership/ representation on all internal and external committees (including selection and promotion panels, boards, etc.),
		• Guide for Inclusive Committee Membership with a specific component on CaLD staff membership is developed and shared.
		• CaLD Staff – Welcome program - Induction for SNM including onboarding for CaLD staff.
			Q4 - 2023	• Diversity and Inclusion 'Pillar' Lead, SNM
				• Chair, Equity and Inclusion Committee, SNM
					Executive Dean, SNM	Increase staff satisfaction across all ECUSES diversity questions for SNM: Qu 9, 10,11,12, 13 and 14 to above 80% (green).
						
						Increase CaLD female academics participation at ALEVC and above to 10% of female academic staff.

ECU - More Information Request

Key Barrier

This Cygnet aims to address an area of focus not originally identified in the work towards the Athena Swan Bronze Action Plan (ASBAP) in 2017 but was subsequently identified during ASBAP monitoring. That is, while females are overrepresented in School of Nursing and Midwifery (SNM), there is a need to increase Cultural and Linguistic Diversity (CaLD) women at the leadership level (defined as ALEVC and above).

*A note on language

ECU's data collection systems collect data on the basis of sex (male/female) rather than gender. This is reflected in the language used in this document.

Evidence of Barrier

The understanding of intersectional themes/issues was limited in 2017, and specific barriers for females from minority groups were not readily identified.

SNM was a female-dominated school with only 8.5% of staff being male (4 males to 43 females), close to the sector average of men in nursing (11%). Given this profile, issues related to women from minority groups as a barrier was not explicitly assigned targeted actions in the ASBAP. Rather, its related actions fell under broader actions assigned to Science, Technology, Engineering, Mathematics and Medicine (STEMM) disciplines.

SNM academic staff by level and gender - 2017
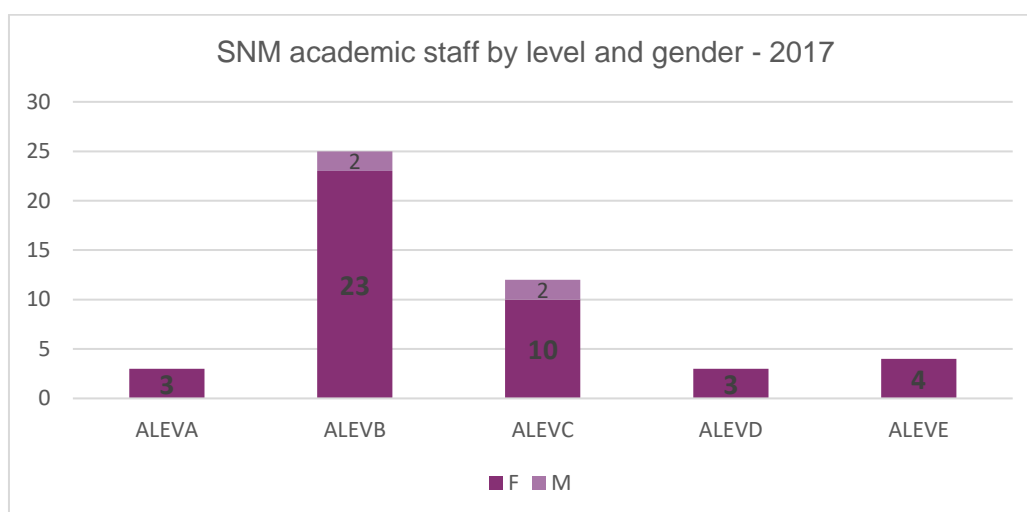
	F	M	F	M
ALEVA	3	0	100%	0%
ALEVB	23	2	92%	8%
ALEVC	10	2	83%	17%
ALEVD	3	0	100%	0%
ALEVE	4	0	100%	0%

Historically, ECU's Human Resources (HR) systems did not keep accurate records on the headcount data for CaLD academic staff, and this was the case in 2017/2018.

However, retrospective analysis indicates that in 2018, as part of a voluntary measure reporting to the Commonwealth Government 14.3FTE academic staff self-identified as being from Culturally and/or Linguistically Diverse (CaLD) backgrounds and having been born in a country other than Australia. Furthermore, the limited data available demonstrates that CaLD female academics in the School of Nursing and Midwifery (SNM) were clustered at the lower levels, with the SNM leadership was monocultural.

While this limited data is an imprecise measure (and ECU does not look to use country of birth, or language spoken at home as a main and reliable equity measure), it does provide SNM with a basic understanding of the reason the support for CaLD staff members in the workplace was required.

