



Athena Swan Silver Award for Higher Education Institutions

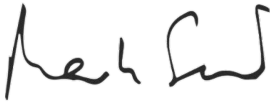
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THE UNIVERSITY OF
SYDNEY

DECLARATION

I declare that the information presented in this application (including data) is an honest, original, accurate and true representation of The University of Sydney, and that the application complies with the 8,500-word limit.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Mark Scott', written in a cursive style.

Professor Mark Scott AO, Vice-Chancellor and President

Section	Total Word Limit 8500 (excluding Tables, Figures, Legends, Headings, Sub-headings)
Leadership & Accountability	978
Career Planning, Progression & Equity	2154
Parents & Carers	1081
Racial Inclusion, Voice & Visibility	1720
DEI in the Faculty of Engineering	1633
Inclusive Managers	909
Total	8475

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF TRADITIONAL CUSTODIANS

We, as Australia's first university, pay our deepest respects to the First Peoples of this Land. This Country hosts the longest continuing culture in the world, a culture where the practice of science is evident in the everyday world and a culture where the wisdom of women has been respected as a central part of the social fabric for more than 60,000 years.

We acknowledge that The University of Sydney's Camperdown campus sits on the lands of the Gadigal of the Eora nation and that we have campuses, teaching and research facilities located on the lands of the Gamaraygal, Dharug, Wangal, Darkinyung, Guringgai, Burramadagal, Dharawal, Gandangara, Gamilaraay, Barkindji, Bandjalang, Wiradjuri, Ngunawal, Gureng Gureng, and Gadagju peoples, who have for thousands of generations exchanged knowledge for the benefit of all.



Charlie Jackson, proud Gomeroi woman, grew up on Darkinjung country and currently lives on Gadigal land. Charlie, studying a Bachelor of Science (Health) is looking to continue her studies with postgraduate medicine. Charlie's dream is to work in paediatrics in rural areas.

STATEMENT FROM THE ARTIST

This artwork was created with the SAGE project in mind: advocating for gender and intersectional equity, diversity and inclusion. The mobs you see in the middle surrounding a larger circle represent groups of women gathering to share ideas, experiences and knowledge. The flow of the artwork represents nature, Mother Nature, and what women's business contributes to communities. The plant seen on the corners is the Sarsaparilla (Dharug people) which is a type of bush medicine. The leaves and stems are boiled in water which is then consumed. This relieves stomach pains, treating colds, coughs, bronchitis, arthritis, rheumatism and diabetes. This plant is now being sold and used for cancer treatment. This artwork seeks to recognise the larger acknowledgment of the Eora nation and the 29 clans; communities that continue to live, work and nurture, and paying respect to their elders past, present and future.

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List of Abbreviations

Abbreviation	Definition
ADKAR	Awareness, Desire, Knowledge, Ability, Reinforcement (change management model)
AEF	Academic Excellence Framework
AI	Artificial Intelligence
AP&D	Academic Planning & Development
CALD	Culturally and Linguistically Diverse
CARM	Culturally and Racially Marginalised
CNTD	Choose Not to Disclose
DAWN	Disability at Work Network
D&I	Diversity & Inclusion
DEI	Diversity, Equity & Inclusion
DIAP	Disability Inclusion Action Plan
DVC	Deputy Vice-Chancellor
DVC C&L	Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Community & Leadership)
DVC-E&S	Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Education and Students)
DVC-ISS	Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Indigenous Strategy & Services)
FTE	Full-Time Equivalent
FTEY	Full-Time Equivalent Year
FoE	Faculty of Engineering
GEDI	Gender Equity, Diversity & Inclusion
HC	Headcount
HDR	Higher Degree by Research
HEO	Higher Education Officer
HR	Human Resources
IRMA	Institutional Research Management Application
ISS	Indigenous Strategy & Services
KPI	Key Performance Indicator
KPM	Key Performance Measure
LGBQ	Lesbian, Gay, Bi+, Queer
LGBTQIA+	Lesbian, Gay, Bi+, Transgender, Queer, Intersex, Asexual/Agender +
NCCC	National Centre for Cultural Competence
ND	Not Disclosed
PMT	Project Management Team
PP&D	Performance Planning & Development
PR	Participation Rate
PSDF	Professional Staff Development Fund
RISE	Realise. Inspire. Support. Energise.
ROPE	Research Opportunity and Performance Evidence
RTO	Relative to Opportunity
SAC	SAGE Advisory Committee
SAT	Self-Assessment Team
SDVCP	Senior Deputy Vice-Chancellor & Provost
SPAM	Strategic Planning and Management
SPS	Senior Professional Staff
STEMM	Science, Technology, Engineering, Mathematics, Medicine
TGD	Trans and Gender Diverse
UE-PCC	University Executive-People and Culture Committee
WG	Working Group
WGEA	Workplace Gender Equality Agency

List of Countries of Birth

Region	Countries Included (based on ABS classification of countries at the time)
Oceania and Antarctica	Australia, Norfolk Island, Australian External Territories, nec, New Zealand, New Caledonia, Papua New Guinea, Solomon Islands, Vanuatu, Guam, Kiribati, Marshall Islands, Micronesia Federated States of, Nauru, Northern Mariana Islands, Palau, Cook Islands, Fiji, French Polynesia, Niue, Samoa, Samoa American, Tokelau, Tonga, Tuvalu, Wallis and Futuna, Pitcairn Islands, Polynesia (excludes Hawaii), nec,, Argentinian Antarctic Territory, Australian Antarctic Territory, British Antarctic Territory, Chilean Antarctic Territory, Queen Maud Land (Norway), Ross Dependency (New Zealand)
North-West Europe	England, Isle of Man, Northern Ireland, Scotland, Wales, Guernsey, Jersey, Ireland, Austria, Belgium, France, Germany, Liechtenstein, Luxembourg, Monaco, Netherlands, Switzerland, Denmark, Faroe Islands, Finland, Greenland, Iceland, Norway, Sweden, Aland Islands
Southern and Eastern Europe	Andorra, Gibraltar, Holy See, Italy, Malta, Portugal, San Marino, Spain, Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, North Macedonia, Greece, Moldova, Romania, Slovenia, Montenegro, Serbia, Kosovo, Belarus, Czechia, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Russian Federation, Slovakia, Ukraine
North Africa and the Middle East	Algeria, Egypt, Libya, Morocco, Sudan, Tunisia, Western Sahara, Spanish North Africa, South Sudan, Bahrain, Gaza Strip and West Bank, Iran, Iraq, Israel, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Syria, Türkiye, United Arab Emirates, Yemen
South-East Asia	Myanmar, Cambodia, Laos, Thailand, Vietnam, Brunei Darussalam, Indonesia, Malaysia, Philippines, Singapore, Timor-Leste, China (excludes SARs and Taiwan), Hong Kong (SAR of China), Macau (SAR of China), Mongolia, Taiwan, Japan, Korea, Democratic People's Republic of (North), Korea, Republic of (South)
Southern and Central Asia	Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Afghanistan, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan
Americas	Bermuda, Canada, St Pierre and Miquelon, United States of America, Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Ecuador, Falkland Islands, French Guiana, Guyana, Paraguay, Peru, Suriname, Uruguay, Venezuela, South America, nec, Belize, Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Mexico, Nicaragua, Panama, Anguilla, Antigua and Barbuda, Aruba, Bahamas, Barbados, Cayman Islands, Cuba, Dominica, Dominican Republic, Grenada, Guadeloupe, Haiti, Jamaica, Martinique, Montserrat, Puerto Rico, St Kitts and Nevis, St Lucia, St Vincent and the Grenadines, Trinidad and Tobago, Turks and Caicos Islands, Virgin Islands, British , Virgin Islands, United States, St Barthelemy, St Martin (French part), Bonaire, Sint Eustatius and Saba, Curacao, Sint Maarten (Dutch part)
Sub-Saharan Africa	Benin, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Cabo Verde, Central African Republic, Chad, Congo, Republic of, Congo, Democratic Republic of, Cote d'Ivoire, Equatorial Guinea, Gabon, Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Liberia, Mali, Mauritania, Niger, Nigeria, Sao Tome and Principe, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Togo, Angola, Botswana, Burundi, Comoros, Djibouti, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Kenya, Lesotho, Madagascar, Malawi, Mauritius, Mayotte, Mozambique, Namibia, Reunion, Rwanda, St Helena, Seychelles, Somalia, South Africa, Eswatini, Tanzania, Uganda, Zambia, Zimbabwe, Southern and East Africa, nec

CONTEXT

Data Explainer

TABLE 1 SUMMARY OF DATA SOURCES & ENGAGEMENT INFORMING OUR SILVER SELF-ASSESSMENT

Principles	Build on Cygnets	Surveys & Data	Centre Lived Experience	Senior Leader Engagement	Amplify Related Work
	Use our Cygnets as well as those from other organisations to help inform selection and understanding of our Silver Priority Areas and action planning	Interrogate survey and demographic data through an intersectional lens	Provide forums to understand priorities and barriers, and inform action planning from different roles, areas, and lived experiences	Seek input and engagement from Deans, Heads of Schools, Leadership Teams, and Subject Matter Experts	Identify and amplify existing or planned programs of work relating to the Silver Priority Areas
Selection of 5 Silver Key Priority Areas	(November-December 2024) Cygnet Working Groups identified ongoing challenges evidenced during Cygnet development.	(November 2024-September 2025) We undertook an intersectional interrogation of workforce and survey data across levels, role types, employment types, and demographic groups. 2024 and 2025 Sydney Listens All Staff Engagement Survey, Diversity Dashboard; 2024 AWEI Survey; 2024 Assess to RISE Survey; 2024 and 2025 WGEA	(November 2024) Forty representatives from Faculty and School DEI teams, Staff Networks, and other stakeholders came together for our inaugural SAGE DEI Symposium, where they identified shared and unique local team priority areas, and shared or unique challenges and barriers.	(October - November 2024) SAGE Advisory Council; meetings with Leadership Teams from Science, Engineering, Business School, Faculty of Arts and Social Science, Law, Architecture, Faculty of Medicine and Health, HR.	(November 2024 - September 2025) We identified, built on, and amplified work underway at the University that aligned with our Silver Priority Areas; Respect@Work, RISE, Academic Excellence Framework, Staff Complaints Procedure Review, Safer Communities, Leadership Academy.
Understanding of Sub-Barriers			(June-August 2025) We used qualitative methodology (focus groups, interviews, surveys) to centre the voices of those impacted by barriers and identify contributing root causes/sub-barriers. We further used these sessions to co-develop actions to address the issues raised.	(February-December 2025) Structured interviews with senior staff and DEI stakeholders; two meetings with SAGE Advisory Council; bi-monthly UE-PCC; Meetings with Leadership Teams from Engineering, Science, Business School, FASS, ADP, FMH, HR, Subject Matter Experts, Operational teams.	
Action Planning	(September 2025) We reviewed our Cygnet Action Plans and those from other organisations to identify and include any actions relevant to the Silver application.		We used focus group data from RISE, and free text comments from the 2025 Sydney Listens All Staff Engagement Survey.		(September - October 2025) We consolidated recommendations to form our Silver Action Plan, and identified which actions aligned with work underway or planned future work, to minimise duplication and amplify impact.
Infrastructure: We concurrently assessed our ability to gather meaningful data and measure outcomes and impacts of planned actions, and identify areas for improvement if required					

Workforce data and limitations

Our HR platform, Workday, and the Student Administration System allow staff and students to self-identify as trans, gender diverse, women, men, or prefer not to disclose. Staff can also self-identify their race/ethnicity, sexual orientation, pronouns, disability, and other demographics.

Workforce data feed into the Diversity Dashboard, used for all workforce tables and graphs unless noted. The Dashboard shows diversity participation across the career cycle by total workforce and cohort percentages, with filters for intersectionality, employment types, classification levels, dates, and organisational areas. To protect privacy, data for groups of six or fewer are hidden. All data used here were independently verified by HR before submission.

Our Diversity Dashboard supports intersectional analysis but relies on staff disclosure via Workday. While mandatory questions have full response rates, non-mandatory disclosures are lower (Table 2), likely under-representing groups who are typically marginalised. Disclosure has improved over the past two years but ongoing trust-building communication about data use and privacy protections remains a priority.

TABLE 2 PROCESS AND PERCENTAGE STAFF DISCLOSURE OF PERSONAL INFORMATION IN WORKDAY

Field	Documents Required to Change	% Staff Who Supplied Information*
Date of Birth (mandatory)	Yes	100.0
Primary Nationality (mandatory)	No	100.0
Gender (mandatory)	No	100.0
Citizenship (mandatory)	No	100.0
Country of Birth (mandatory)	No	95.5
Race / Ethnicity (optional)	No	58.1
Disability (optional)	No	59.9
Sexual Orientation (optional)	No	41.7
Pronoun (optional)	No	10.5

* Based on all active workers in Workday as at 3 March 2025, irrespective of whether they have a lapsed contract or not (n = 24,875)

Sydney Listens All Staff Engagement Survey data and limitations

The primary survey data source was the annual Sydney Listens Survey, run via CultureAmp since 2023. It encompasses engagement, enablement, and workplace culture, with demographic categories aligned to Workday for consistent, intersectional analysis that allows us to link representation and progression with staff experience. To protect privacy, responses from groups smaller than ten are concealed. We have included a demographic breakdown of headcounts and participation rates as relevant in the data explainer for each Key Barrier. All survey analyses were independently verified by HR.

Staff could also submit anonymous comments, which we thematically analysed using keyword searches aligned to each Key Barrier, supported by Microsoft Copilot, although staff survey privacy settings did not include permission for us (SAGE) to use direct quotes from the free text comments, and so we are presenting themes only.

Focus group data and limitations

Focus groups ran June-August 2025 and were promoted through staff networks, Viva Engage, newsletters, and targeted emails. Staff could also contribute via survey or 1:1 confidential interview. Discussion questions, developed by Working Groups, explored what was/wasn't working well, and potential solutions, helping identify progress, barriers, and co-designed actions. Sessions were facilitated by the SAGE team and SAT members, except LGBTQIA+ groups, which were led by an external Pride in Diversity facilitator.

Conducted via Zoom, transcripts were recorded and combined with interview and survey responses for thematic analysis by the SAGE team. Direct quotes are used with permission, and participant demographics are shown per Key Barrier. While we were mindful of consultation fatigue, especially for marginalised groups, and aimed to align with existing consultations where possible, some focus groups had lower attendance. This was particularly the case for those discussing race, engineering, and LGBTQIA+ staff. These limitations are discussed further in the submission.

SAGE DEI Symposium

In November 2024, the SAGE and HR D&I teams hosted a SAGE DEI Symposium, bringing together 40 representatives from Faculty and School DEI teams, SAGE SAT, Staff Network, Student Life, Health and Wellbeing, Sydney Policy Lab, and Modern Slavery. Discussions covered shared priorities, governance, structures, resourcing, and challenges, informing our Silver priority areas, Leadership & Accountability, and action planning. Representatives from the same teams reconvened online in October 2025 to review key outcomes and proposed actions from the Self-Assessment.

Leadership Roadshow

In November–December 2024, the SAGE team conducted a consultation roadshow with leadership teams across all Faculties and University Schools (apart from the Conservatorium, who did not have a Leadership meeting availability within timeframe). Discussions focused on shared and unique priorities, governance, structures, resourcing, and key challenges, informing our Silver priority areas and Leadership and Accountability section. A second round of consultations took place in November–December 2025 to share and discuss outcomes and recommendations.

Structured interviews with Senior Staff and DEI Stakeholders, HR focus group

Between February–April 2025, SAGE interviewed 25 key stakeholders, including Executive staff, Senior HR, and DEI leads, to explore DEI policies, governance, and future aspirations. In July 2025, seven HR partners joined a focus group facilitated by the SAGE team to discuss strategic and operational aspects of DEI. All sessions were recorded via Zoom, combined thematic analysis was conducted.

Ethical considerations

Privacy, respect, and inclusivity guided the development of this document. All data were de-identified, aggregated, and handled in line with the University's Privacy Policy and data governance protocols, and our approach to our focus groups were reviewed by the Privacy Team before commencing. All outputs have been validated, and where AI tools were used for thematic grouping, we undertook human verification of findings. Before submission, we conducted a thorough due diligence process, seeking feedback from subject matter experts, academic and professional staff, and senior leaders. This submission was also reviewed by General Council, Privacy, Risk, Communications (limited to Branding), and relevant HR teams to ensure privacy and data integrity were upheld.

Recommendations and Action Plans

Recommendations in qualitative data tables reflect suggestions for action arising from our qualitative sources. Final Action Plans were developed by scoping these recommendations, as well as those developed by Working Groups, with key stakeholders to determine what was most feasible and impactful. Actions are subject to resourcing over the Silver Action Plan lifespan and may be iterated pending currently unforeseen constraints.

Terminology

Language is constantly changing, socially constructed, and is a powerful signal for inclusion. We are committed to ensuring that the language we use is respectful and meaningful. We have endeavoured to use language, questions, and response options that capture the broad community at the University, but we acknowledge we may not always achieve this.

CARM and CALD

In this application, culturally and racially marginalised (CARM) groups include Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander, and others racialised as Black, Brown, Asian, or non-white. Culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) groups may also include people racialised as white but from non-Anglo-Celtic backgrounds or with non-English speaking heritage.

Disability

A person's experience of disability is shaped by the interaction between their health condition(s) and personal and environmental factors (WHO, 2001). Disability can be visible or invisible, permanent or temporary, and may be genetic, acquired, or related to chronic health conditions. It affects individuals in diverse ways, and each person's experience is unique. In Australia, disability is legally defined under the Disability Discrimination Act 1992, which guides how we collect, interpret, and report disability-related data.

Diversity, Equity & Inclusion

We use the acronym DEI (Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion) to describe our programs and strategies aimed at fostering a more inclusive workforce and culture. We acknowledge that not all individuals or communities feel

fully represented by this term, especially given the current political and cultural sensitivities surrounding its use. However, we use it here for clarity and consistency with our audience, while remaining open to refining our language as our understanding and context evolve.

First Nations

First Nations peoples in Australia refers to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, the original custodians of the land. This term recognises the diverse nations, cultures, and languages that have existed for over 65,000 years. We use it here to respectfully represent individuals who identify as Australian Aboriginal, Torres Strait Islander, or both, acknowledging their distinct identities and experiences within broader equity and inclusion efforts.

Gender

Our data sources primarily utilise gender, but where sex was the only metric available, we have assumed male correlates to man and female to woman gender identities. We use the acronym TGD to refer to trans and gender diverse people, including those with a trans history. We acknowledge these assumptions may not fully represent the identities of the persons in these datasets.

Leadership

We use the terms Leaders/Leadership Roles/Managers/Management Roles interchangeably. In workforce reporting, managers are classified as (1) CEO (Vice Chancellor and President) (2) Key Management Personnel (KMP: Senior Deputy Vice Chancellor & Provost; Deputy Vice Chancellors; Chair Academic Board; Vice Presidents; Deans; Executive Deans and Pro-Vice Chancellors), and (3) All other managers (defined as having a direct report).

LGBTQIA+

We have used the acronym LGBTQIA+ when discussing the community, and LGBQ/GBQ when discussing sexuality in particular. We acknowledge that the LGBTQIA+ community is richly diverse and that the language we have used may not encapsulate all identities and histories of our staff and students across diverse genders, sexualities, and bodies.

Race, Racism and Gendered Racism

Concepts like race and racism carry deep emotional and historical significance, reflecting lived experiences of identity, trauma, and systemic injustice. These terms help articulate social inequities and provide a shared language for addressing them, particularly for marginalised groups, such as women and non-binary people of colour, who often face gendered racism, compounded forms of discrimination at the intersection of race and gender. Race typically refers to socially constructed meanings attached to physical traits, while ethnicity relates to shared cultural characteristics like language, ancestry, and beliefs. We have used race/ethnicity/cultural background interchangeably depending on the context/data source.

Racial Literacy

Addressing racial inequity - the unequal distribution of resources and opportunities rooted in systemic discrimination - requires racial literacy: the ability to understand, analyse, and act on racial dynamics with empathy and informed advocacy.

Summary of Pathway from SAGE Bronze to Silver

TABLE 3 SUMMARY OF PATHWAY FROM BRONZE TO SILVER

Actions taken to date	Outcomes	Impacts
LGBTQIA+ Inclusion		
Actions focused on improving LGBTQIA+ inclusion by building capability, increasing visibility and support, embedding inclusive systems and spaces, and fostering intersectional awareness.	We demonstrated strengthened LGBTQIA+ inclusion, reflected in improved Australian Workplace Equality Index results, rising from Bronze in 2017 to consecutive Gold status (2021–2023). Representation of TGD and LGBQ staff increased across roles and recruitment, with TGD hires rising from 0.1% to 0.6% and LGBQ hires from 4.0% to 6.7%, showing progress in visibility and inclusion.	Focus groups with LGBTQIA+ staff acknowledged many positive changes over the period, but ongoing issues remained. These included identity management, need for improved demographic data collection, and need for a visible all-gender bathroom strategy. Staff also called for stronger visible support and advocacy from Senior Leaders, and more consistent LGBTQIA+ inclusion capability among people-facing staff.
Recruitment		
Actions focused on improving recruitment data, increasing applicant diversity, enhancing senior-level staff diversity (D/E), and boosting engagement with the Induction Program.	We demonstrated progress in inclusive recruitment, shown by improved candidate attraction and recruitment KPIs, a rise in women applying for STEMM academic roles (37%, nearing the 40% Bronze target), and an increase in women appointed to continuing academic roles, exceeding the 40% target at Levels D/E with 50.3%. Engagement and satisfaction with the onboarding process also improved.	Discussions with recruitment staff, HR Partners, and Hiring Managers showed strong general understanding of inclusive recruitment, but inconsistent grasp of strategic drivers for recruiting under-represented cohorts and challenges in a competitive market. Key ongoing issues included tracking recruitment benchmarks, boosting stakeholder awareness, increasing equity training uptake, and exploring search teams and campaign-style approaches.
Career Development & Progression		
Actions focused on improving equitable access to career development and increasing awareness and confidence in the University's promotion process.	We demonstrated strong progress in gender equity in career progression, with similar satisfaction levels between women and men. More women applied for promotion across all academic levels, with gender-balanced pools and rising success rates (from 90% in 2018 to 93% in 2023). The academic workforce became more gender-balanced, especially at Levels D (up from 38.6% to 45.4%) and E (up from 31.1% to 36.1%) since 2017.	A survey of staff who submitted promotion applications (2018–2023) showed strong appreciation for initiatives that built confidence and awareness, especially for women and marginalised groups. Ongoing challenges included disconnects between Planning and Development and promotions, inconsistent mentoring across Faculties and demographics, limited data beyond gender, and low engagement with equity training.
Caring & Flexibility		
Actions focused on raising awareness and addressing inequities in parental leave and caring support provisions, while improving understanding of their impact on staff with caring responsibilities.	We demonstrated progress in supporting more equitable caring and flexible work provisions. This included increased uptake of parental and carers leave by men, a rise in men working part-time (from 14.9% in 2018 to 18.3% in 2023), and greater staff engagement with support for caring and parental responsibilities, indicating a shift toward normalising flexibility across genders.	Focus groups with staff with caring responsibilities valued the University's support, especially flexible work, as key to retention. However, experiences varied depending on manager empathy and inclusion capability. Ongoing challenges included ensuring consistent support, increasing uptake of carers' leave by men, and improving visibility of diverse caring roles.
Safer Communities		
Actions focused on improving access, awareness, and trust in reporting misconduct, with greater transparency.	We demonstrated improved reporting processes for bullying, harassment, discrimination, and sexual misconduct, alongside building staff capability and inclusion awareness. Increased complaints, more referrals to the Safer Communities Office, positive feedback on training, and higher completion rates reflected growing trust and accountability.	Staff providing support services reported significant progress in their ability to assist staff and students, while also identifying areas for further improvement. Ongoing challenges included increasing engagement with equity, diversity and inclusion training and addressing potential under-reporting of incidents.

SECTION 1 – LEADERSHIP AND ACCOUNTABILITY

Strategy

At the University of Sydney, we value diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI), a value and practice built on years of targeted strategies, recognised by Senior Leaders and key stakeholders (Table 4). We promote our DEI commitments on various platforms and report progress annually. *"Thriving Through Diversity"* is a key aspiration in the *"Sydney in 2032"* Strategy.

DEI is embedded in the curricula, with over 400 opportunities for students to incorporate DEI into their education, and a rich DEI research ecosystem of academics and Higher Degree by Research (HDR) students. Additionally, under the Pro Vice-Chancellor Indigenous (Academic), the University is undertaking a major program of work to Indigenise the Curricula.

TABLE 4 SENIOR LEADER AND KEY STAKEHOLDER THOUGHTS ON STRATEGIC ALIGNMENT

Note: Arising from thematic analysis of structured interviews with Senior Leaders and staff in DEI leadership roles across the University, and an HR Partners Focus Group.

Senior Leader & Key Stakeholder Insights	
DEI benefits both individuals and the University by fostering recognition, safety, and better outcomes through diverse perspectives. Global challenges, such as political shifts in the USA and increased risk of disclosing identity characteristics, pose challenges. Participants stressed the need for Executive courage to protect DEI efforts.	
What is Working Well	Working Less Well
As DEI is central to the University's Sydney 2032 strategy, it cascades through Faculty strategies, with increased awareness providing a platform for action. <i>"There's been a lot of appointments to support diversity and inclusion ... people who have expertise and lived experience ... And I can see the benefits of it." — L07</i>	Intersectionality needs greater focus, as overlapping identities can compound exclusion and disadvantage. Intersectionality has a structural and personal/identity component, and both aspects need to be addressed. Inclusion is not guaranteed by diversity alone; implementation of inclusive policies is inconsistent and often depends on local manager capability. <i>"I know there's been really significant schemes to widen diversity ... but I worry that the university is missing the point. We not only have to focus on bringing people in, but we have to have a really hard look at ourselves as to the environment that these [new recruits] are coming into." — L04</i>
SAGE Team Reflection	
The 2024 SAGE DEI Symposium highlighted that DEI efforts across the University are often siloed, despite shared goals and resources. While the University has invested in various strategies and accreditation processes, the absence of an overarching DEI Strategy contributes to fragmentation. The Respect@Work Action Plan commits to developing this strategy by 2026.	

Governance

Located within the Office of the Senior Deputy Vice-Chancellor and Provost (SDVC&P), the SAGE Program is one of four central teams reporting to the Executive, across which responsibility is distributed for driving the University's Indigenous and DEI aspirations. The SAGE Program is advised by a SAGE Advisory Committee (SAC), comprising ~20 Executive and Senior Leaders, meeting twice yearly to analyse data, monitor progress, and provide strategic advice and feedback (Figure 1).

Most Faculty and University Schools support local DEI teams reporting to their Faculty/School Leadership Teams, and three have appointed Associate Deans/Academic Directors with workload allocation and budget

to coordinate and drive this work (Figure 2). Senior leader and key stakeholder perceptions on DEI Governance at the University are captured in Table 5.¹

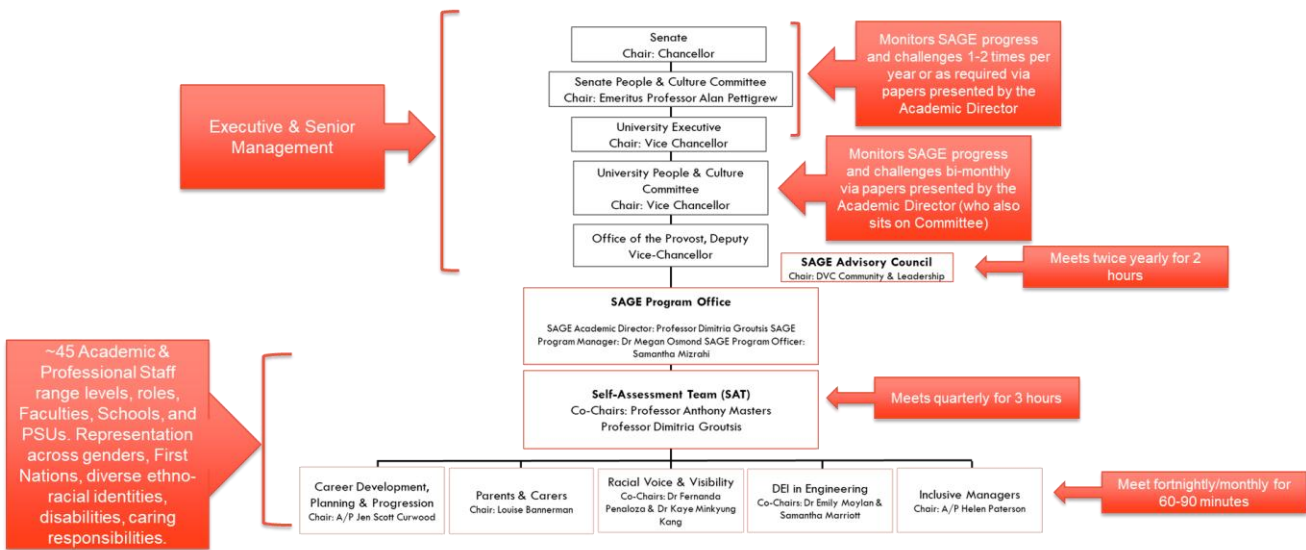


FIGURE 1 GOVERNANCE STRUCTURE FOR THE SAGE PROGRAM AT THE UNIVERSITY

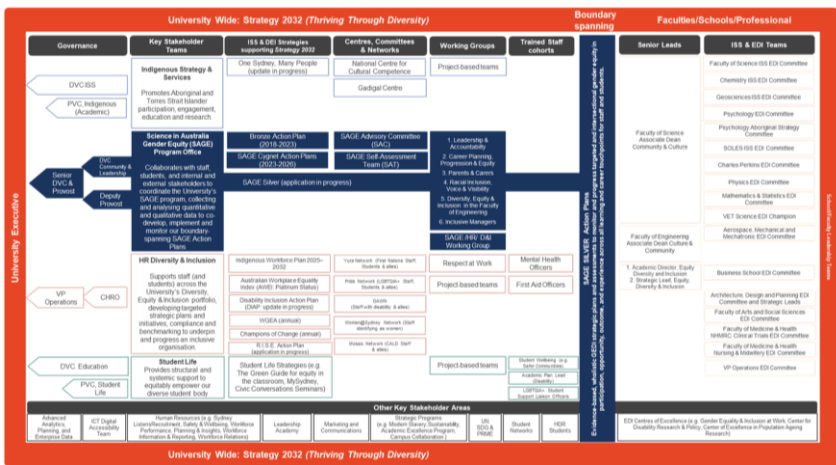


FIGURE 2 DIVERSITY, EQUITY AND INCLUSION DISTRIBUTION AND GOVERNANCE ACROSS THE UNIVERSITY (FULL-SIZE VERSION INCLUDED ON PAGE 37)

¹ Post-submission update: The University has committed to developing an overarching Gender Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (GEDI) strategy by the end of 2026. This will be progressed concurrently with a broader DEI strategy, within which GEDI, alongside other targeted strategies, will be nested to ensure alignment with overarching priorities and commitments. SAGE will play a central role in shaping both the GEDI strategy and its implementation plan, with development informed by external expertise and deep consultation and co-design with staff and students. Governance arrangements will be articulated as part of this process. In parallel, the SAGE team has formally transitioned into the DVC Community and Leadership Portfolio, reporting to the DVC Community and Leadership. Governance will continue to evolve through 2026 as the University's overarching DEI strategy is developed and refined.

TABLE 5 SENIOR LEADER AND KEY STAKEHOLDER THOUGHTS ON DEI GOVERNANCE

Senior Leader & Key Stakeholder Insights	
The DEI governance network at the University is complex, with risk of silos. There is hope that the appointment of the University's first DVC for Community and Leadership (DVC-C&L) will bring better coordination and a streamlined structure, including oversight of SAGE, which is seen as a "lightning rod" for change in the DEI space.	
What is Working Well	Working Less Well
Many committed individuals, including those with lived experience, are active in DEI. The 2024 SAGE gathering was a valuable opportunity to connect and collaborate. <i>"At the SAGE symposium, we got this map of the different organisations at the university that are working towards DEI. It's a really complex network and it's really good that [SAGE] did this, because we don't want to reinvent the wheel."</i> — L24 The appointment of the University's first DVC-C&L offers opportunity to have a more coordinated approach to DEI across the university.	The complex network that has developed around DEI risks duplication of effort and people working in silos. <i>"The governance around DEI is poor. It's fragmented. There is great connection between many of us, but that's driven, I think, not through good governance, but by people."</i> — L04 <i>"Many of the [faculties and schools] have their own smaller DEI teams ... that report through to their local level leadership. But there's not always visibility of what they're doing, and it's not always really coordinated across all of those teams."</i> — L02
SAGE Team Reflection	
During our Cygnet self-assessment, we identified inconsistent DEI governance and limited visibility of local successes and challenges across Faculties and Schools, which restricted opportunities for support, lessons and collaboration. The positive response to the 2024 SAGE DEI Symposium highlighted strong support for ongoing cross-University engagement. In late 2024, the University demonstrated its commitment to DEI by appointing its first DVC-Community & Leadership, who will work closely with DEI teams, including SAGE. Additionally, Engineering, Science, and Business have since appointed Associate Deans or Academic Leads, all with work allocation and resourcing, to drive local DEI initiatives and liaise with the DVC C&L.	

Resourcing, Recognition & Reward

The SAGE Program is managed by a Program Management Team (PMT) with an annual budget that supports a Level E Academic Director (0.5 FTE), a Program Manager (1 FTE), a Project Officer (0.7 FTE), and resourcing for SAGE activities and events. The University's Human Resources (HR) D&I team, Student Life, and Indigenous Strategy & Services (ISS) are resourced by their respective Professional Service Units (PSUs). Faculty and University School Associate Deans/Academic Directors (where appointed) and local DEI teams support inclusion and equity work at the Faculty and School levels, although challenges remain (Table 6).

The SAGE PMT works with a Self-Assessment Team (SAT) comprising ~45 academic and professional staff across various levels and Faculties, Schools, and PSUs, each with approved 0.1 FTE from their business area, distributing support and recognising workload for the SAGE Program across the University. Several HR and HR D&I team members also sit on the SAT, ensuring aligned, intersectional, and collaborative work.

The Vice-Chancellor's Award for Excellence in D&I annually recognises a team or individual advancing DEI at the University. In 2024, the SAGE team was proud to accept this award. The SAGE team was further honoured at the 2025 National SAGE Awards, with the Highly Commended Outstanding Collaborator Award (SAGE Team) and the Outstanding Leader Award (SAGE Academic Director, Professor Dimitria Groutsis).

TABLE 6 SENIOR LEADER & KEY STAKEHOLDER THOUGHTS ON RESOURCING, RECOGNITION & REWARD

Senior Leader & Key Stakeholder Insights	
University commitment to DEI is reflected in the funding of SAGE and other programs, and their place in the BAU work environment. However, time and resources are a challenge for many people who are committing unpaid hours to DEI efforts. Moreover, funding of building upgrades and equipment is necessary to increase accessibility.	
What is Working Well	Working Less Well
Funding of SAGE. The program becoming part of business-as-usual at the university. <i>"I think the fact that the SAGE program is resourced - it can always be resourced with more people - but it is well resourced and well supported. For me, that is a stamp of approval that our leadership wants accountability." — L01</i>	Insufficient recognition of workload to perform some DEI functions. <i>"A lot of our leadership speaks to the importance of the networks. But they're not resourced. And then staff do that work outside of their normal business hours. I think that for our leadership to be accountable, and show they actually care, that needs to be reviewed." — L18</i>
SAGE Team Reflection	
Although many Faculties, Schools and PSUs have local DEI teams that report to their local Leadership Teams (Figure 2), our 2024 SAGE DEI Symposium revealed that appropriate resourcing (specifically workload recognition and budget) is a key barrier to enablement. The University is currently reviewing how this work can be recognised/rewarded.	