The results of the ECU biennial Staff Engagement Survey (ECUSES) presented in the Bronze application showed some notable areas where SNM's scores were below ECU's average ratings. Staff in SNM were less likely to agree that "There is equal opportunity for all staff at ECU" (6% lower than all ECU) and much less likely to agree that "Bullying and abusive behaviours are prevented and not tolerated" (20% lower than all ECU).

When the data for SNM was disaggregated by professional and academic staff, these two issues were particularly highlighted for academic staff. Only 45% of academic staff agreed that "There is equal opportunity for all staff at ECU" compared to 65% of professional staff, and only 49% of academics agreed that "Bullying and abusive behaviours are prevented and not tolerated" compared to 59% of professional staff. In addition, academics agreed at much lower rates than professional staff that "Discrimination is prevented and not tolerated" (academic 68%, professional 92%).

These results cannot be disaggregated by gender because of the small number of men in SNM, nor by CaLD background because that data was not available at the time. However, it certainly highlights issues within SNM and the possibility that it could reflect inequities for staff from CaLD backgrounds is supported by research (DCA reference[15])
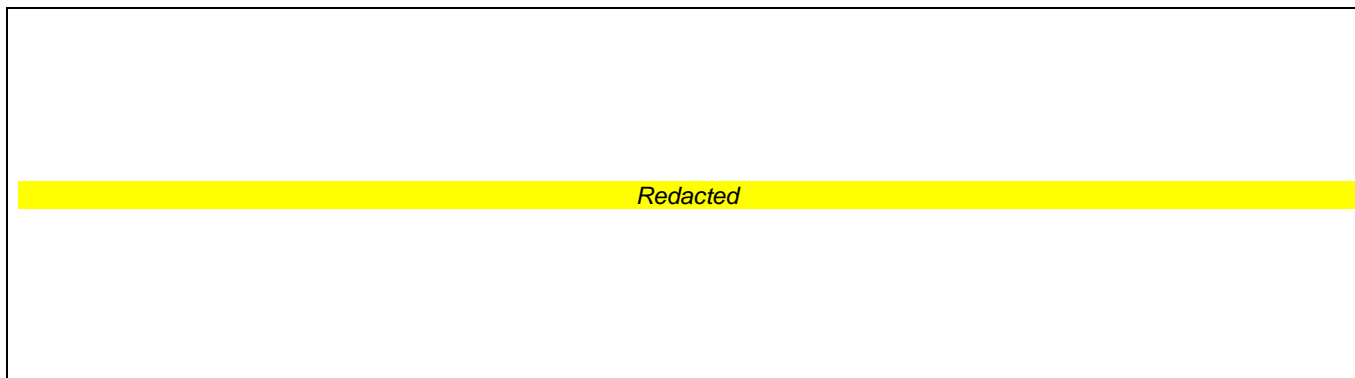
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In 2021, SNM's new Executive Dean (ED) and School Executive adopted a strong leadership GEDI vision, noting SNM would be best served by a broader Diversity and Inclusion (D&I) strategy not simply a gender balanced focus. The SNM's D&I approach considers the increasingly diverse Western Australian community both in terms of teaching, research, and outreach.

The School of Nursing and Midwifery is determined to promote gender equality, diversity, and inclusivity, with a particular emphasis on increasing the number of staff from CaLD backgrounds achieving academic level C and above. By adhering to principles like fairness, diverse leadership, inclusive hiring practices, and staff support, the School aspires to enrich its academic community, improve the quality of education and healthcare delivery, and set a positive example for its students and the wider academic and healthcare sectors. (Professor Karen Strickland, Executive Dean, SNM)

In the absence of national benchmarks specifically pertaining to CaLD Registered Nurses and Midwives in the Australian health workforce, ECU determined a need to develop a set of baseline data in order to move forward in progressing standardised and accessible diversity data sets.

As such, the Athena Swan team worked with SNM to:

1) identify and begin to address barriers to taking an intersectional approach to their D&I work; and
2) identify and begin to address barriers to CaLD women in leadership in SNM.

Activities and Outputs

1: Identify and begin to address barriers to taking an intersectional approach to SNM's D&I work

1) Formalise gender equality, diversity, and inclusion frameworks within SNM

ECU's Strategic Plan refers to the University working towards an employee profile that better reflects the composition of the Western Australian population. To begin their EDI work, SNM has:

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[15] *https://www.dca.org.au/research/culturally-diverse-female-leadership*

a) Created an SNM Equity and Inclusion Plan which details a targeted approach to equity and inclusion activities and initiatives including designated funding for equity, access, and inclusion initiatives, and appointed an Associate Dean Lead for the plan.

b) Created a SNM Equity and Inclusion (E&I) Committee which is a forum comprising academic and professional staff members. To support the formation of the SNM E&I committee members were sought with diverse lived experiences, examples are:
- men;
- Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander people;
- people who identity as LGBTQIA+, including trans, non-binary and gender diverse people;
- people with disability; and
- people from all cultural and linguistic backgrounds.