Leadership Accountability

Progress against the University's Strategy 2032 *Thriving Through Diversity* pillar is monitored via student- and staff-based Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) and Key Performance Measures (KPMs), including the share of women and Trans & Gender Diverse (TGD) senior academics. Progress is reported to the University's Executive and Senate. SAGE Deans' KPIs, set annually by the SDVC&P, align with the University academic gender targets, with progress reviewed twice yearly, however some ambiguity about how accountability is cascaded remains (Table 7). The University's Executive Team also have a KPI to *"Uphold the University's Respect@Work commitment and ethical, integrity and compliance standards, to build an inclusive, respectful, and safe work environment."*

Recognising the opportunity for senior leaders to champion DEI, several Executive Team and Senior Management members sponsor staff diversity networks and DEI programs, using their leadership roles to contribute insights and bring visibility and strategic expertise, supporting an active DEI ecosystem at the University.

TABLE 7 SENIOR LEADER & KEY STAKEHOLDER THOUGHTS ON LEADERSHIP ACCOUNTABILITY

Senior Leader & Key Stakeholder Insights	
Concerns that accountability effectively stops at the Dean or Head of School level, when it is the team leaders who enact DEI through to the local, personal level for staff.	
What is Working Well	Working Less Well
Performance expectations for DEI are set for some levels of leadership.	Lack of clarity around who owns responsibility for DEI progress. Measured accountability for DEI seems to stop before it reaches team leader level. <i>"At that team leader level, I'm not aware of any specific accountabilities they have, in terms of what they're doing to support DEI strategies and culture. I think it would be really useful to incorporate some measurements and hold them to account to drive a safe culture."</i> — L28
SAGE Team Reflection	
Our Cygnet process revealed that whilst several Executive and Senior leaders are active in the DEI space, some were more visible than others, highlighting an opportunity to more actively utilise these DEI champions to sponsor, advocate and raise visibility for DEI at the University.	

Communication & Engagement

The University takes a consultative approach to shaping strategy and culture, using co-design approaches with staff, students, and stakeholders, such as in Indigenous strategies, the Civic Campus Initiative, and the Academic Excellence Framework. This approach also underpins DEI efforts, with lived experience and best practice informing continuous improvement (Table 8). Intersectionality is embedded in programs and events, including Diversity Days and staff network collaborations. SAGE updates are shared across multiple platforms, and the Cygnet self-assessment used surveys, interviews, and focus groups to inform action plans. These principles were carried into the Silver application, guiding barrier identification and action development (see Context Table 1).

TABLE 8 SENIOR LEADER & KEY STAKEHOLDER THOUGHTS ON DEI COMMUNICATION & ENGAGEMENT

Senior Leader & Key Stakeholder Insights	
Significant increase in visibility and celebration of diversity, although pockets of resistance remain. Communication and engagement activities must continue and be properly resourced.	
What is Working Well	Working Less Well
Increased visibility of DEI – whether that's through policy, or general comms or SAGE or network activities – has boosted awareness and acceptance. Diversity networks e.g. Pride, Mosaic, DAWN, provide connection and a sense of "celebration". <i>"I feel like it is more visible. I don't know if we're doing more. I think we are ... I feel like there's more leaders talking about DEI in terms of it being BAU, like business as usual."</i> — L17	Pockets of resistance to, or misunderstanding of, DEI remain. Over-reliance on networks and people's goodwill to do the heavy lifting. <i>"There are a lot of local groups, communities if you like, within the university that are very supportive of each other [but] there can be a bit of a sense that the university doesn't care, or the university doesn't connect enough with them. Certainly, I've heard that feedback."</i> — L03
SAGE Team Reflection	
We used surveys and focus groups to inform our self-assessment, and were careful to avoid over-consulting staff, especially those from marginalised groups. Some groups were still more difficult to engage with than others. By prioritising key areas and using targeted invitations, we improved engagement and coordinated with other University initiatives to reduce unnecessary burden where possible	

Data & Analysis

The University's ability to capture gender-intersectional workforce and survey data has increased substantially over the past few years, but limitations remain around system integration, building staff trust in sharing their details, and access to data for some groups (Table 9).

For our Silver Self-Assessment, the SAGE SAT self-selected into Working Groups to self-assess our five Key Barriers. They met regularly to analyse University structures, systems, and cultures through a gender-intersectional lens (see Context, Table 1).

TABLE 9 SENIOR LEADER & KEY STAKEHOLDER THOUGHTS ON DEI DATA AND ANALYSIS

Senior Leader & Key Stakeholder Insights	
Data is crucial to demonstrate where we are, where we are going and where we land.	
What is Working Well	Working Less Well
Diversity data collection has improved, with staff surveys and the Diversity Dashboard now providing better measurement and intersectional insights. <i>"You can't overemphasise the importance of good data. It becomes very difficult for people to argue if you get the chance to show the data. I think we've been fortunate that we've been able to get good data, but it's not always been easy to do that." — L10</i>	Some data depends on staff and students feeling safe to disclose their identities, and more information is still needed on intersectionality. <i>"One issue is that it is very much up to the individual whether or not they will disclose their diversity, their intersectionality ... I'd like to think that there'd be more visibility about people's diversity and that they feel safe to disclose their diversity demographics. At the moment, I think it's patchy." — L14</i>
SAGE Team Reflection	
At the 2024 SAGE DEI Symposium, local DEI teams identified limited access to workforce data as a barrier to monitoring progress and engaging key stakeholders. Exploring ways to provide these teams with gender-intersectional data, while maintaining strict privacy guardrails (i.e. some areas would be too small to maintain privacy so localised data will not be appropriate for all teams), will enable effective local progress and evaluation without overburdening HR staff.	

Action Implementation

Approximately 70% of the University's Bronze Action Plan was implemented, with outstanding actions largely relating to shifting priorities and resources during the 2020-21 pandemic. Actions that were not delivered or were changed were included in each of our five Cygnet applications, with comprehensive explanations.

The implementation of the Silver SAGE Action Plan will be managed and monitored by the SAGE PMT, working closely with delivery leads across the University, with whom we consulted, although implementation may be iterated pending unforeseen emergent priorities and resource constraints.

Progress will be made transparent via a SAGE Action Tracker on the SAGE intranet, sharing updated outcomes with staff and inviting continuous feedback through the SAGE inbox or an anonymous survey, and through bi-monthly reporting to UE-PCC. Risks include ensuring that actions are cascaded at every level, and that our stakeholders feel supported and resourced to deliver (Table 10).

TABLE 10 SENIOR LEADER & KEY STAKEHOLDER THOUGHTS ON DEI ACTION IMPLEMENTATION

Senior Leader & Key Stakeholder Insights	
The breakdown between aspiration and action is often at team leader/line manager level. They are the ones who can make or break the experience for staff by setting work culture at that personal level and supporting (or not) policy into practice.	
What is Working Well	Working less well
SAGE oversight of action plans and supportive leadership through faculties and schools.	Implementation of DEI strategies and policy is inconsistent, reliant on local leadership fostering a DEI culture. Insufficient allocations of time or funding can make it hard to deliver on actions. <i>"What I notice as a challenge is the way DEI filters down with the managers ... because they're the ones that need to be able to create the safe environment. It varies so much. At times, I have become aware of instances where managers have handled matters in a way that is not consistent with best practice." L28</i>
SAGE Team Reflection	
Whilst well-intentioned, the inclusion of an Action Plan in each Cygnet, followed by a Silver Action Plan, led to some confusion and action-plan fatigue amongst key stakeholders. To mitigate this, we paused delivery of our five Cygnet Action Plans to consolidate as many actions as possible into our Silver Action Plan, with a coordinated timeframe for delivery.	

Monitoring & Evaluating Progress, Outcome & Impact

The SAGE team embedded an intersectional approach to monitoring and evaluation for its five Cygnet Award submissions, commended by the National SAGE Office and Senior Leaders and key stakeholders (Table 11). We built on this approach for SAGE Silver, contributing to the length of this application. Our SAGE Award applications on the National SAGE Cygnet repository are linked on our SAGE intranet page. Outcomes are also reported in the University's Annual Report and on social media.

TABLE 11 SENIOR LEADER & KEY STAKEHOLDER THOUGHTS ON DEI PROGRESS, OUTCOME & IMPACT

Perspectives
SAGE is seen as a leader in driving change and holding the university to account; there's no room for complacency. <i>"SAGE is one of those powerful connectors that bring many of us together." — L04</i> <i>"SAGE is a way of holding the university accountable for this stuff. You sign up to it, do it, be honest with it, be warts and all. And it's only then, through that honest truth-telling, that you can make change." — L13</i> <i>"It's dangerous to think mission accomplished. It's only through examining what we do that we come to understand what might have been invisible to us before. Because of our biases, you know, whatever. So, I think what is working well is the introspection, that as an institution we are prepared to look at ourselves. We're not an institution that says we've got it right. We're an institution that says we'd like to get it right." — L10</i>
SAGE Team Reflection
Our Cygnet Self-Assessment indicated that there had been periods where monitoring of outcomes and impact had faltered, particularly during the pandemic and aftermath, as well as during a restructure of the SAGE Program Management Team in 2023. Embedding processes for monitoring outcomes and impacts of our Cygnet and Silver actions will support robust self-assessment via our pre-Gold Cygnets and will ensure the program is embedded system/policy-wide.

Action Plan

Note: We have been deliberately non-prescriptive with the framing of our outputs, outcomes, and impacts in developing these actions. By framing actions in a non-prescriptive way, it gives us flexibility to develop a three-year implementation plan with responsible leads that aligns and sequences with current and planned work at the point of implementation. These leads are actively structuring delivery of the actions into planned work where appropriate, or factoring into workflow where actions are stand alone.

ENABLING ACTIONS: LEADERSHIP & ACCOUNTABILITY						
ID	Rationale/Evidence	Actions	Timeframe (start & end)	Person / Group Responsible for Implementing Action	Senior Leader Accountable for Action Delivery	Example Outputs, Outcomes, and Impacts
1. Strengthen Strategic Leadership and Governance, and Resourcing for DEI The University has a strong opportunity to enhance its equity outcomes by building on existing DEI efforts through the development of a unified Community, Leadership & Culture strategic framework incorporating DEI. By establishing consistent governance structures and embedding faculty-level roles, we can amplify our capacity to deliver systemic and coordinated equity initiatives. Strengthening accountability, clarifying workload allocation and resourcing, and fostering clear communication between central and local DEI teams, Staff Networks, and other key stakeholders will enable more cohesive, high-impact collaboration across the institution.						
L&A 1.1	Although DEI efforts are supported across the University, they lack a unified strategy, consistent governance, and sustainable resourcing. While some Faculties have appointed senior DEI leads, broader adoption would strengthen coordination and accountability. Many initiatives rely on goodwill and short-term funding, making them appear	L&A 1.1.1 Co-develop with University stakeholders a cohesive Community, Leadership & Culture Roadmap across the organisation, inclusive of DEI. <i>(Note: This action aligns with Respect@Work Action 2.1, and is currently in progress)</i>	2025-2026	Director, Community and Leadership, MarComms, SDVCP Office, SAGE Team, DEI Stakeholders, HR, Organisational Development, Respect@Work Team	DVC-Community & Leadership	<i>Subject to final collaborative implementation and resourcing, example outputs and outcomes could include:</i> Output Measures Co-development opportunities offered to staff and stakeholders. Communication materials (e.g., presentations, visuals, talking points) to raise visibility of process and outcomes. Outcome Measures A published Community, Leadership & Culture Roadmap co-developed with stakeholders. Impact Measures <i>Feedback via focus groups, surveys, feedback forms indicating:</i> - Stronger shared organisational narrative around inclusion, strategy, and impact, enhancing internal trust and external reputation. - Supporting the University's <i>Sydney in 2032</i> strategic goals under the <i>Thriving Through Diversity</i> pillar.

ENABLING ACTIONS: LEADERSHIP & ACCOUNTABILITY						
ID	Rationale/Evidence	Actions	Timeframe (start & end)	Person / Group Responsible for Implementing Action	Senior Leader Accountable for Action Delivery	Example Outputs, Outcomes, and Impacts
	optional rather than core business. Without clear local performance expectations, managers struggle to connect DEI to everyday staff experience, limiting impact and accountability.					Embedding the University values of <i>Excellence, Trust & Accountability</i>.
		L&A 1.1.2 Strengthen DEI governance and accountability, and rationale for resourcing by: (1) Building on the DEI and ISS Stakeholder map (Figure 2) through development of a Culture & Community Governance and Accountability map inclusive of DEI, with linkages and shared outcomes highlighted, as well as unique value and impact; (2) Mapping actions from different programs against one another to identify and leverage overlaps and reduce silos, and (3) Using these maps in staff and manager communications where relevant, to illustrate how they work together and reduce perceptions of duplication. <i>(Note: This action is replicated as L&A 1.1.2 and NIC:M 1.1.1, and is currently in progress)</i>	2025-2026	SDVCP Office, SAGE Team	DVC-Community & Leadership	<i>Subject to final collaborative implementation and resourcing, example outputs and outcomes could include:</i> Output Measures (1) DEI Strategy and Governance Map developed, building on the existing DEI and ISS Stakeholder Map, with linkages, shared outcomes, and unique contributions clearly illustrated. (2) Across-program action map identifying overlaps, synergies, and areas of siloed activity across DEI, ISS, and related initiatives. (3) Communication materials (e.g., presentations, visuals, talking points) incorporating these maps for use in staff and manager engagement. Outcome Measures Reduction in duplicated or siloed efforts, with more coordinated and efficient program delivery. Use of the maps in planning, reporting, and governance processes. Enhanced collaboration across departments and functions due to visibility of shared outcomes and interdependencies. Improved resource allocation, efficiencies and decision-making processes based on clear visibility of overlaps and gaps. Impact Measures <i>Feedback via focus groups, surveys, feedback forms indicating:</i> - Improved clarity and alignment across teams regarding roles, responsibilities, and strategic connections between DEI and ISS efforts. - Increased engagement and understanding among staff and managers of how different initiatives contribute to shared goals.

ENABLING ACTIONS: LEADERSHIP & ACCOUNTABILITY						
ID	Rationale/Evidence	Actions	Timeframe (start & end)	Person / Group Responsible for Implementing Action	Senior Leader Accountable for Action Delivery	Example Outputs, Outcomes, and Impacts
						• Cultural shift toward systems thinking and collaboration in DEI, reducing fragmentation in strategic initiatives. • Stronger shared organisational narrative around inclusion, strategy, and impact, enhancing internal trust and external reputation. • Supporting the University's <i>Sydney in 2032</i> strategic goals under the <i>Thriving Through Diversity</i> pillar. • Embedding the University values of <i>Excellence, Trust & Accountability</i>.
		L&A 1.1.3 Explore the possibility to appoint Associate Deans (or similarly senior roles) with responsibility at the Faculty and Leadership level for DEI. <i>(Note: This action is currently in progress)</i>	2025-2028	DVC-Community & Leadership, SAGE Academic Director, SAGE Team, Faculty and University School Leadership Teams	DVC-Community & Leadership, Deans and Heads of Schools	<i>Subject to final collaborative implementation and resourcing, example outputs and outcomes could include:</i> Output Measures Discussions with Faculties/University Schools that have explored or initiated the appointment of Associate Deans or similarly senior roles with carriage over DEI. Communications or engagement activities (e.g., consultations, newsletters) related to appointments. Spherical dotted governance lines made between Faculties and Central Portfolios. Outcome Measures Number of Faculties and University Schools that formally appoint Associate Deans or similarly senior roles with carriage over DEI. Coordinated Faculty/University School-level DEI governance and strategic planning. Increased engagement with local and central DEI initiatives across and between Faculties and University Schools. Impact Measures <i>Feedback via focus groups, surveys, feedback forms indicating:</i> • Increased perception of leadership engagement with and accountability for DEI.

ENABLING ACTIONS: LEADERSHIP & ACCOUNTABILITY						
ID	Rationale/Evidence	Actions	Timeframe (start & end)	Person / Group Responsible for Implementing Action	Senior Leader Accountable for Action Delivery	Example Outputs, Outcomes, and Impacts
						• Cultural shift toward inclusive leadership and decision-making at the faculty level. • Enhanced institutional reputation and recognition for DEI leadership, DEI initiatives, and innovation on pathway to SAGE Gold Award status. • Supporting the University's <i>Sydney in 2032</i> strategic goals under the <i>Thriving Through Diversity</i> pillar. • Embedding the University values of <i>Excellence, Trust & Accountability</i>.
		L&A 1.1.4 Advocate to Faculty and University School Leadership Teams that local teams/committees with carriage over DEI be appropriately resourced with budget, workload recognition, and accountability embedded as core operational functions.	2026-2028	DVC-Community & Leadership, SAGE Academic Director, SAGE Team, Faculty and University School Leadership Teams	DVC-Community & Leadership, Deans and Heads of Schools	<i>Subject to final collaborative implementation and resourcing, example outputs and outcomes could include:</i> Output Measures Update 2024 review of resourcing for local teams/committees with carriage over DEI across Faculties and University Schools to identify current accountability structures, workload allocations, and resourcing challenges. Tailored recommendations for resourcing local teams/committees with carriage over DEI developed and shared with Faculty & University School Leadership Teams Outcome Measures Inclusion of DEI resourcing in Faculty and University School operational plans or budget submissions. Local teams/committees with carriage over DEI have workload recognition for DEI-related responsibilities. Establishment of clear accountability structures for DEI work within Faculties and University Schools. Increased visibility and integration of DEI work in Faculty and University School planning and reporting cycles. Impact Measures <i>Feedback via focus groups, surveys, feedback forms indicating:</i>

ENABLING ACTIONS: LEADERSHIP & ACCOUNTABILITY						
ID	Rationale/Evidence	Actions	Timeframe (start & end)	Person / Group Responsible for Implementing Action	Senior Leader Accountable for Action Delivery	Example Outputs, Outcomes, and Impacts
						• DEI, Culture & Community work embedded as a core operational function across Faculties and University Schools. • Sustained funding and staffing for local teams/committees with carriage over DEI reflected in multi-year planning. • Supporting the University's <i>Sydney in 2032</i> strategic goals under the <i>Thriving Through Diversity</i> pillar. • Embedding the University values of <i>Excellence, Trust & Accountability</i>.
		L&A 1.1.5 Work with Faculty and University School Leadership Teams to explore how to operationalise DEI strategy at the local level through embedding DEI expectations around Head of School performance, as well as annual manager performance reviews (AP&Ds and PP&Ds) aligned with performance expectations for Deans and <i>Thriving Through Diversity</i> KPMs. <i>(Note: This action is replicated as Action L&A 1.1.5 and NIC:M 1.1.2, FoE 2.2.2, and aligns with Respect@Work Action 1.4.)</i>	2026-2028	DVC-Community & Leadership, SAGE Academic Director, SAGE Team, Respect@Work Team, Faculty and University School Leadership Teams	DVC-Community & Leadership, Deans and Heads of Schools	<i>Subject to final collaborative implementation and resourcing, example outputs and outcomes could include:</i> Output Measures Exploration of mechanisms to incorporate DEI performance expectations across levels. Refresh and promote guidance materials to support DEI goal-setting and reflection. Guidance for managers on evaluating DEI contributions. Outcome Measures Increased prioritisation of DEI in individual and team goal-setting. More consistent recognition of DEI-related work, including service, mentoring, and inclusive leadership. Enhanced accountability for DEI progress at all levels of leadership. Improved integration of DEI into strategic planning and operational decision-making. Impact Measures <i>Feedback via focus groups, surveys, feedback forms indicating:</i> • Strengthened leadership commitment to equity and inclusion. • Supporting the University's <i>Sydney in 2032</i> strategic goals under the <i>Thriving Through Diversity</i> pillar. • Embedding the University values of <i>Excellence, Trust & Accountability</i>.