2) Improve data collection and monitoring
At ECU, all school leaders have access to the AS Data Dashboard via the software program 'Tableau'. This dashboard provides metrics to assist decision-making and actions that impact GEDI, specifically gender equity, and also affords the ability to understand some basic underlying intersectional experiences of individuals within SNM. The current Dashboard provides data in a range of visual formats, including graphs and charts and generates limited customised reports.

Over the past 9-months in an effort to expand on and ensure the validity of, the intersectional knowledge of the University, ECU has been working towards the creation of a new Equity and Diversity Institutional Data Dashboard, a dataset that will have the detailed information on student and staff characteristics that will work in partnership with the already established AS Data Dashboard. This information will be useful when exploring data trends in student and staff, for staff submitting award nominations, or those needing context setting information for grant applications, research applications, journal articles etc.

The new intersectional dashboard will allow:

- A breakdown of overall student/staff diversity across ECU (and also by School).
- The access to accurate data which will be streamlined, processed and linked for increased transparency and allow more appropriate strategic actions to be determined.
- The ability to generate simplified, customised reports
- The ability to differentiate different equity groups (for staff and students) as well as the instances where students and staff are part of several equity groups, such as:
  - Gender split
  - CaLD
  - Disability
  - Socioeconomic status
  - Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander origin
  - Age distribution
  - Domestic/international students

The Analytics team, along with the Program Manager – Athena Swan; the Manager, Equity and Inclusion; and the Senior Analyst of Strategic Governance Services, have formed a working group to collaboratively brainstorm requirements and, when appropriate, seek approval from relevant Committees.

2: Identify and begin to address barriers to CaLD women in leadership in the School

Work already outlined in Cygnet #2 saw an increase in promotion rates (all levels) for women in SNM from 2% in 2017 to 10% in 2022.

However, through focus groups, it was identified that further work was needed to support the career advancement of CaLD female academics in SNM. Before SNM started enacting changes on their AS journey, female academics in SNM were interviewed in the focus groups. They identified that before they saw the new Executive Dean and the School Executive starting to 'take action', they didn't 'see' as many CaLD females. Now, they see diversity around them, but the lack of senior CaLD females in leadership is still there, and thus the ramification is an absence of role models. The SNM females (and males) are starting to believe that SNM is supportive of their career aspirations.

1) Improve visibility in promotional materials

Promotional materials for SNM have been reviewed to ensure that they do not contain images of only white people. This is in recognition that the gender imbalance in SNM dictates that images should contain a mix of genders and of course, reflect diversity.

The SNM, along with all other academic and service areas, operates under overarching University guidelines that include an Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Blueprint (2020) and a Diversity Development Framework to guide internal and external engagement on ECU-wide equity initiatives supported by a multi-modal approach to staff development in all areas of diversity (Foundation offerings cover concepts such as: the state and federal government requirements around equal employment opportunity, bias (conscious and unconscious), and subsequent offerings are focused on six identified areas of diversity; race, ethnicity and cultural heritage, gender, LGBTIQ, age, disability, religion).

ECU also has an overarching Inclusive Language Guide (that draws attention to intersectionality considerations, gender neutral language and cultural diversity and religious considerations, good inclusive language practice). As well, in 2016, the Athena Swan team developed the "Promotion of Gender Equality at ECU – A Gender Bias Busting Checklist". This Bias Busting Checklist covers the impact areas of: job adverts (recruitment and promotion); language in articles, media and promotion; visual images (pictures, posters, photos); titles (events, labelling); environment (locations, facilities); education (awareness); social media; achievement (reward, recognition); promoting role models (male champions, female exemplars, mentoring, sponsorship); calling bias & redressing inequalities in a respectful way). This was promoted for use throughout ECU and can be found in our online gender equity resources. As well, the Athena Swan team was approached by other universities asking for permission to use the Checklist (including on their websites).

The SNM operates within the above procedural framework, but also must follow other University guidelines from our Brand and Marketing Service Centre on gender balance in images and all promotional material must undergo a standard quality style check to ensure it meets our corporate style guidelines before being printed or published. Finally, all areas including SNM adhere to ECU's People and Culture Plan which also has a key focus on Fostering Equity, Diversity, Inclusion and Belonging.

SNM also set up social media accounts (on Facebook and LinkedIn) in 2019 to celebrate and share the success and work of the staff and students in the School.