ENABLING ACTIONS: LEADERSHIP & ACCOUNTABILITY						
ID	Rationale/Evidence	Actions	Timeframe (start & end)	Person / Group Responsible for Implementing Action	Senior Leader Accountable for Action Delivery	Example Outputs, Outcomes, and Impacts
		L&A 1.1.6 Review preventative education training modules for staff and students through an intersectional lens and refine as appropriate. <i>(Note: This action supports the University's work in Gender-Based Violence)</i>	2026-2028	Student Life, Safer Communities, SAGE Team, HR D&I Team, Respect@Work Team, Gender-Based Violence Taskforce	DVC Education & Students	<i>Subject to final collaborative implementation and resourcing, example outputs and outcomes could include:</i> Output Measures: Number of training modules reviewed Number of consultation sessions held with diverse stakeholders (e.g., equity advisers, student groups). Number of modules revised to incorporate intersectional perspectives. Documentation of intersectional analysis applied to each module. Outcome Measures: Updated training materials published and distributed. Impact Measures: <i>Feedback via focus groups, surveys, feedback forms indicating:</i> - Increased staff and student awareness of intersectionality in prevention education (measured via pre/post surveys). - Improved confidence among facilitators to deliver intersectionally-informed content. - Higher satisfaction ratings from participants regarding relevance and inclusivity of training. - Improved campus climate and sense of belonging for diverse student and staff populations. - Supporting the University's <i>Sydney in 2032</i> strategic goals under the <i>Thriving Through Diversity</i> pillar. - Embedding the University values of <i>Excellence, Trust & Accountability</i>.

ENABLING ACTIONS: LEADERSHIP & ACCOUNTABILITY						
ID	Rationale/Evidence	Actions	Timeframe (start & end)	Person / Group Responsible for Implementing Action	Senior Leader Accountable for Action Delivery	Example Outputs, Outcomes, and Impacts
2. Embed Recognition Pathways to Elevate DEI, Community & Culture Contributions By leveraging existing promotion pathways and performance development processes, the University has an opportunity to elevate and reward contributions to DEI, Community, and Culture work. Strengthening visibility of the collegiality pillar and recognising non-BAU effort can foster a culture of inclusive excellence, while ensuring recognition mechanisms are equitable and do not reinforce cultural or colonial overload.						
L&A 2.1	The Academic Excellence Framework, introduced in 2025, provides a pathway for DEI work by academic staff to be recognised and rewarded via the Service and the Collegiality pillars of the Framework, however as a new initiative, visibility is currently low.	L&A 2.1.1 Raise visibility with academic staff, managers, and AP&D Advisers for how Collegiality and Service work can be used as a framework to build DEI, Community & Culture work into career planning and promotion cases. <i>(Note: This action aligns with AEP planning and impact measurements, and Respect@Work Action 1.2, 2.3 and 2.4)</i>	2026-2028	SAGE Team, Academic Excellence Program, Academic Promotions Unit, HR D&I Team, Respect@Work Team	Vice-Provost	<i>Subject to final collaborative implementation and resourcing, example outputs and outcomes could include:</i> Output Measures Development and distribution of guidance materials linking Service and Collegiality to DEI, Community & Culture contributions (provide examples in the evidence menu). Inclusion of DEI examples in promotion case studies or templates. Outcome Measures Institutional recognition of DEI contributions as integral to academic excellence. Impact Measures <i>Feedback via focus groups, surveys, feedback forms indicating:</i> - Increased awareness among academic staff of how DEI work aligns with Service and Collegiality. - Increased manager and AP&D Adviser confidence in advising staff on integrating DEI into career planning. - Increased staff perception of fairness, respect, and value in how DEI work is recognised. - Reduction in reports of cultural overload or burnout related to DEI work. - Supporting the University's <i>Sydney in 2032</i> strategic goals under the <i>Thriving Through Diversity</i> pillar. - Embedding the University values of <i>Excellence, Trust & Accountability</i>.

ENABLING ACTIONS: LEADERSHIP & ACCOUNTABILITY						
ID	Rationale/Evidence	Actions	Timeframe (start & end)	Person / Group Responsible for Implementing Action	Senior Leader Accountable for Action Delivery	Example Outputs, Outcomes, and Impacts
L&A 2.2	In our LGBTQIA+ Cygnet and Silver Self-Assessment we identified that while Academic staff can be recognised for service such as mentorship, leading staff networks, and contributing to a collegial culture via the AEF Collegiality pillar, no such framework supported Professional Staff who go over and above BAU. In lieu of promotion, Professional staff can be awarded annual bonuses to reflect excellence, providing an opportunity to address above BAU service load, as well as foster a sense of value for professional staff. However, our focus groups suggested variable visibility, unclear expectations, and inconsistent application of this mechanism to recognise and reward professional staff.	L&A 2.2.1 Create and communicate a framework to guide managers and staff about what merits reward and bonus in end-of-year PP&D assessments. Within this broader framework, explicitly include professional contributions to a collegial culture over and above BAU, such as leadership and contributions to DEI and staff networks, and cultural/colonial load. Raise visibility of the ability to incorporate feedback from more than one person in PP&D reviews to help guide assessment. Ensure that this does not drive a culture exacerbating cultural/ colonial overload but rather a valued, respectful and meaningful pathway to recognition and reward for professional staff. <i>(Note: This action is replicated as L&A 2.2.1 and CP&P 5.2.1, aligns with RISE Action 1.3, and updates and replaces LGBTQIA+ Cygnet Action 2.3 and 2.4).</i>	2026-2028	Professional Services Review Team, Organisational Development, SAGE Team	Director, Organisational Development	<i>Subject to final collaborative implementation and resourcing, example outputs and outcomes could include:</i> Output Measures Development of a clear, accessible framework outlining reward and bonus criteria for professional staff. Inclusion of examples of meritorious contributions such as leadership and initiative; contributions to DEI; active participation in staff networks; collegiality and collaboration beyond role expectations. Integration of the framework into PP&D guidance materials for staff and manager training. Raise visibility of existing Workday tools to incorporate multi-source feedback to validate exceeds expectations ratings. Outcome Measures Increased consistency and transparency in reward and bonus decisions across units. Impact Measures <i>Feedback via focus groups, surveys, feedback forms indicating:</i> • Improved professional staff understanding of what constitutes above-BAU contributions. • Enhanced manager confidence in recognising and assessing against expectations framework. • Positive feedback from staff on fairness and clarity of reward processes. • Increased sense for professional staff of feeling valued, with pathways for recognition and reward. • Supporting the University's <i>Sydney in 2032</i> strategic goals under the <i>Thriving Through Diversity</i> pillar. • Embedding the University values of <i>Excellence, Trust & Accountability</i>.

ENABLING ACTIONS: LEADERSHIP & ACCOUNTABILITY						
ID	Rationale/Evidence	Actions	Timeframe (start & end)	Person / Group Responsible for Implementing Action	Senior Leader Accountable for Action Delivery	Example Outputs, Outcomes, and Impacts
3. Foster Connection, Visibility and Engagement Across the DEI Community The University is well-positioned to deepen our culture of belonging and shared accountability by building on existing DEI engagement. A strategic and coordinated approach to senior executive involvement, paired with stronger connections between DEI stakeholders and staff networks, can significantly enhance visibility and collaboration. By developing cohesive DEI Communication and Engagement Plans annually, we can elevate DEI efforts, empower staff to contribute ideas and experiences, and foster continuous cultural transformation. Improving access to timely, privacy-protected workforce data and promoting transparent progress tracking through tools like the SAGE Silver Action Tracker will further enable informed decision-making. Strengthening data pathways, interpretation support, and feedback mechanisms will build trust, encourage engagement, and embed a culture of evidence-based equity practice across the institution.						
L&A 3.1	Our Cygnet process revealed that whilst several Executive and Senior leaders are active in the DEI space, some were more visible than others, highlighting an opportunity to more actively utilise these potential DEI champions to advocate and raise visibility for DEI at the University.	L&A 3.1.1 Develop an annual cohesive DEI Communication & Engagement Plan: (1) Map peak demand periods for academic and professional staff to inform timing of key DEI events/initiatives/capability building to reduce pressure during high-load periods. Share map with other central portfolios. (2) Using the map to inform timing, co-develop an annual, cohesive DEI Communication and Engagement Plan across DEI teams, identifying intersectional opportunities to collaborate and amplify, forward plan events, foster organisational	Annually in September for the following year	SAGE Team, HR D&I Team, Faculty and University School Teams and Senior Leaders with carriage over DEI, Community & Leadership Team, MarComms, Staff Network Steering Committees, Executive Sponsors and Senior Leaders	DVC- Community & Leadership	<i>Subject to final collaborative implementation and resourcing, example outputs and outcomes could include:</i> Output Measures Annual completion of a map of peak workload periods across the University (e.g. teaching, assessment, reporting cycles). Annual completion of DEI Communication and Engagement Plan, including mapping timing against peaks and troughs of academic, professional, and DEI stakeholder workloads, and within budgetary envelopes. Forward plan leadership engagements (e.g. event participation, communications, sponsorships). Share Plan with key stakeholders, including Faculty and University School teams with carriage over DEI. Outcome Measures Improved planning and coordination between DEI and operational teams. Greater responsiveness to staff wellbeing and workload pressures. Increased staff engagement with DEI initiatives due to better timing and reduced competing demands. Intersectional and/or cross-functional collaboration opportunities identified and actioned. Increased visibility of DEI work in organisational communications and leadership messaging.

ENABLING ACTIONS: LEADERSHIP & ACCOUNTABILITY						
ID	Rationale/Evidence	Actions	Timeframe (start & end)	Person / Group Responsible for Implementing Action	Senior Leader Accountable for Action Delivery	Example Outputs, Outcomes, and Impacts
		visibility and senior leadership engagement, and opportunities to deepen visibility of Staff Networks and their connection with leaders. Share Plan with Faculty and University School teams with carriage over DEI to assist with localised planning and amplify engagement. <i>(Note: This action is replicated as L&A 3.1.1 and NIC:M 2.1.4)</i>				Increased visibility of Executive and Senior Leaders in DEI, Community & Culture activities. Increased collaboration between Staff Networks and leadership teams. Increased leadership attendance and active participation in DEI events. Impact Measures <i>Feedback via focus groups, surveys, feedback forms indicating:</i> • Reduced burnout and improved perceived ability to participate in DEI events, capability building, and other initiatives. • Strengthened integration of DEI into University culture without adding undue pressure. • Improved staff perception of leadership commitment to DEI. • Improved connections between Staff Networks and Senior Leaders. • Increased sense of connection and engagement from Faculty and University School DEI teams. • Supporting the University's <i>Sydney in 2032</i> strategic goals under the <i>Thriving Through Diversity</i> pillar. • Embedding the University values of <i>Excellence, Trust & Accountability</i>.
L&A 3.2	While the 2024 SAGE DEI Symposium highlighted strong support for ongoing collaboration among DEI teams, the effectiveness of the SAGE Program could be enhanced by continuing to build staff awareness, incorporating additional feedback mechanisms for	L&A 3.2.1 Bring DEI stakeholders and teams, and HR Partners across the University together at least annually for shared capability building, support and connection. Seek opportunities to be inclusive of postgraduate students.	Annually	SAGE Team	SAGE Program Manager	<i>Subject to final collaborative implementation and resourcing, example outputs and outcomes could include:</i> Output Measures Annual consultation focusing on areas of most value for participants. Annual DEI stakeholder and HR Partner gatherings held. Dissemination of an outcomes report from each gathering. Outcome Measures Increased cross-functional collaboration between DEI teams, HR, and postgraduate student bodies. Improved alignment of DEI priorities and practices across the

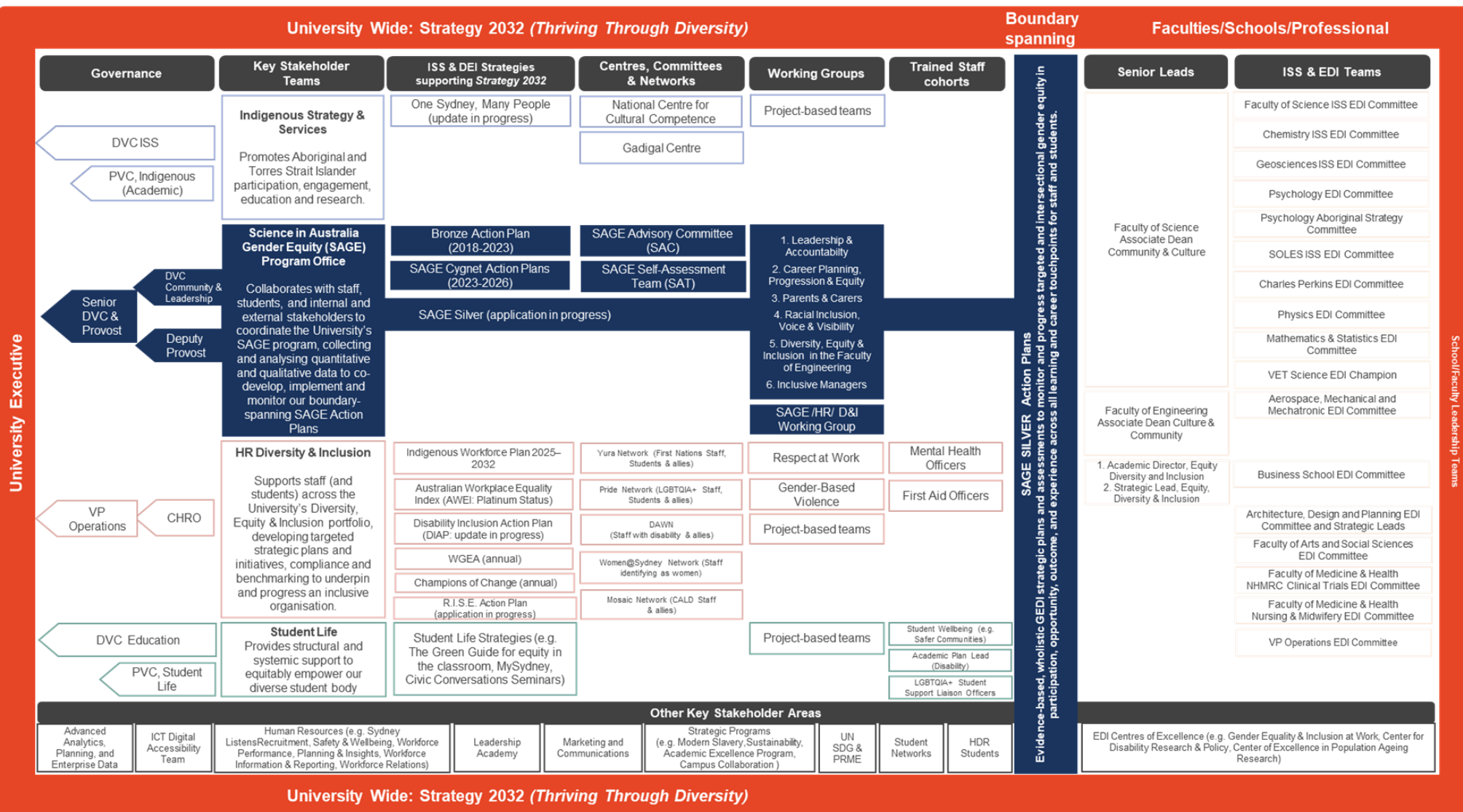
ENABLING ACTIONS: LEADERSHIP & ACCOUNTABILITY						
ID	Rationale/Evidence	Actions	Timeframe (start & end)	Person / Group Responsible for Implementing Action	Senior Leader Accountable for Action Delivery	Example Outputs, Outcomes, and Impacts
	continuous improvement, and creating more opportunities to share progress and surface challenges.					University. Uptake of shared initiatives or practices across Faculties and University Schools and Central Portfolios. Strengthened relationships and communication channels between DEI and HR stakeholders. Impact Measures <i>Feedback via focus groups, surveys, feedback forms indicating:</i> - Increased sense of connection, engagement, support, and shared purpose from participants. - Supporting the University's <i>Sydney in 2032</i> strategic goals under the <i>Thriving Through Diversity</i> pillar. - Embedding the University values of <i>Excellence, Trust & Accountability</i>.
		L&A 3.2.2 Invite representation from Faculty and School DEI teams, as well as Staff Network Steering Committees and post-graduate students.	2026-2028	SAGE Team	SAGE Program Manager	<i>Subject to final collaborative implementation and resourcing, example outputs and outcomes could include:</i> Output Measures Representation from Faculty and School DEI teams, Staff Network Steering Committees, and postgraduate students invited in next SAT refresh. Outcome Measures Increased diversity of perspectives and lived experiences within the SAT. Improved alignment between SAT priorities and grassroots DEI, Community & Culture work. Enhanced collaboration between SAGE and Staff Networks/postgraduate communities. Uptake of intersectional and inclusive approaches in SAT planning and actions. Impact Measures <i>Feedback via focus groups, surveys, feedback forms indicating:</i>

ENABLING ACTIONS: LEADERSHIP & ACCOUNTABILITY						
ID	Rationale/Evidence	Actions	Timeframe (start & end)	Person / Group Responsible for Implementing Action	Senior Leader Accountable for Action Delivery	Example Outputs, Outcomes, and Impacts
						• Positive experiences from all SAT members on their inclusion and influence in SAT processes. • Greater visibility and influence of Faculty and University School teams with carriage over DEI, Staff Networks, and postgraduate students in strategic SAT decision-making. • Enhanced trust and engagement from equity groups due to authentic representation. • Recognition of the SAT as a model for inclusive and collaborative leadership. • Supporting the University's <i>Sydney in 2032</i> strategic goals under the <i>Thriving Through Diversity</i> pillar. • Embedding the University values of <i>Excellence, Trust & Accountability</i>.
		L&A 3.2.3 Add opportunities for participants to share broader feedback relating to the themes of the event to post-event feedback forms. Ensure that expectations for action are set by including a note that all feedback is valued but not all may be actioned. <i>(Note: This action aligns with OD work to develop short-term and long-term feedback/evaluation)</i>	2026-2028	HR D&I Team, SAGE Team	SAGE Program Manager, Senior Manager, HR D&I	<i>Subject to final collaborative implementation and resourcing, example outputs and outcomes could include:</i> Output Measures Post-event feedback forms updated to include broader thematic prompts. Development of a feedback analysis framework to capture feedback and actionable insights. Outcome Measures Use of feedback in SAGE monitoring and impact assessments. Improved responsiveness to participant insights in future event planning. Uptake of feedback-informed changes in programming, communications, or strategy. Impact Measures <i>Feedback via focus groups, surveys, feedback forms indicating:</i> • Positive staff sentiment regarding opportunities to contribute ideas and feedback.