SNM is required to adhere to ECU's Social Media Policy, which like all of ECU's policies, aligns to ECU's overt commitment to Equity, Diversity and Inclusion. There is strong evidence of the SNM overt commitment to profiling the achievements of CaLD staff, e.g., the SNM's Facebook and LinkedIn sites which is a planned and deliberate approach under the School Executive's leadership:

[Staff and student exemplars redacted]
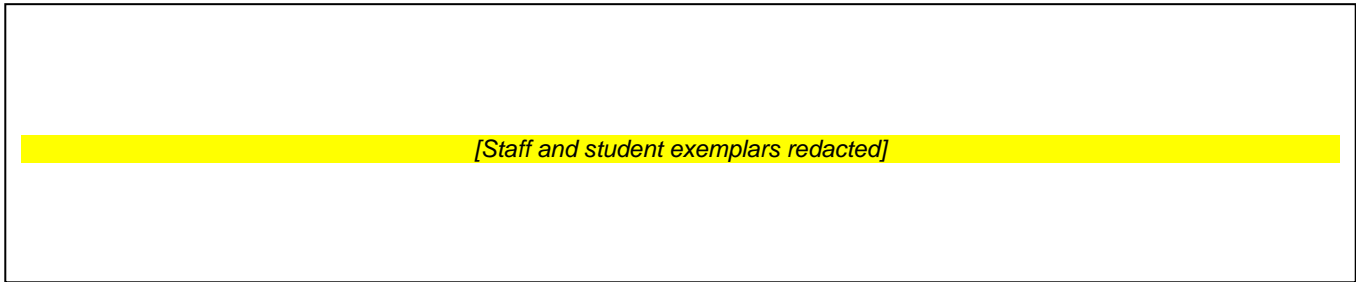
2) Provide opportunities to act up

SNM are developing strategies to improve leadership development opportunities for all staff. As such, SNM has introduced a new system whereby junior academic staff members have opportunities to 'act up' into a senior position, for example when the Associate Deans are not at work or not available. Two CaLD women staff and one man have had regular opportunities to act up and receive this leadership experience. This is part of the SNM's integrated approach to developing diversity in their leadership team. The introduction of 'acting up' to the SNM Executive team changed with the new Executive Dean and the focus on leadership capacity building as per this Cygnet application. Traditionally, the Associate Deans 'covered each other'; now two CaLD women academics regularly act up and the SNM Executive believes this has been instrumental in their individual personal development and it's been noted that their contributions have always been very constructive; thus, this approach has demonstrated gain for the School as well as the individuals.

ECU has a policy; unconscious bias training as mandatory for all staff serving on selection or promotion panels. Further, there is a concerted effort by the SNM Executive to examine the patterns of leadership development, including 'acting up', and a commitment to redressing cognitive bias and the 'halo effect'. The SNM is well aware that homogeneity in a leadership team, while decision-making is easier, in the longer term, will not deliver the results that would come from a diverse leadership team.

The Athena Swan team has done considerable desk analysis of the benefits of diversity in leadership and this work is shared across ECU (and the sector): diverse teams are critical for innovation; diversity reduces 'group think' and enhances decision making; inclusive workplaces maximise talent and productivity; diverse leadership teams are more likely to recognise risk, and so forth.

In 2024, ECU will undertake a review of the Academic Leadership Roles policy as part of the Contemporary Academic Careers Project. A guiding principle of the project is that ECU will underpin academic career development by a contemporary approach to equity, inclusion, and mitigation of exclusionary barriers to academic career success.

3) Provide mentoring support
a) iMATE
iMATE is a mentorship scheme whereby new teaching staff are assigned a 'buddy'. Interview feedback from CaLD staff (2023) confirmed that this has been a significant support influencing their success and retention.
b) Research mentors
All new research staff meet with the SNM Associate Dean Research and are supported to join a research group and assigned a research mentor. This can be extremely valuable for CaLD staff who find themselves without a network "*I didn't study in Australia so I don't have the links for my research that others may have'* (Women in STEMM SNM Focus Group Participant).

4) Improve organisational and School culture to be inclusive of cultural and linguistic diversity

a) Racism. It stops with me
ECU has pledged support to this campaign. It provides tools and resources to help the University learn about racism and how to take actions to create change.

ECU has a range of policies that guide our work about inclusion and not just because it is the 'right thing to do'. Equity has always been a basic principle for ECU, helping to ensure that our University remains relevant, and responsive to our diverse students, staff and communities. Respect is one of our core values. Our diversity, inclusion and equity plans/ blueprints/ frameworks are supported by our governing Council, our Senior Leadership Team and across the University more broadly.

Kurongkurl Katitjin, ECU's Centre for Indigenous Australian Education and Research, plays a vital role in assisting the University, including the schools, to meet our commitment to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and ensuring that individual differences and diversity are respected.

The SNM's mission is: "It is our Mission to improve the health and wellbeing of communities for today and future generations by educating aspiring/ transformational nursing and midwifery leaders through a lens of humanitarian principles of social justice, equity, and inclusion."

In terms of Racism. It stops with me, the SNM is highly visible here, with a snapshot of specific organised events/ communications:

- 15 December 2023; yarning session with Elder in Residence, Dr Roma Winmar;
- 16 September 2023; the SNM Executive Dean profiled the work of the Nursing Peaks Coalition releasing a joint statement in support of the Voice to Parliament and SNM staff and students participated in the Walk for Yes on 17 September 2023;
- 3 February 2023; cultural immersion experience with Aboriginal Artist from Broome; and
- This year, the Executive Dean ECU's SNM, who is Chair of the Council of Deans of Nursing & Midwifery ANZ, worked with the UK Council of Deans on their "Anti-racism in AHP Education: Building an Inclusive Environment" recently published (2023) practical guide.

b) Inclusive Language Guide
ECU's Inclusive language Guide, developed in 2022, includes a specific section on Race, Ethnicity and Culture which refers to cross-cultural communication and avoiding stereotypes.

This Guide was based on broad consultation noting that language changes over time, and thus ECU is constantly welcoming any feedback and further input. This Guide is socialised within SNM through the following ways:

- The Inclusive Language Guide is in alignment with and supported by ECU's Corporate Writing Guide and there is a resource, 'Writing within ECU' that affords further guidance.
- ECU is a member of the Diversity Council Australia (DCA) and the DCA's knowledge and resources helped inform our guiding principles in inclusive language (and ECU users are referred to supporting resources such as the DCA's 'Words at Work' resource).
- ECU's Equity Projects Team, responsible for the implementation of projects and initiatives to ensure ECU is a safe and inclusive place for everyone, offers internal support to ECU users, e.g., schools.
- The ECU Student Guild has several student-run equity clubs which exist to support and connect students including the Mature Age Student Network, Ethnocultural Collective, Queer Collective, Women's Community and ECU Wellbeing Community.
- ECU's Equity, Diversity and Disability Service provides support for students with diverse study needs,
- University Contact Officers (UCOs) are available to provide information to students and staff who are, or feel that they may have been, the subject of bullying, harassment or discrimination at ECU. UCOs can provide information on relevant policies and procedures in conjunction with the services available to assist in resolving an issue or concern.
- The SNM has its own School level Equity & Inclusion Committee and Plan which includes attention to inclusive language including through curricula renewal, e.g., the Midwifery curriculum has been revised to observe inclusive language.

c) SNM D&I events

The ECU SNM website landing page deliberately features CaLD women. It also features Athena Swan – both ECU's membership (ECU is proud to be a member of the Athena Swan Charter in Australia, a program focused on improving the recruitment, retention, and promotion of women in science, technology, engineering, maths and medicine) and ECU's attainment of the Athena Swan Bronze Award.

The SNM Executive Dean issues a Dean's Digest approximately every ten days, including using this as a vehicle to promote events, for example:

- 10 November 2023 issue was to "celebrate a joyous Diwali! Across Hindu, Jain, and Sikh communities, this Festival of Lights signifies the spiritual victory of good over evil, light over darkness, and knowledge over ignorance. The lights have both mythical and spiritual meaning. Happy Diwali".
- 7 June 2023 – the issue covered attendance at a Minister's Roundtable on Transforming Lives Through Refugee Education Migration Pathways and reported back on how the sector might look at ways we can support people who have fled or are fleeing their home country involuntarily and find themselves settling in Australia as refugees (note the SNM has a project to support refugees to transition to living in Australia and helping to address the workforces shortages).
- 21 March 2023, WA Harmony Week multicultural lunch by the SNM Social Committee.
- March – April 2023, Ramadan was celebrated with the SNM Social Committee organising a 'potluck' feast at the end of Ramadan (all colleagues encouraged to bring a pot to share to acknowledge the end of the fast).

[Student exemplar redacted]

Outcomes

Target outcome 1: Establish baseline for CaLD representation (by gender) in SNM. (Achieved)

As noted in the Evidence of Barrier section, the lack of baseline data on CaLD women's representation or experiences in SNM in 2017 makes it difficult to measure success in terms of representation. As such, the quantitative data presented here serves as a baseline for future actions to improve the representation of CaLD females in SNM.

Overall, SNM is still female-dominated (8M to 61F: 12%M).

Regarding the reported data, for the purposes of this Cygnet application, the data has been matched to the university's People and Culture (P&C) CaLD report, prepared for the SNM Cygnet in August 2023. A caveat on this data reporting is that numbers and percentages may be slightly different from previous reporting due to Human Resources (HR) personnel reconciliation and other specific data reporting sets.