ENABLING ACTIONS: LEADERSHIP & ACCOUNTABILITY						
ID	Rationale/Evidence	Actions	Timeframe (start & end)	Person / Group Responsible for Implementing Action	Senior Leader Accountable for Action Delivery	Example Outputs, Outcomes, and Impacts
						- Supporting the University's <i>Sydney in 2032</i> strategic goals under the <i>Thriving Through Diversity</i> pillar. - Embedding the University values of <i>Excellence, Trust & Accountability</i>.
		L&A 3.2.4 Track implementation of the SAGE Silver Action Plan through regular workforce and Sydney Listens data analysis, surveys, and staff focus groups, with high-level findings updated regularly on the SAGE intranet and Action Tracker. Introduce a visible feedback mechanism on the SAGE intranet page, clearly communicating that all feedback is valued, while setting expectations that not all input may result in direct action.	Annually	SAGE Team	SAGE Program Manager	<i>Subject to final collaborative implementation and resourcing, example outputs and outcomes could include:</i> Output Measures Regular data analyses and feedback opportunities to assess implementation progress. Implementation of a visible feedback mechanism on the SAGE intranet page with clear communication on the feedback mechanism outlining that all feedback is valued, though not all may be actioned. Regular publication of high-level findings from SAGE Silver Action Plan progress monitoring on the SAGE intranet and Action Tracker. Outcome Measures Increased staff awareness and understanding of SAGE Silver Action Plan progress. Improved staff engagement with DEI initiatives through accessible feedback channels. Greater staff participation in focus groups and feedback processes. Impact Measures <i>Feedback via focus groups, surveys, feedback forms indicating:</i> - Positive staff sentiment regarding opportunities to contribute ideas and feedback. - Strengthened culture of transparency, continuous improvement, and co-design in SAGE. - Supporting the University's <i>Sydney in 2032</i> strategic goals under the <i>Thriving Through Diversity</i> pillar. - Embedding the University values of <i>Excellence, Trust & Accountability</i>.

ENABLING ACTIONS: LEADERSHIP & ACCOUNTABILITY						
ID	Rationale/Evidence	Actions	Timeframe (start & end)	Person / Group Responsible for Implementing Action	Senior Leader Accountable for Action Delivery	Example Outputs, Outcomes, and Impacts
L&A 3.3	At the 2024 SAGE DEI Symposium, Faculty and PSU DEI teams identified limited access to workforce data as a barrier to stakeholder engagement and local program evaluation.	L&A 3.3.1 Strengthen provision of timely workforce data for Faculty and School Senior Leaders and teams with carriage over DEI by articulating clear data request pathways and supporting interpretation of results. Work with HR and the University's Privacy Team to ensure strict privacy guardrails. <i>(Note: This work aligns with HR work to improve access to data)</i>	2026-2028	HR Performance, Workforce Planning and Insights Team, SAGE Team, Privacy Team, Workforce Analytics Team	Director, Workforce Planning and Insights	<i>Subject to final collaborative implementation and resourcing, example outputs and outcomes could include:</i> Output Measures Development and dissemination of a clear data request protocol or pathway document, with privacy and data governance checks. Outcome Measures Improved timeliness and relevance of data provided to support DEI planning. Reduction in <i>ad hoc</i> or unclear data requests. Compliance with privacy and data governance standards. Impact Measures <i>Feedback via focus groups, surveys, feedback forms indicating:</i> • Increased confidence among DEI teams in accessing and using workforce data. • Enhanced data-informed decision-making in Faculty and School DEI strategies. • Sustained trust in data processes due to robust privacy protections. • Supporting the University's <i>Sydney in 2032</i> strategic goals under the <i>Thriving Through Diversity</i> pillar. • Embedding the University values of <i>Excellence, Trust & Accountability</i>.

SAGE@USyd Indigenous Strategy & Services and Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Staff Stakeholder Connections



SECTION 2 – KEY BARRIERS TO ATTRACTION, RETENTION AND/OR PROGRESSION

KEY BARRIER 1: Career Planning, Progression & Equity

1.1 Executive Summary

TABLE 12 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY OF CAREER PLANNING, PROGRESSION & EQUITY

Background
This section of the application explores the University of Sydney's progress and ongoing challenges in fostering equitable career development for academic and professional staff. While significant strides have been made since the 2018–23 SAGE Bronze Action Plan, persistent and emerging barriers exist, particularly for women and those from typically marginalised groups of academic and professional staff.
Data Sources
The analysis drew on: HR Diversity Dashboard 2025 Sydney Listens Staff Engagement Survey (quantitative and qualitative) SAGE Silver Focus Groups and Surveys: Lived experience of academic and professional staff Gender and Gender-Intersectional Pay Gap Analysis
Enablers Identified
<u>Academic Staff</u> Strong academic recruitment outcomes for women. Promotion success for academic women. Academic Excellence Framework (AEF)'s structured approach to career planning, with collegiality added as a formal promotion criterion and Faculty advisers to support career planning. Informal mentoring from senior colleagues and supportive managers. Some promotion panels apply Relative to Opportunity (RTO) effectively and equitably. <u>Professional Staff</u> Professional Staff Development Fund. Leadership programs and secondment opportunities. Informal mentoring networks and supportive managers.
Barriers Identified
<u>Academic Staff</u> Women born overseas, First Nations staff, and staff with disabilities face challenges related to remuneration and promotion. Junior academic women were more likely than senior academic women to apply for promotion relative to workforce share but felt less optimistic about their prospects for progression; senior women felt more optimistic but applied less frequently than junior academic women relative to workforce share. Academic staff who had an education/teaching component to their workload showed lower engagement scores in the 2025 Sydney Listens All Staff Engagement Survey, and lower promotion success. Tenure, level, and diversity-linked pay disparities persist. While promising, the AEF has generated confusion and scepticism for some staff. Access to mentoring varies across Faculties and University Schools. Application of RTO can be inconsistent, with some staff unclear on its value, use and impact. Access to flexible work can be inconsistent. <u>Professional Staff</u> Men are less likely to apply and be hired for professional roles, especially at junior levels. Overseas-born and men with disability face compounded barriers, as do TGD candidates.

Emerging pay gaps suggest potential for negotiation and package disparities.

Higher resignation rates, particularly among First Nations and culturally diverse men.

Staff report unclear progression routes, limited part-time options, and feelings of undervaluation compared to academics.

Professional Performance & Development reviews seen as superficial and inconsistently administered, with limited impact on career development.

Key Recommendations

Academic Staff

Maintain performance expectations around gender while preparing for intersectional metrics through data harmonisation, policy reviews, and leadership engagement.

Mentoring particularly for Levels C & D women; provide tailored support for staff with multiple diversity characteristics; ensure equity across academic streams; build on partnerships between APU and Faculties and Schools to share resources and best practice to support local implementation of promotion mentoring programs.

Train AP&D Advisers in DEI principles and cultural responsiveness; monitor gender-intersectional equity outcomes across streams.

Improve AP&D review quality and goal alignment.

Build on RTO guidelines and tools; train panels and embed RTO in career planning; improve feedback and review consistency across processes; support use in external grants.

Professional Staff

Explore the impact of the under-representation of professional men, and higher gender-intersectional resignation rates for professional men.

Clarify progression models and support; better promote existing frameworks for recognising excellence and contributions.

General Issues

Conduct regular pay reviews with intersectional analysis and seek to address gaps.

Promote recognition of mentoring in workload via the Collegiality and Service pillars of the AEF; promote informal mentoring and alumni networks; expand visibility of existing programs and pilot new ones as required.

1.2 Background

Our 2024 Career Progression Cygnet celebrated significant progress arising from the SAGE 2018-23 Bronze Action Plan in fostering inclusive career development for academic staff. The share of academic roles held by women rose from 44.8% in 2017 (39% and 26% at Levels D and E, respectively) to 48.4% in 2023, with strong increases at Levels D (+17.6%) and E (+16.1%).

We also reported that the percentage of women academic promotion applicants and recipients increased from 46% to 50%, and 48% to 53%, respectively. Staff shared that career development programs boosted confidence, career planning, and promotion success.

Since our Cygnet we have further built on this progress: women currently hold 50.2% of academic roles, and we have achieved gender balance across all employment types and levels except Level E (Table 13).

TABLE 13 GENDER BREAKDOWN WITHIN CATEGORIES ACROSS THE UNIVERSITY OF SYDNEY WORKFORCE

Note: Snapshot taken as at 31 March 2025. Light green shading = Gender balanced; Dark green shading = Not gender balanced in favour of women; Light orange shading = Not gender balanced in favour of men; TGD = Trans & Gender Diverse; ND = Not Disclosed; HC = headcount; Data verified by HR Workforce Information & Reporting 29 September 2025 and correct at the time of verification.

	Men		TGD		ND		Women	
	HC	%	HC	%	HC	%	HC	%
All (excluding Casual)	4094	39.9	53	0.5	25	0.2	6098	59.4
Full-time	3573	43.4	39	0.5	17	0.2	4613	56.0
Part-time	521	25.7	14	0.7	8	0.4	1486	73.2
Casual	5820	44.1	107	0.8	93	0.7	7179	54.4
Fixed-Term	1679	37.4	25	0.6	10	0.2	2775	61.8
Continuing	2444	41.7	29	0.5	15	0.3	3370	57.5
Academic	2067	49.3	15	0.4	7	0.2	2106	50.2
Professional	2029	33.3	38	0.6	18	0.3	4001	65.7
20-29	306	33.5	15	1.6	8	0.9	585	64.0
30-39	1213	38.7	24	0.8	8	0.3	1893	60.3
40-49	1145	38.1	7	0.2	≤6	0.1	1855	61.7
50-59	874	42.6	7	0.3	≤6	0.2	1165	56.8
60+	556	48.0	0	0.0	≤6	0.3	600	51.8
Academic Level A	340	46.6	≤6	0.6	≤6	0.3	383	52.5
Academic Level B	477	42.4	≤6	0.4	≤6	0.3	640	56.9
Academic Level C	416	47.2	≤6	0.3	≤6	0.1	461	52.3
Academic Level D	319	51.4	≤6	0.5	0	0.0	299	48.2
Academic Level E	507	61.9	0	0.0	≤6	0.1	311	38.0
Professional HEO 1-4	133	30.7	≤6	0.9	≤6	1.2	291	67.2
Professional HEO 5-7	1019	30.1	26	0.8	8	0.2	2335	68.9
Professional HEO 8-10	638	38.3	≤6	0.4	≤6	0.2	1020	61.2
Professional SPS A-B	126	36.3	0	0.0	≤6	0.3	220	63.4
Professional SPS C-D	69	43.7	≤6	0.6	0	0.0	88	55.7
Senior Staff	1040	52.3	≤6	0.2	≤6	0.1	944	47.4
Management Role	1138	41.7	8	0.3	6	0.2	1577	57.8
First Nations	48	35.0	≤6	2.2	0	0	86	62.8
Disability	71	38.0	7	3.7	≤6	1.1	108	57.5
Born in a Country other than Australia	1902	42.3	11	0.2	7	0.2	2579	57.3

However, we identified some remaining issues for academic staff, as well as trepidation around the University's new Academic Excellence Framework (AEF). Additionally, it became clear that professional staff felt under-valued compared to academic staff, without clear career development and progression pathways. Finally, there was evidence of poorer career experience and progression for staff from traditionally marginalised groups.

Speaking to career equity at the University, senior leaders and key stakeholders largely echoed both the progress made, and aspects that have lagged (Table 14).

A gender-intersectional focus on career planning, promotion, and equity is therefore needed to broaden progress, mitigate barriers, and support attraction, progression and retention of a diverse workforce. In addition, we need to more sharply bring our professional staff cohort into frame.

TABLE 14 SENIOR LEADER AND KEY STAKEHOLDER THOUGHTS ON CAREER EQUITY AT THE UNIVERSITY

Note: Arising from thematic analysis of structured interviews with Senior Leaders and staff in DEI leadership roles across the University, and an HR Partners Focus Group.

Working Well	Working Less Well
Evolving Understanding of Merit Appointments have always been merit-based, but the understanding of what constitutes “merit” has evolved to be more inclusive and nuanced. <i>“Appointment committees are much better at determining what counts as merit and teasing out that sort of thing.” – L10</i> Fairness Through Relative to Opportunity RTO considerations during promotion make the process fairer for staff who have taken career breaks or experienced disadvantage. <i>“I see in conversations that happen in promotion committees, that panellists are very respectful of people’s circumstances and really take them into account. I know that staff themselves don’t necessarily think that happens, but it does.” – L03</i> Targeted Mentoring and Encouragement Targeted, formal mentoring programs have helped more women progress to senior academic levels by providing encouragement and structured support. <i>“The ... process was one of the ways of overcoming the sense that the odds were stacked against women. And the results were a massive increase in promotion of women. It wasn’t because the promotion process was changed. It was the encouragement and support women were given to apply that had the most impact.” – L11</i>	Ongoing Gender Disparities in Advancement Gender disparities continue in some parts of the university, especially at senior staff levels. Academic women were perceived to be overburdened with service administrative roles, which were under-valued in promotion pathways. <i>“Equity has a long way to go in the university to right any power imbalances. I see a lot of my male colleagues, for instance, just breeze through. They get perfect job reviews. They get any promotion that they want. And then you see female academics, and they’re toiling in administration roles without promise of advancement.” – L19</i> Perceptions of Narrow Framing of Gender Equity Some participants felt the focus on gender equity has sometimes failed to account for intersecting identities such as race, Indigeneity, and disability, leaving some women behind in equity efforts. <i>“I do think that it’s very much white Anglo women who have benefited from the programs that we’ve had to date. I think there is an enormous opportunity to now focus on women from intersectional disadvantage or disability.” — L15</i> <i>(Note: The University has been running a decade-long sponsorship program specifically for CALD women, who are mentored by University Leaders at the highest level, as well as other programs and initiatives to support ethno-racial equity. See Key Barrier 3: Racial Inclusion, Voice & Visibility).</i> Accessibility Barriers Some University buildings were described as inaccessible, creating structural barriers for staff with disabilities. <i>“I think the challenge is a lot of our buildings are very old and they’re not necessarily accessible. So, if you happen to be located in one of those buildings and you have a disability, it puts you in a very difficult situation.” – L25</i>

1.2.1 Related activities and programs of work

TABLE 15 RELATED ACTIVITIES & PROGRAMS OF WORK

Related Portfolios & Initiatives	Description	Linkages
DVC-Community & Leadership	Development of over-arching DEI Framework and Strategy for the University.	Need for a coherent strategy, leadership, advocacy, and meaningful engagement.
Academic Excellence Framework	The Framework seeks to create a supportive academic culture by clarifying measures for and criteria of excellence, streamlining processes, equipping supervisors, and fostering a collegial community across the University.	Career planning, progress and performance.
Professional Services Review	The Professional Services Review is a University-wide initiative assessing all enabling functions, along with the systems, processes, and culture that support our work. Its goals are to (1) Deliver a consistently excellent, seamless service experience for students, staff, and stakeholders, and (2) Provide cost-effective professional services, ensuring resources are focused on delivering transformational education and life-changing research.	Role expectations, load and career mobility for professional staff.
DIAP	The University is in the process of developing its new Disability Inclusion Action Plan (DIAP).	Findings and recommendations focus on staff with disability.