The numbers presented in this table below are taken from the P&C CaLD Report whereas the alternate data provided, demonstrates a 'snapshot in time' taken from a different reporting snapshot. Hence, anomalies such as the timing of contracts and staff separations appear to show 3 extra female staff and this is the small difference shown.
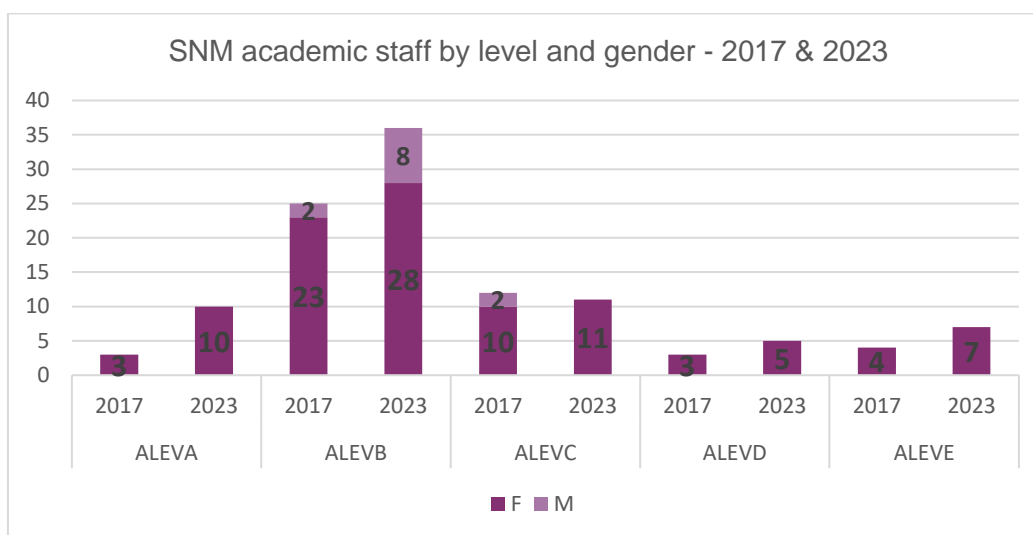

School	ALEVA	ALEVB	ALEVC	ALEVD	ALEVE & Above
# Female (F) staff	3	23	10	3	4
# Female (F) staff 2023	10	28	11	5	7
# Male (M) staff	0	2	2	0	0
# Male (M) staff 2023	0	8	0	0	0
Difference between F and M in 2023	+10	+20	+11	+5	+7

	Year	F	M	F	M
ALEVA	2017	3	0	100%	0%
	2023	10	0	100%	0%
ALEVB	2017	23	2	92%	8%
	2023	28	8	76%	24%
ALEVC	2017	10	2	83%	17%
	2023	11	0	100%	0%
ALEVD	2017	3	0	100%	0%
	2023	5	0	100%	0%
ALEVE	2017	4	0	100%	0%
	2023	7	0	100%	0%

SNM has a culturally diverse cohort, with 20 academics (14 women and 6 men) reporting a country of birth other than Australia (29% of all academics, 23% of women academics, 75% of men academics).

While the numbers of CaLD staff have increased proportionately to the growth in SNM numbers overall, other factors such as Covid and other natural attrition factors have ensured that numbers have remained inert.

Given the challenges for all universities over this time-period, it is not surprising that most CaLD staff in SNM are still at lower levels (ALEVC and below). Changes in nursing workforce planning Australia-wide have encouraged overseas employment of large numbers of nurses, demonstrating the need for more concerted efforts to support this cohort to progress to more senior levels.