1.2.2 Data sources used in this section

TABLE 16 DATA SOURCES USED IN THIS SECTION

Source	Type of Data	Details	Limitations
University of Sydney HR Diversity Dashboard	Workforce representation	Linked to central data warehouse, Snowflake. Includes demographic questions around gender, country of origin, disability status, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander identity, and age. Allows for intersectional representation across career cycle.	Does not include questions relating to ethno-racial background or sexuality.
	Recruitment applications, short-listed and hired.	Linked to standalone recruitment platform. Includes categories available in Snowflake, and additional demographic questions relating to ethno-racial background and sexuality.	Some data fields are less populated than others by candidates, and data fields are not always an exact match for our internal fields for staff.
	Promotion applications and success rates.	Manual import of Academic Promotion Unit data with Diversity Dashboard. Some high-level intersectional analyses available.	Due to low numbers, intersectional analyses are not disaggregated by racial background. Ethno-racial background filter currently limited to Anglo-Celtic, non-Anglo-Celtic, or not disclosed.
	Separation/Turnover	Linked to central platform, Snowflake which includes demographic questions around gender, country of origin, disability status, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander identity. Allows for intersectional representation by type and reason for leaving.	Country of origin currently limited to born in Australia, born outside Australia, or not disclosed. Racial background is not included
Gender and gender-intersectional pay gap analysis	Gender and gender-intersectional pay gaps	Calculations built on the WGEA gender pay gap formula of [(average remuneration of men - average remuneration of women)/average remuneration of men] x 100 at each classification level for academic and professional staff. Data is differentiated from WGEA calculation and categorisation by applying to the University's classification structure, as well as timing, which uses data as at 31 January 2025 as opposed to the 23/24 WGEA reporting timeframe. To create an intersectional analysis, the Cultural Background, Indigenous status or disability status was incorporated into the assessment.	Classification and timeframe differences make the calculations reported here non-comparable with WGEA reporting measures.
2025 Sydney Listens All Staff Engagement	% Favourable responses across engagement factors and question set.	Open to staff May 2025. Headcounts (HC) and participation rates (PR) for different staff groupings are shown in data tables.	Both cultural background and ethno-racial demographics are available, but with much lower disclosure of the latter, leading to more limited availability of ethno-racial data by gender due to

Survey Quantitative data			Culture Amp privacy parameters. For this reason and to better align with workforce data, which does not capture ethno-racial data, cultural background is used more frequently in this section than ethno-racial data.															
2025 Sydney Listens All Staff Engagement Survey Qualitative data	Thematic analysis of 2025 Sydney Listens anonymous free text feedback from staff.	Thematic analysis of the total of 10,512 free text comments from men (67% commented, median 3 comments per commenter); 15, 017 comments from women (68% commented, median 3 comments per commenter); 15, 634 comments from Professional staff (70% commented, median 3 comments per commenter); 10, 218 comments from Academic staff (63% commented, median 3 comments per commenter). We used Microsoft CoPilot to interrogate the datasets, asking whether positive or negative themes were raised in free text comments relating to each of the identified sub-barriers, and if any suggestions were raised by staff to address the issues. Themes were verified by humans.	We do not have permission to use direct quotes from staff and so have limited inclusion of free text data from Sydney Listens to thematic analysis.															
SAGE Silver Focus Groups & Surveys	Thematic analysis of SAGE Silver Focus Group participant data. Focus groups and Surveys Offered: - Academic Women - Academic Men - Professional Women - Professional Men - LGBTQIA+ Staff - Staff who had participated on a promotion panel within past five years	<u>Demographics</u> 48 staff responded, the vast majority of them professional women. Of the 48 participants, 37 (77%) said they had parenting or other caring responsibilities, and 17 were in leadership roles. <table><tr><td></td><td>Professional</td><td>Academic</td></tr><tr><td>Woman</td><td>26</td><td>11</td></tr><tr><td>Man</td><td>≤6</td><td>≤6</td></tr><tr><td>Not specified</td><td>≤6</td><td>0</td></tr><tr><td>TGD</td><td>≤6</td><td>0</td></tr></table>		Professional	Academic	Woman	26	11	Man	≤6	≤6	Not specified	≤6	0	TGD	≤6	0	
	Professional	Academic																
Woman	26	11																
Man	≤6	≤6																
Not specified	≤6	0																
TGD	≤6	0																

Ethnicity	
Anglo-Celtic	18
Asian	10
European	≤6
Latin American	≤6
African	≤6
Middle Eastern/North African	≤6
Not specified	9
Disability	
Yes	8
No	32
Not specified	8
LGBTQIA+	
Yes	7
No	32
Not specified	9
Caring responsibilities	
Child or children	12
Child with disability or illness	≤6
Older person	≤6
Adult with disability	≤6
More than one type	≤6
Caring role, not specified	9
No caring responsibilities	≤6
Not specified	≤6

Quotes are used with permission. Individuals are represented by participant numbers (Cxx) to preserve anonymity.

Promotion Panel Experience Focus Group

In addition to the above focus groups, surveys and interviews, we sought input from staff who had recently served on academic promotion panels, to gauge their knowledge of inclusive practices, such as being aware of unconscious bias and understanding relative to opportunity statements.

Demographics

16 staff contributed their experiences – 6 women or who did not specify their gender, and 10 men. 12 of the 16 had sat on a promotion panel within the past year. Their experience covered panels ranging from Levels B through to E. Some participants had acted as panel chairs.

		<table><tr><th colspan="2">Gender</th></tr><tr><td>Man</td><td>10</td></tr><tr><td>Woman</td><td>≤6</td></tr><tr><td>Not specified</td><td>≤6</td></tr><tr><th colspan="2">Ethnicity</th></tr><tr><td>Anglo-Celtic</td><td>≤6</td></tr><tr><td>European</td><td>≤6</td></tr><tr><td>Middle Eastern/North African</td><td>≤6</td></tr><tr><td>Pacific Islander</td><td>≤6</td></tr><tr><td>Not specified</td><td>3</td></tr><tr><th colspan="2">Disability</th></tr><tr><td>Yes</td><td>≤6</td></tr><tr><td>No</td><td>14</td></tr><tr><td>Not specified</td><td>≤6</td></tr><tr><th colspan="2">LGBTQIA+</th></tr><tr><td>Yes</td><td>≤6</td></tr><tr><td>No</td><td>12</td></tr><tr><td>Not specified</td><td>≤6</td></tr><tr><th colspan="2">Caring responsibilities</th></tr><tr><td>Yes</td><td>10</td></tr><tr><td>No</td><td>≤6</td></tr><tr><td>Not specified</td><td>≤6</td></tr></table>	Gender		Man	10	Woman	≤6	Not specified	≤6	Ethnicity		Anglo-Celtic	≤6	European	≤6	Middle Eastern/North African	≤6	Pacific Islander	≤6	Not specified	3	Disability		Yes	≤6	No	14	Not specified	≤6	LGBTQIA+		Yes	≤6	No	12	Not specified	≤6	Caring responsibilities		Yes	10	No	≤6	Not specified	≤6	
Gender																																															
Man	10																																														
Woman	≤6																																														
Not specified	≤6																																														
Ethnicity																																															
Anglo-Celtic	≤6																																														
European	≤6																																														
Middle Eastern/North African	≤6																																														
Pacific Islander	≤6																																														
Not specified	3																																														
Disability																																															
Yes	≤6																																														
No	14																																														
Not specified	≤6																																														
LGBTQIA+																																															
Yes	≤6																																														
No	12																																														
Not specified	≤6																																														
Caring responsibilities																																															
Yes	10																																														
No	≤6																																														
Not specified	≤6																																														
Insights from Senior Leaders, DEI Stakeholders and HR Partners		Structured interviews with Senior Leaders and DEI Stakeholders held February - April 2025; Focus Group for HR Partners held July 2025. 32 participants in total, including 28 women and 4 men. Thematic analysis identified themes raised around career planning, progression, and equity. Quotes are used with permission. Individuals are represented by participant numbers (Lxx) to preserve anonymity.																																													

1.3 Evidence of the Barrier and Contributing Factors

1.3.1 Barriers for Academic Staff

1.3.1.1 Faculty and unit level-specific gaps in gender-balanced workforce representation

Since 2021, the percent of women in academic roles showed a 6.4% increase, rising from 47.2% to 50.2%, achieving overall gender balance (defined here as at least 40% women: at least 40 men: up to 20% any gender) (Table 17). However, although Level E saw the largest increase (+9.8%), women remain under-represented at this level.

TABLE 17 PERCENT CHANGE IN THE PERCENTAGE ACADEMIC WOMEN EMPLOYED BY THE UNIVERSITY OF SYDNEY 2021 v 2025

Note: Snapshots taken as at 31 March 2021 and 2025. Green font = Increase in the % women; HC = Headcount; Data verified by HR Workforce Information & Reporting 29 September 2025 and correct at the time of verification.

	2021	2025	%Δ Women
All Academic Women	47.2% (HC: 1645)	50.2% (HC: 2106)	6.4%
Level A	50.8% (HC: 338)	52.5% (HC: 383)	3.3%
Level B	53.2% (HC: 446)	56.9% (HC: 640)	7%
Level C	51.2% (HC: 363)	52.3% (HC: 461)	2.1%
Level D	44.9% (HC: 254)	48.2% (HC: 299)	7.3%
Level E	34.6% (HC: 240)	38% (HC: 311)	9.8%

All Faculties and Schools contributed to the rise in academic women (Table 18), with most showing consistent progress (Table 19).

By 2025, five of eight were gender-balanced; women remain under-represented in Engineering and the Conservatorium, and men in Medicine and Health. The Business School and Science reached gender-balance but potentially risk regression without continued focus. Some gender-balanced areas also still face unit-level challenges (Table 20, Figure 3).

TABLE 18 CHANGE IN PERCENTAGE OF ACADEMIC ROLES HELD BY WOMEN ACROSS FACULTIES AND UNIVERSITY SCHOOLS 2021 v 2025 (% CHANGE)

Note: Snapshots taken as at 31 March 2021 and 2025. Green font = Increase in the % women; HC = Headcount; Data verified by HR Workforce Information & Reporting 30 September 2025 and correct at the time of verification.

	2021	2025	Δ% Women
Business School	37.4% (HC: 107)	40.2% (HC: 121)	7.5%
Faculty of Arts & Social Sciences	52.8% (HC: 284)	53.9% (HC: 278)	2.1%
Faculty of Engineering	18.1% (HC: 62)	22.2% (HC: 86)	22.7%
Faculty of Medicine & Health	59.6% (HC: 783)	61.8% (HC: 1090)	3.7%
Faculty of Science	38.2% (HC: 273)	40.9% (HC: 333)	7.1%
Conservatorium of Music	33.9% (HC: 22)	38.9% (HC: 51)	14.7%
School of Architecture, Design & Planning	47.9% (HC: 34)	51.3% (HC: 61)	7.1%
University of Sydney Law School	44.4% (HC: 40)	47.1% (HC: 49)	6.1%

TABLE 19 GENDER REPRESENTATION FOR ACADEMIC STAFF ACROSS FACULTIES AND UNIVERSITY SCHOOLS 2021-25

Note: Snapshots taken as at 31 March each year. Light green shading = Gender-balanced that year; Orange shading = Not gender-balanced in favour of men that year; Dark green = Not gender-balanced that year in favour of women; HC = Headcount; TGD = Trans & Gender Diverse; ND = Not Disclosed; Data verified by HR Workforce Information & Reporting 30 September 2025 and correct at the time of verification.

		TGD		Men		ND		Women	
		HC	%	HC	%	HC	%	HC	%
Business School									
	2021	0	0.0	179	62.6	0	0.0	107	37.4
	2022	0	0.0	171	63.3	0	0.0	99	36.7
	2023	0	0.0	173	61.8	0	0.0	107	38.2
	2024	0	0.0	180	61.0	≤6	0.3	114	38.6
	2025	0	0.0	179	59.5	≤6	0.3	121	40.2
Faculty of Arts & Social Sciences									
	2021	≤6	0.7	249	46.3	≤6	0.2	284	52.8
	2022	≤6	0.6	246	46	≤6	0.2	285	53.3
	2023	≤6	0.6	254	46.4	0	0.0	290	53
	2024	≤6	0.6	242	45.8	≤6	0.2	283	53.5
	2025	≤6	1.0	232	45	≤6	0.2	278	53.9
Faculty of Engineering									
	2021	0	0.0	280	81.9	0	0.0	62	18.1
	2022	0	0.0	274	81.1	0	0.0	64	18.9
	2023	0	0.0	284	79.8	0	0.0	72	20.2
	2024	0	0.0	288	79.1	≤6	0.3	75	20.6
	2025	0	0.0	299	77.3	≤6	0.5	86	22.2
Faculty of Medicine & Health									
	2021	≤6	0.1	528	40.2	≤6	0.1	783	59.6
	2022	0	0.0	520	38.7	≤6	0.2	822	61.2
	2023	≤6	0.1	565	39	≤6	0.1	881	60.8
	2024	≤6	0.1	635	39.8	≤6	0.1	957	60
	2025	≤6	0.2	668	37.9	≤6	0.1	1090	61.8
Faculty of Science									
	2021	0	0.0	439	61.4	≤6	0.4	273	38.2
	2022	0	0.0	428	61.8	≤6	0.1	264	38.1
	2023	≤6	0.6	426	60.1	≤6	0.1	278	39.2
	2024	≤6	0.4	451	59.3	≤6	0.3	305	40.1
	2025	≤6	0.3	477	58.6	≤6	0.3	333	40.9
Conservatorium of Music									
	2021	0	0.0	43	66.2	0	0.0	22	33.9
	2022	0	0.0	48	65.8	0	0.0	25	34.3
	2023	0	0.0	50	65.8	0	0.0	26	34.2
	2024	0	0.0	55	61.8	0	0.0	34	38.2
	2025	≤6	0.8	79	60.3	0	0.0	51	38.9
School of Architecture, Design & Planning									
	2021	0	0.0	37	52.1	0	0.0	34	47.9
	2022	0	0.0	45	51.1	0	0.0	43	48.9
	2023	0	0.0	45	52.9	0	0.0	40	47.1
	2024	≤6	1.1	46	48.4	0	0.0	48	50.5
	2025	≤6	2.5	55	46.2	0	0.0	61	51.3
University of Sydney Law School									
	2021	0	0.0	49	54.4	≤6	1.1	40	44.4
	2022	0	0.0	54	56.3	≤6	1.0	41	42.7
	2023	0	0.0	51	53.1	0	0.0	45	46.9
	2024	0	0.0	52	55.3	0	0.0	42	44.7
	2025	0	0.0	55	52.9	0	0.0	49	47.1

TABLE 20 GENDER REPRESENTATION FOR ACADEMIC LEVELS ACROSS FACULTIES AND UNIVERSITY SCHOOLS

Note: Snapshots taken as at 31 March 2025. Light green shading = Gender-balanced; Orange shading = Not gender-balanced in favour of men; Dark green = Not gender-balanced in favour of women; HC = Headcount; TGD = Trans & Gender Diverse; ND = Not Disclosed; Data verified by HR Workforce Information & Reporting 30 September 2025 and correct at the time of verification.

		TGD		Men		ND		Women	
		HC	%	HC	%	HC	%	HC	%
Business School									
	Level A	0	0.0	9	40.9	0	0.0	13	59.1
	Level B	0	0.0	51	54.3	≤6	1.1	42	44.7
	Level C	0	0.0	44	61.1	0	0.0	28	38.9
	Level D	0	0.0	28	63.6	0	0.0	16	36.4
	Level E	0	0.0	47	69.1	0	0.0	21	30.9
Faculty of Arts & Social Sciences									
	Level A	≤6	2.7	10	27.0	0	0.0	26	70.3
	Level B	≤6	0.8	48	37.2	≤6	0.8	79	61.2
	Level C	≤6	1.5	63	45.7	0	0.0	73	52.9
	Level D	≤6	1.1	43	47.8	0	0.0	46	51.1
	Level E	0	0	68	56.2	0	0.0	53	43.8
Faculty of Engineering									
	Level A	0	0	68	70.1	≤6	1.0	28	28.9
	Level B	0	0	61	71.8	0	0.0	24	28.2
	Level C	0	0	52	81.3	≤6	1.6	11	17.2
	Level D	0	0	49	89.1	0	0.0	≤6	10.9
	Level E	0	0	68	80.0	0	0.0	17	20
Faculty of Medicine & Health									
	Level A	0	0	93	32.6	0	0.0	192	67.4
	Level B	≤6	0.4	171	31.7	≤6	0.2	366	67.8
	Level C	≤6	0.3	142	36.2	0	0.0	249	63.5
	Level D	≤6	0.4	104	40.0	0	0.0	155	59.6
	Level E	0	0	160	55.2	0	0.0	130	44.8
Faculty of Science									
	Level A	0	0.0	131	58.2	≤6	0.4	93	41.3
	Level B	≤6	1.1	90	49.7	0	0.0	89	49.2
	Level C	0	0.0	68	57.1	0	0.0	51	42.9
	Level D	0	0.0	60	54.6	0	0.0	50	45.5
	Level E	0	0.0	128	70.7	≤6	0.6	52	28.7
Conservatorium of Music									
	Level A	≤6	2.6	21	53.9	0	0.0	17	43.6
	Level B	0	0.0	23	67.7	0	0.0	11	32.4
	Level C	0	0.0	18	58.1	0	0.0	13	41.9
	Level D	0	0.0	15	79.0	0	0.0	≤6	21.1
	Level E	0	0.0	≤6	28.6	0	0.0	≤6	71.4
School of Architecture, Design & Planning									
	Level A	≤6	10.0	≤6	30.0	0	0.0	12	60
	Level B	0	0.0	16	50.0	0	0.0	16	50
	Level C	0	0.0	15	50.0	0	0.0	15	50
	Level D	≤6	4.0	13	52.0	0	0.0	11	44
	Level E	0	0.0	≤6	36.4	0	0.0	7	63.6
University of Sydney Law School									
	Level A	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	≤6	100
	Level B	0	0.0	12	52.2	0	0.0	11	47.8
	Level C	0	0.0	12	63.2	0	0.0	7	36.8
	Level D	0	0.0	7	38.9	0	0.0	11	61.1
	Level E	0	0.0	24	57.1	0	0.0	18	42.9



FIGURE 3 GENDER REPRESENTATION FOR ACADEMIC LEVELS ACROSS FACULTIES AND UNIVERSITY SCHOOLS

Note: Snapshots taken as at 31 March 2025. Light green shading = gender balanced (40:40:20); TGD = Trans & Gender Diverse; ND = Not Disclosed; Data verified by HR Workforce Information & Reporting 30 September 2025 and correct at the time of verification.

Nearly half of academics were born overseas, with balanced gender overall. However, women born overseas were under-represented at Level E and senior roles (Table 21). First Nations academics had low representation across all levels, especially senior ones. Academics with disabilities were underrepresented at both junior and senior levels.

TABLE 21 TOTAL WORKFORCE REPRESENTATION OF ACADEMIC MEN AND WOMEN AT THE INTERSECTIONS OF FIRST NATIONS, COUNTRY OF BIRTH, OR DISABILITY

NOTE: Snapshot taken as at 31 March 2025. TGD = Trans & Gender Diverse; HC = Headcount; % = % all academics; Data verified by HR Workforce Information & Reporting 1 October 2025 and correct at the time of verification.

	First Nations Academic Men		First Nations Academic Women		First Nations Academic TGD		Academic Men born outside Australia		Academic Women born outside Australia		Academic TGD born outside Australia		Academic Men with Disability		Academic Women with Disability		Academic TGD with Disability	
	HC	%	HC	%	HC	%	HC	%	HC	%	HC	%	HC	%	HC	%	HC	%
Academic	21	0.5	40	1.0	≤ 6	0.0	1078	25.7	894	21.3	≤ 6	0.1	35	0.8	47	1.1	≤ 6	0.0
Employment Type																		
Full-time	14	0.4	24	0.8	≤ 6	0.1	950	30.3	677	21.6	≤ 6	0.2	26	0.8	26	0.8	≤ 6	0.0
Part-time	7	0.7	16	1.5	0	0.0	128	12.1	217	20.5	≤ 6	0.1	9	0.9	21	2.0	≤ 6	0.1
Casual	44	0.4	84	0.8	0	0.0	2151	21.1	2135	21.0	28	0.3	67	0.7	111	1.1	11	0.1
Fixed-Term	12	0.6	27	1.3	0	0.0	523	24.3	457	21.2	≤ 6	0.1	16	0.7	18	0.8	≤ 6	0.0
Continuing	9	0.4	14	0.7	≤ 6	0.1	565	26.9	448	21.3	≤ 6	0.2	19	0.9	32	1.5	≤ 6	0.0
Academic Level																		
Level A	≤ 6	0.8	8	1.1	0	0.0	188	25.8	174	23.9	≤ 6	0.1	≤ 6	0.8	≤ 6	0.8	≤ 6	0.1
Level B	7	0.6	15	1.3	≤ 6	0.1	237	21.1	272	24.2	≤ 6	0.1	10	0.9	10	0.9	≤ 6	0.1
Level C	≤ 6	0.5	≤ 6	0.6	0	0.0	206	23.4	186	21.1	≤ 6	0.1	7	0.8	13	1.5	0	0.0
Level D	≤ 6	0.5	≤ 6	0.6	≤ 6	0.2	167	26.8	131	21.1	≤ 6	0.5	≤ 6	0.8	8	1.3	0	0.0
Level E	≤ 6	0.1	≤ 6	0.7	0	0.0	274	33.5	126	15.4	0	0.0	7	0.9	10	1.2	0	0.0
Academic Senior Staff	≤ 6	0.3	12	0.8	≤ 6	0.1	446	30.4	260	17.7	≤ 6	0.2	12	0.8	18	1.2	0	0.0
Academics in Management Roles	≤ 6	0.3	8	0.6	≤ 6	0.1	367	26.7	292	21.2	≤ 6	0.1	13	0.9	17	1.2	0	0.0

Since 2022, Deans' KPIs have been set by the SDVC&P in consultation with strategic teams and Deans, to bring consistency and alignment with strategic organisational aspirations. These are monitored biannually.

SAGE gender targets were incorporated in 2023 to advance gender-balanced representation of women and TGD academic staff. As of 30 June, some Faculties and Schools were on track to meet their 2025 SAGE targets, whereas others lagged (Figure 4).

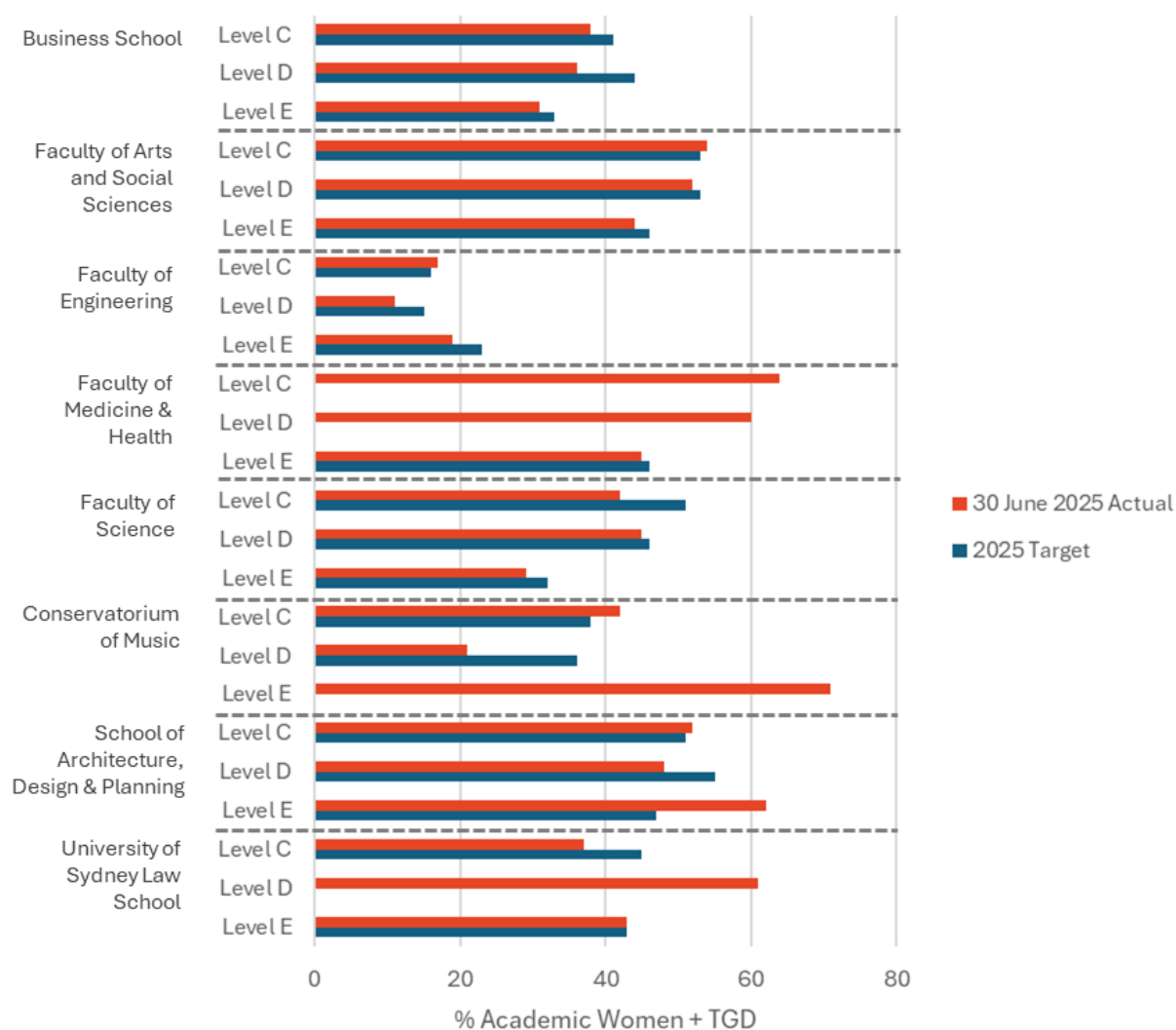


FIGURE 4 PROGRESS AGAINST ANNUAL SAGE FACULTY AND UNIVERSITY SCHOOL GENDER TARGETS AS AT 30 JUNE 2025

Note: Snapshot taken as at 30 June 2025. The absence of a target means that the proportion of academic roles held by women and TGD staff at that level in the current year exceeded 55%; TGD = Trans & Gender Diverse; Data verified by HR Workforce Information & Reporting 1 October 2025 and correct at the time of verification.

1.3.1.2 Inequities in promotion

Some survey responses do not align with behaviours or outcomes and should be read with caution, though they still provide a useful pulse check of staff sentiment.

The 2025 Sydney Listens Survey suggested junior academic women were less optimistic about career opportunities than men and senior women (Figure 5). Women were also less likely than men to believe in equal opportunity, across cultural backgrounds. Staff with disabilities, especially men, were less positive than those without about career prospects. Gay and lesbian staff were more optimistic than staff with other sexualities.

“People from all backgrounds have equal opportunities to succeed at the University of Sydney”

“I believe there are good career opportunities for me at the University of Sydney”

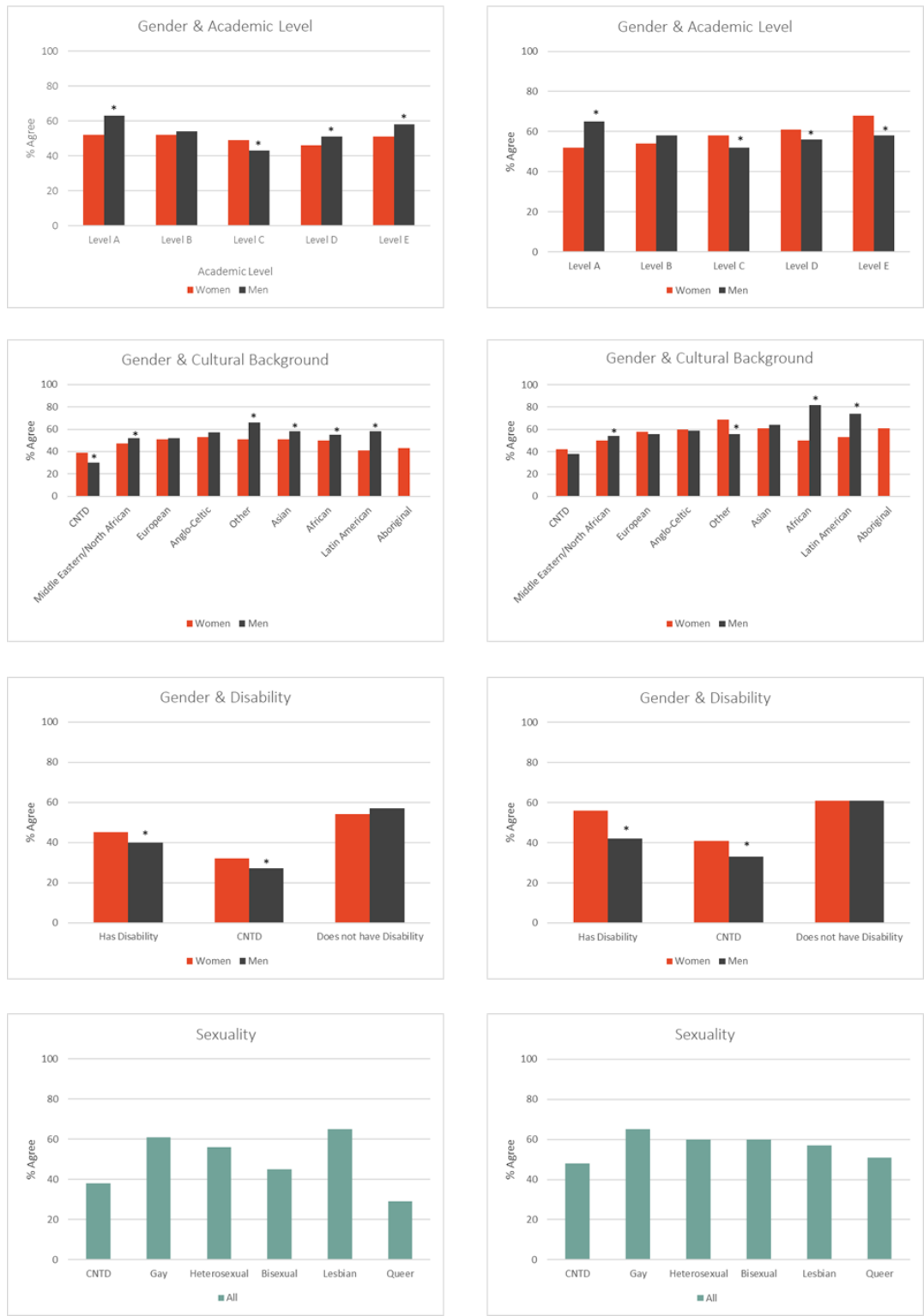


FIGURE 5 ACADEMIC STAFF RESPONSES TO TWO 2025 SYDNEY LISTENS QUESTIONS RELATED TO CAREER OPPORTUNITIES AND EQUITY BY GENDER AND ACADEMIC LEVEL; CULTURAL BACKGROUND; DISABILITY; SEXUALITY

*Note: CNTD = Choose not to disclose; * = ≥ 5pt difference between men and women*

Over the past four years, women made up a larger share of promotion applicants than men, exceeding their overall workforce representation and achieving higher average success (Table 22).

However, application rates declined with seniority, from 61% at Level B to 42% at Level E, leaving women slightly under-represented at Levels D-E (Table 23).

TABLE 22 PROMOTION OUTCOMES FOR WOMEN AND MEN BY YEAR 2021-24

Note: HC = Headcount; LVL = Level; Data verified by HR Workforce Information & Reporting 1 October 2025 and correct at the time of verification.

Year	Women						Men					
	Applicants (HC)	Successful (HC)	Success Rate	% LVL A-D Academic Staff	% Total Applicants	% Total Promotions	Applicants (HC)	Successful (HC)	Success Rate	% LVL A-D Academic Staff	% Total Applicants	% Total Promotions
2021	133	126	95%	50%	52%	56%	125	100	80%	49%	48%	44%
2022	131	114	87%	51%	51%	52%	127	107	84%	48%	49%	48%
2023	136	127	93%	52%	49%	49%	143	130	91%	48%	51%	51%
2024	182	171	94%	52%	54%	57%	147	124	84%	48%	44%	41%
Total	582	538	92%	51%	52%	54%	542	461	85%	48%	48%	46%

TABLE 23 PROMOTION OUTCOMES FOR WOMEN AND MEN BY LEVEL SOUGHT 2021-24

Note: HC = Headcount; Data verified by HR Workforce Information & Reporting 1 October 2025 and correct at the time of verification.

Level Sought	Women						Men					
	Applicants (HC)	Successful (HC)	Success Rate	2021-24 Ave % Academic Staff Current Level	% Total Applicants	% Total Promotions	Applicants (HC)	Successful (HC)	Success Rate	2021-24 Ave % Academic Staff Current Level	% Total Applicants	% Total Promotions
Level B	90	87	97%	51%	61%	61%	56	54	96%	49%	38%	38%
Level C	220	212	96%	55%	56%	57%	174	157	90%	45%	44%	42%
Level D	166	149	90%	52%	50%	52%	167	137	82%	48%	50%	48%
Level E	106	90	85%	45%	42%	44%	145	113	78%	54%	57%	55%
Total	582	538	92%	51%	52%	54%	542	461	85%	49%	48%	46%

Compared to senior academic women and men at the same level, junior academic women felt there were fewer career opportunities but were more likely to apply for promotion relative to their workforce share. Conversely, senior women felt more optimistic about career opportunities compared to junior women and their men peers but were less likely to apply for promotion relative to their workforce share. Supporting women at Levels C-D and recruiting junior women will be key to maintaining a pipeline after a strong period of promotions to levels D and E.

Promotion outcomes revealed intersectional gaps (Table 24). Applications from First Nations women were few but had 100% success whereas First Nations men had lower success. GBQ men, staff with disability, and those born overseas had below-average outcomes, highlighting the need for targeted strategies.

TABLE 24 GENDER-INTERSECTIONAL PROMOTION OUTCOMES FOR WOMEN AND MEN BY YEAR 2021-24

Note: HC = Headcount; LGBQ = Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Queer and Questioning; na = not applicable; Data verified by HR Workforce Information & Reporting 1 October 2025 and correct at the time of verification.

	2021-24 Applicants (HC)	2021-24 Successful (HC)	Average 2021-24 Success Rate	Average % 2021-24 Academic Staff A-D	Average 2021-24 % Total Applicants	Average 2021-24 % Total Promotions
All Women	582	538	92%	51%	52%	54%
With Disability	16	13	81%	1.3%	1.4%	1.3%
Without Disability	457	424	93%	37.7%	40.4%	42.2%
Disability Not Disclosed	109	101	93%	12.4%	9.6%	10.1%
Born in Australia	342	323	94%	32%	30%	32%
Born Outside Australia	240	215	90%	21%	21%	21%
First Nations	≤6	≤6	100%	1%	0.3%	0.3%
LGBQ	≤ 6	≤ 6	100%	na	na	na
Heterosexual	35	32	91%	na	na	na
Sexuality Not Disclosed	543	502	92%	na	na	na
All Men	542	461	85%	49%	48%	46%
With Disability	9	7	78%	0.6%	0.8%	0.7%
Without Disability	442	379	86%	36.4%	39.1%	37.7%
Disability Not Disclosed	91	72	82%	12.1%	8.1%	7.2%
Born in Australia	249	222	89%	26%	22%	22%
Born Outside Australia	293	239	82%	25%	26%	24%
First Nations	≤6	≤6	83%	0.5%	0.5%	0.5%
GBQ	9	7	78%	na	na	na
Heterosexual	15	14	93%	na	na	na
Sexuality Not Disclosed	518	440	85%	na	na	na

1.3.1.3 Teaching and Service role pressures

The 2025 Sydney Listens Survey showed Teaching/Research/Service and Education-Focused staff were less positive towards the University than Research Only academics across most engagement factors.

Women in Teaching/Research/Service roles rated more positively than men across all categories other than safety where they were equal, but there was more variability for women in Education-Focused and Research Only roles (Table 25).

TABLE 25 SYDNEY LISTENS STAFF SURVEY 2025: PERCENTAGE FAVOURABLE RESPONSES ACROSS CATEGORIES FOR MEN AND WOMEN BY WORK FUNCTION

Note: Numbers in parentheses show percentage point change compared to 2024; Light orange shading = Men or women with teaching allocation 1-4pp lower than men or women research only staff, respectively; Dark orange shading = Men or women with teaching allocation 5pp or more lower than men or women research only staff; No shading = No difference between men or women with teaching allocation and men or women research only staff; Light green shading = Men or women with teaching allocation 1-4pp higher than men or women research only staff; Dark green shading = Men or women with teaching allocation 5pp or more higher than men or women research only staff; Green font = Women higher than men; Red font = Women lower than men; Black font = No difference between women and men; pp= Percentage Point; PR = Participation Rate; Note: TGD staff were excluded from survey analyses by the Culture Amp privacy settings due to small numbers.