SNM academics by level and CaLD status - 2023
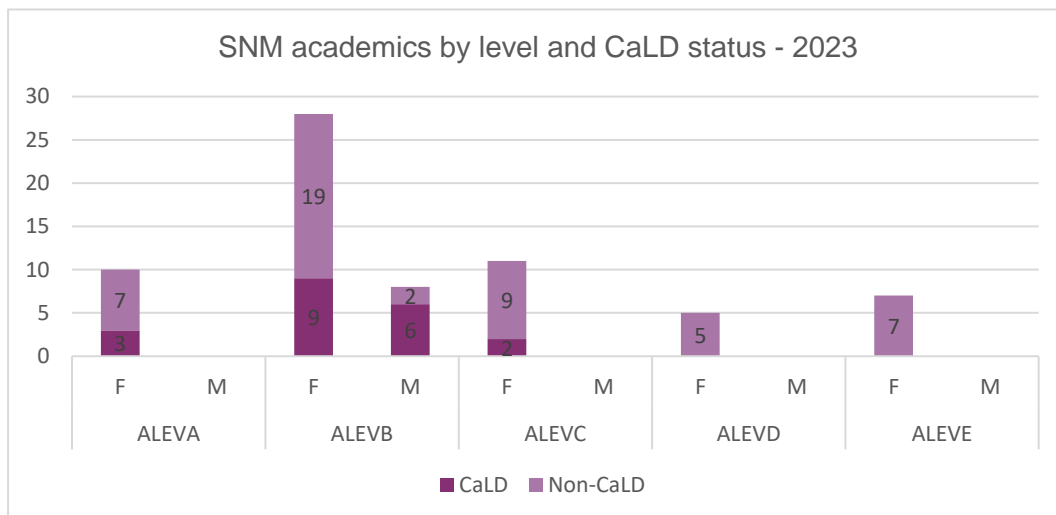
Target outcome 2: SNM academic satisfaction scores for each of the 6 inclusion questions in the Staff Engagement Survey (ECUSES) improve to 80% or above and be even with or above the All-ECU score. (Partially Achieved: 10,11,13,14 achieved; 9&12 not achieved)

Until recently, we had very little data on CaLD staff experiences in SNM, which made it difficult to design actions that specifically address the structural and cultural barriers that they face. Therefore, as an interim measure, our actions were aimed at improving the culture in SNM more generally. We hoped that this will also improve the experiences of CaLD staff while we develop more CaLD-targeted actions.

Results of the 2022 Staff Engagement Survey (ECUSES) show an improvement in scores across SNM. These surveys are used to evaluate the effectiveness of strategic initiatives and monitor historical trends. Overall satisfaction scores improved for five of the six inclusion questions, with the 6th ("My immediate supervisor/manager genuinely supports equality between women and men") decreasing by 2% (2016 90% - 2022 88%).

ECUSES data redacted
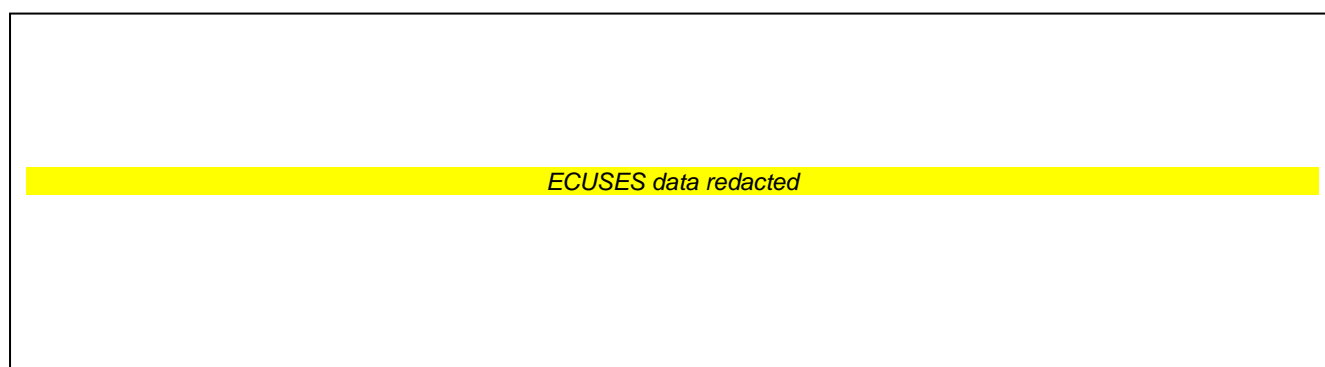
SNM is essentially on an even par on all the six diversity questions. Questions nine is even, questions 10 and 12 only down by 1% point, questions 11 and 14 slightly up and only "Q 13. My immediate supervisor/manager genuinely supports equality between women and men" is an issue where the SNM academics were 5% lower than the overall ECU score.

Comparing academic and professional staff agreement, there is now little difference across the 6 questions. Academic staff agreement with the statement "There is equal opportunity for all staff at ECU" has increased from 45% to 66% and agreement that "Bullying and abusive behaviours are prevented and not tolerated" from 49% to 73%.

Because of the small numbers, the data still cannot be disaggregated by gender, and more granular data is required to directly assess the experiences of CALD staff. While we are unable to determine a direct causality for the improvements, these results indicate that SNM culture is moving in a positive direction.

Impact

In 2022, ECU employed an independent qualitative researcher to facilitate wiS focus group (wiSFG) discussions to better understand specific needs of STEMM women. As part of this, female staff were asked about their experiences, particularly if from CaLD backgrounds, and how this impacted their perceived ability to progress at ECU.

In 2023, further in-depth, one-hour, semi-structured interviews were held with CaLD women in SNM to discuss their experiences working as a female academic. Six individual interviews (43% of the relevant academic female staff) were undertaken. The ability to participate in these interviews was impacted by factors including conflicting professional commitments or lack of availability. As per standard research and University protocols, it was impressed upon the interviewees that this was a safe workspace, and the interviews were entirely voluntary, free from pressure to participate.

Thematic mapping shows a series of key enablers and barriers to support CaLD women to senior positions.

a) Enablers (Broken down by theme)

(Quotes from SNM female interview participants under the themes below have been redacted for confidentiality)

1. Supervisor support - 'open door' plus other key behaviours.

2. Formal mentor program (iMATE)

3. Colleagues and peers support not just for tasks but for psycho-social support and for help to understand the system, including the new starter buddy system.

4. Workload allocation accommodation e.g., allowing time for PhD completion.

5. Workplace flexibility particularly at team level to enable balancing across different roles inside and out of work.

6. Personal attributes such as strong skills, persistence and positivity in the face of problems.

b) Barriers (Broken down by theme)

(Quotes from SNM female interview participants under the themes below have been redacted for confidentiality)

1. Managing workload flexibly but maintaining appropriate boundaries within family life.

2. Inadequate research support e.g., knowledge, networks and funding to progress career beyond early-mid career stage.

3. Not seeing role models at more senior academic levels 'like me'.

4. Promotions process and standards to more senior levels appear daunting given existing work demands.

5. No workload accommodation to build research profile.

6. Personal attributes such as assertiveness and negotiation not a natural part of cultural background for my gender (e.g., negotiating workload academic loads.)

7. Overall, staff are receptive to the changes to increase diversity in SNM.

A recent example of the impact on CaLD staff within SNM is a successful 2023 nomination for the Edith Cowan Athena Swan Advancement Scheme. As part of consultation with the SNM female CaLD academics, which included discussing ideas for targeted support strategies, several females were encouraged to apply for the scheme. One was successful in the Career Advancement category and was awarded this subsidy by the Vice-Chancellor to progress her career through financial support for her personal requirements. Such achievements provide encouragement, support, recognition and a "you can be, what you can see" message for inspiring future CaLD female applicants.

Conclusion

Perhaps the greatest challenge has been that when we realised this was an area of great need for attention to redress gender inequities, it became clear early on there was little 'out there' in the sector to help guide our work. An immediate impulse was to try and locate benchmarks and published guidelines/ resources. When it was obvious there was a dearth of available work, if anything, it motivated us more to focus on the issues for CaLD females within nursing and midwifery to identify the barriers and develop some baseline data. This was critical in our view to prepare us to then identify other like-minded universities/ science institutions who had also focussed on this area, with whom we might undertake some benchmarking in the future.

As well, we were affected to hear the stories from some of these women in terms of how they've felt heard (for the first time). In the clinical setting, the challenges for those whose first language is not English (CaLD women and men) are well-known and our goal is to not only build the leadership opportunities for CaLD staff in this field, but to also build the confidence within the pipeline of students so that ultimately, there is a positive impact for health consumers in terms of the diversity of the future health workforce (given one in four Australians are born overseas and Australia's population is one of the most diverse in the world). For instance, this is a broad issue for the wider health system in Australia, e.g., in December 2022, the Summer edition of the Nurse & Midwife Support newsletter: "Supporting culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) nurses, midwives, and students" deals with the sensitive issues related to racism and other forms of discrimination for CaLD nurses, midwives and students, and suggest how non-CaLD nurses and midwives can get involved and support them[16].

As we continue on our Athena Swan journey, there's a growing body of research that can help us in this domain to co-design actions to achieve our targets, for example:

- First, continue our critical examination of the issues and challenges relating to the experience of CaLD nurses and midwives (males, females and gender diverse people) within Australia (drawing also on international contexts);
- Examining what strategies have been developed, trialled and evaluated that prove to enhance their employment experiences within the Australian health care system and their opportunities to contribute to the development of contemporary Australian nursing practice[17];
- Co-develop realistic and measurable targets with the CaLD staff (all genders);
- Identify benchmarking collaborators and measure our early results against our collaborators to progress this work on a sector-wide scale (including benchmarking against other schools, within the discipline and across disciplines); and
- Finally, the work ahead of us to achieve sustainable positive change isn't underestimated and while we note we're in the early stages of delivering outcomes and impact, we envisage the Athena Swan Silver framework and process provides ECU and the School, in the SNM Executive Dean's words "with a very clear mandate around this important aspect of their work".

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[16] *For more information: https://www.nmsupport.org.au/news/culturally-and-linguistically-diverse-colleagues-deserve-our-support*

[17] *https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S1322769608605430*