	2025 Men Research Only Staff (n=269; PR=43%; +12%)	2025 Women Research Only Staff (n=295; PR=42%; +3%)	2025 App Women v Men Research Only Staff	2025 Men Teaching Only Staff (n=111; PR=50%; +7%)	2025 Women Teaching Only Staff (n=170; PR=54%; +12%)	2025 App Women v Men Teaching Only Staff	2025 Men Teaching & Research (n=724; PR=62%; +9%)	2025 Women Teaching & Research Staff (n=662; PR=62%; +5%)	2025 App Women v Men Teaching & Research Staff
Engagement	68% (+4pp)	70% (+6pp)	2	64% (+2pp)	63% (-2pp)	-1	61% (+5pp)	65% (+5pp)	4
Company Confidence	52% (+1pp)	53% (0pp)	1	46% (0pp)	47% (-6pp)	1	47% (+4pp)	50% (+5pp)	3
Alignment & Involvement	74% (+6pp)	72% (+1pp)	-2	63% (-6pp)	63% (-2pp)	0	64% (+1pp)	70% (+5pp)	6
Collaboration & Communication	65% (+8pp)	59% (+4pp)	-6	51% (-5pp)	54% (+3pp)	3	47% (+7pp)	49% (+6pp)	2
Enablement	62% (+5pp)	57% (+2pp)	-5	52% (-2pp)	49% (-2pp)	-3	48% (+4pp)	49% (+8pp)	1
Feedback & Recognition	64% (+7pp)	61% (+3pp)	-3	46% (-11pp)	45% (-3pp)	-1	46% (+3pp)	51% (+2pp)	5
Innovation	64% (+10pp)	58% (-2pp)	-6	37% (-12pp)	47% (-3pp)	10	39% (+4pp)	48% (+8pp)	9
Leadership	44% (+3pp)	46% (+5pp)	2	35% (-1pp)	36% (-5pp)	1	33% (+5pp)	38% (+3pp)	5
Learning & Development	69% (+5pp)	70% (+4pp)	1	61% (-3pp)	60% (-3pp)	-1	59% (+3pp)	66% (+3pp)	7
Management	79% (+3pp)	80% (+4pp)	1	70% (-1pp)	72% (-1pp)	2	66% (+4pp)	68% (+2pp)	2
Service & Quality Focus	56% (+10pp)	52% (+2pp)	-4	38% (0pp)	39% (-5pp)	1	33% (+7pp)	39% (+8pp)	6
Social Connection	59% (+12pp)	55% (+3pp)	-4	45% (-3pp)	51% (0pp)	6	45% (+2pp)	48% (+7pp)	3
Teamwork & Ownership	73% (+10pp)	68% (-1pp)	-5	52% (-5pp)	56% (-3pp)	4	52% (+5pp)	58% (+7pp)	6
Work & Life Blend	69% (+11pp)	65% (+4pp)	-4	50% (-9pp)	50% (-5pp)	0	52% (+3pp)	54% (+9pp)	2
Action	38% (+5pp)	42% (+4pp)	4	29% (-4pp)	34% (-5pp)	5	38% (+6pp)	47% (+9pp)	9
Diversity & Inclusion	64% (+8pp)	62% (+2pp)	-2	49% (-8pp)	52% (0pp)	3	51% (+2pp)	54% (+5pp)	3
Safety	85% (+3pp)	84% (0pp)	-1	76% (-3pp)	70% (-3pp)	-6	75% (0pp)	75% (+3pp)	0

Promotion outcomes reflected disparities between application streams. Research-focused applications had the highest success, while Education-focused and Teaching/Research/Service (GLE) and Service (GLE) only streams had lower success (Table 26). The difficulty in obtaining promotion through the GLE route may disproportionately impact women, who have been shown to carry heavy service loads, such as committee work, at the expense of their research and sometimes teaching ². This theme will be revisited in the AEF discussion in 1.3.1.6.

² Allen, TD *et al* (2023) Faculty Time Expenditure Across Research, Teaching, and Service: Do Gender Differences Persist? Occupational Health Sciences, May 24: 1-14.

TABLE 26 PROMOTION OUTCOMES FOR WOMEN AND MEN BY STREAM 2021-24

Note: HC = Headcount; GLE = Governance, Leadership & Engagement; Data verified by HR Workforce Information & Reporting 1 October 2025 and correct at the time of verification.

	Women					Men				
	Applicants (HC)	Successful (HC)	Success Rate	% Total Applicants	% Total Promotions	Applicants (HC)	Successful (HC)	Success Rate	% Total Applicants	% Total Promotions
Education-Focused	79	73	92%	60	62	52	45	87%	40	38
GLE-Focused	≤ 6	≤ 6	75%	57	60	≤ 6	≤ 6	67%	43	40
Research-Focused	137	132	96%	54	55	116	107	92%	46	45
Teaching & Research Balanced	362	330	91%	49	51	371	307	83%	50	48

1.3.1.4 Level-specific gender pay inequities

In 2025, the University's WGEA-reported gender pay gap was 1.8% (median total) and 3% (base salary), both below sector averages. This reflects a long-standing commitment to gender pay equity, with the mean total remuneration gap falling from 11.4% in 2018 to 7.4% in 2024 (noting WGEA used mean data prior to adopting median in 2025).

However, intersectional and level-specific analysis (Table 27) showed remaining gaps. The largest gaps were among long-tenured academics (particularly at Levels B and E) and senior professionals, with some outliers at shorter tenures. Gender-intersectional pay gaps were also identified (Tables 28–29). Continued focus on pay equity is therefore needed to prevent slippage.

TABLE 27 GENDER PAY GAPS ACROSS ACADEMIC LEVELS

Note: % >0 are in favour of men; % <0 are in favour of women. Percentages were calculated using the WGEA means calculation applied to the University's classification structure, using data as at 31 January 2025; LVL = Level; Data provided by HR Performance, Workforce Planning and Insights

Table redacted for privacy reasons

TABLE 28 AVERAGE REMUNERATION FOR WOMEN AND MEN IN TRADITIONALLY MARGINALISED COHORTS COMPARED TO WOMEN AND MEN NOT IN THOSE COHORTS

Note: Orange shading/negative percentage = Gap favours non-marginalised cohort; Green shading/positive percentage = Gap favours marginalised cohort. For Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander, Negative Percentage (-x%) indicates those that identify as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander are paid less than those that don't (this excludes those who prefer not to say or haven't provided information); Positive percentage (x%) indicates those that identify as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander are paid more than those that don't (this excludes those who prefer not to say or haven't provided information). For other groups, Negative Percentage (-x%) indicates group is paid less than Anglo-Celtic (This excludes those who chose not to say and Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander); Positive percentage (x%) indicates group is paid more than Anglo-Celtic (This excludes those who chose not to say and Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander). For Disability, Negative Percentage (-x%) indicates those that identify with a disability are paid less than those that don't (this excludes those who prefer not to say or haven't provided information); Positive percentage (x%) indicates those that identify with a disability are paid more than those that don't (this excludes those who prefer not to say or haven't provided information). Data provided by HR Performance, Workforce Planning and Insights

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TABLE 29 GENDER PAY GAP WITHIN TRADITIONALLY MARGINALISED COHORTS

Note: Orange shading/negative percentage = Gap favours men within cohort; Green shading/positive percentage = Gap favours women within cohort. Data provided by HR Performance, Workforce Planning and Insights

Table redacted for privacy reasons

1.3.1.5 Strong recruitment but higher resignation rates for academic women

Recruitment and resignation trends can reflect how academic staff perceive career progression at the University. A strong, diverse applicant pool suggests the University is an appealing employer for a variety of groups of people, while high resignations may signal internal dissatisfaction or better alternative offers.

From 2021–24, academic women consistently applied at steady rates and were enriched through recruitment stages at all levels, especially Level E (Tables 30–31, Figure 6), indicating the University is seen as a promising career destination for women in general.

Faculty and School-level breakdowns indicated shared commitment to achieving a gender-balanced workforce across the University (Figure 7, Table 32). However, although First Nations candidates (Tables 33–34, Figure 8) and candidates with disability (Tables 35–36, Figure 9) progressed well through the recruitment stages post-application, attraction remains a challenge. Conversely, international candidates form a large pool but face barriers, for example visas, progressing to hire (Tables 37–38, Figure 10: see Key Barrier 3).

Resignation rates for academic staff employed on continuing contracts remained low 2021–24 (Table 39–40). Academic women showed slightly higher resignation rates than men across all levels, despite lower intention to stay indicated only at senior levels in 2025 Sydney Listens (Figure 11).

Intention to stay data from 2025 suggested culturally diverse women and women with disability were more positive than men (Figure 11). However, resignation rates were higher for women overall, noting small headcounts may exaggerate some percentages (Table 41).

TABLE 30 GENDER PROGRESSION THROUGH THE STAGES OF RECRUITMENT FOR ACADEMIC ROLES BY LEVEL 2021-24

Note: TGD = Trans & Gender Diverse; HC = Headcount; ND = Not Disclosed; Data verified by HR Workforce Information & Reporting 29 September 2025 and correct at the time of verification.

Applied	TGD		Men		ND		Women	
	HC	%	HC	%	HC	%	HC	%
Total A-E	229	0.5	25852	59.5	1117	2.6	16269	37.4
Level A	63	0.4	9892	61.7	234	1.5	5848	36.5
Level B	117	0.7	9589	56.3	391	2.3	6923	40.7
Level C	36	0.6	3957	61.6	158	2.5	2272	35.4
Level D	6	0.3	1263	65.2	69	3.6	600	31
Level E	7	0.3	1151	56.2	265	12.9	626	30.6
Short-Listed								
Total A-E	52	0.6	3941	46.8	456	5.4	3968	47.1
Level A	11	0.4	1410	49.7	97	3.4	1319	46.5
Level B	28	0.9	1493	45.1	113	3.4	1677	50.7
Level C	8	0.7	581	46.9	52	4.2	599	48.3
Level D	4	1	205	49.9	32	7.8	170	41.4
Level E	1	0.2	252	40.8	162	26.2	203	32.9
Hired								
Total A-E	9	0.3	1237	46.3	8	0.3	1418	53.1
Level A	4	0.4	519	48	5	0.5	554	51.2
Level B	2	0.2	444	44.1	3	0.3	557	55.4
Level C	2	0.6	149	45.3	0	0	178	54.1
Level D	1	0.8	62	50.8	0	0	59	48.4
Level E	0	0	63	47.4	0	0	70	52.6

TABLE 31 2021-24 CONVERSION RATES FROM (A) APPLIED TO SHORT-LISTED AND (B) SHORT-LISTED TO HIRED FOR ACADEMIC ROLES BY LEVEL

Note: TGD = Trans & Gender Diverse; HC = Headcount; ND = Not Disclosed; Data verified by HR Workforce Information & Reporting 29 September 2025 and correct at the time of verification.

A

Conversion	TGD	Men	ND	Women
Applied to Short-Listed	% HC	% HC	% HC	% HC
Level A	17.5	14.3	41.5	22.6
Level B	23.9	15.6	28.9	24.2
Level C	22.2	14.7	32.9	26.4
Level D	66.7	16.2	46.4	28.3
Level E	14.3	21.9	61.1	32.4

B

Conversion Short-Listed to Hired	TGD	Men	ND	Women
	% HC	% HC	% HC	% HC
Level A	36.4	36.8	5.2	42.0
Level B	7.1	29.7	2.7	33.2
Level C	25.0	25.6	0.0	29.7
Level D	25.0	30.2	0.0	34.7
Level E	0.0	25.0	0.0	34.5

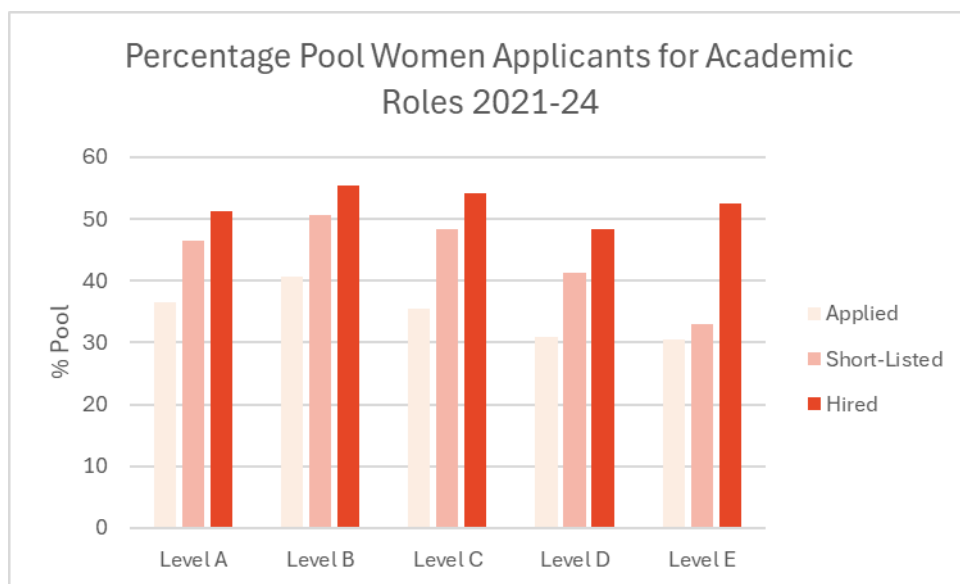


FIGURE 6 AVERAGE 2021-24 PROGRESSION OF WOMEN THROUGH RECRUITMENT STAGES FOR ACADEMIC ROLES BY LEVEL

Note: Data verified by HR Workforce Information & Reporting 29 September 2025 and correct at the time of verification.

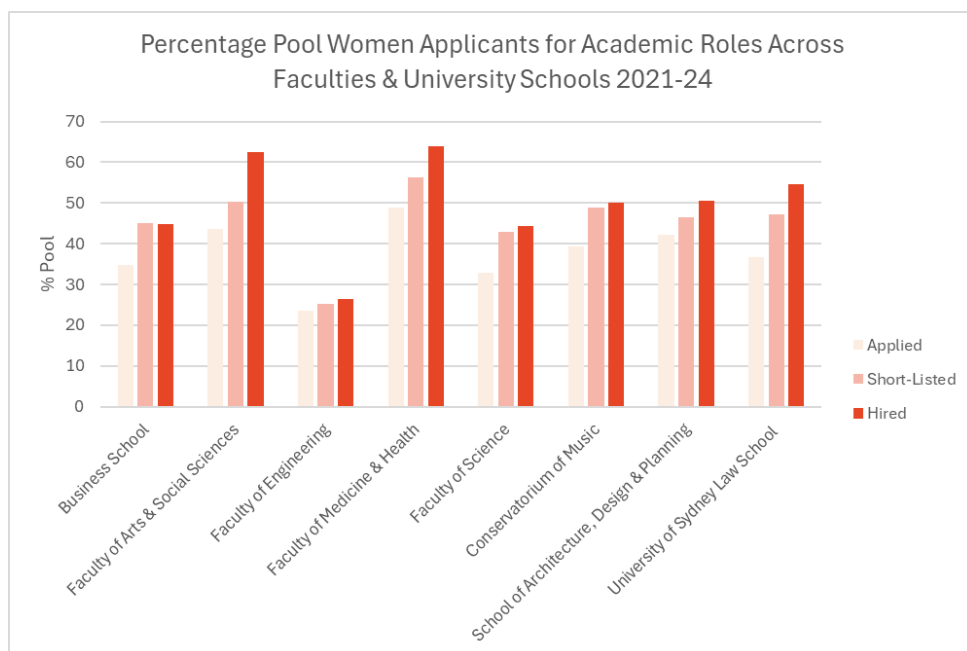


FIGURE 7 AVERAGE 2021-24 PROGRESSION OF WOMEN THROUGH RECRUITMENT STAGES FOR ACADEMIC ROLES BY FACULTY/UNIVERSITY SCHOOL

Note: Data verified by HR Workforce Information & Reporting 29 September 2025 and correct at the time of verification.

TABLE 32 PROGRESSION AND CONVERSION RATES OF WOMEN THROUGH RECRUITMENT STAGES FOR ACADEMIC ROLES BY LEVEL AND FACULTY/UNIVERSITY SCHOOL

Note: HC = Headcount; TGD = Trans & Gender Diverse and gender not disclosed not shown; Data verified by HR Workforce Information & Reporting 29 September 2025 and correct at the time of verification.

	Women Applied		Women Short-Listed		Women Hired		Conversion Rate Applied to Short-Listed		Conversion Rate Short-Listed to Hired	
	HC	%	HC	%	HC	%	Women	Men	Women	Men
Business School A-E	1596	34.9	242	45	56	44.8	15.2	9.6	23.1	25.0
Level A	80	38.3	28	43.1	15	46.9	35.0	29.4	53.6	45.9
Level B	931	37.9	130	47.5	26	46.4	14.0	9.2	20.0	22.1
Level C	334	33.7	43	46.7	≤6	42.9	12.9	7.3	14.0	17.0
Level D	168	27.5	25	38.5	7	43.8	14.9	7.8	28.0	27.3
Level E	83	26.6	16	38.1	≤6	28.6	19.3	11.0	12.5	21.7
Faculty of Arts & Social Sciences A-E	1852	43.7	350	50.2	130	62.5	18.9	13.5	37.1	25.4
Level A	463	50	113	63.1	58	69.9	24.4	13.8	51.3	39.0
Level B	1235	43.4	201	50.1	60	61.2	16.3	11.7	29.9	21.3
Level C	75	42.6	19	50	8	57.1	25.3	18.6	42.1	33.3
Level D	11	22	≤6	12.5	≤6	33.3	9.1	11.8	100.0	50.0
Level E	68	28.7	16	21.6	≤6	30	23.5	29.4	18.8	17.5
Faculty of Engineering A-E	1808	23.5	281	25.2	82	26.4	15.5	12.9	29.2	31.1
Level A	1080	24.2	125	24.4	43	25.4	11.6	10.8	34.4	35.2
Level B	455	25.4	99	27.7	25	25.5	21.8	19.0	25.3	29.5
Level C	198	21	33	28.2	≤6	13.3	16.7	10.6	6.1	16.9
Level D	29	13.9	10	29.4	≤6	38.5	34.5	12.5	50.0	38.1
Level E	46	16.1	14	14.4	7	43.8	30.4	18.7	50.0	28.1
Faculty of Medicine & Health A-E	5333	48.9	1830	56.2	730	64	34.3	23.4	39.9	33.1
Level A	1871	50.9	547	59.9	247	67.3	29.2	18.9	45.2	35.6
Level B	2319	50.7	804	58.9	303	63.9	34.7	23.5	37.7	33.7
Level C	802	46.4	331	54.2	121	61.4	41.3	27.7	36.6	31.0
Level D	170	38.5	70	39.8	29	53.7	41.2	35.6	41.4	28.4
Level E	171	37.6	78	40	30	62.5	45.6	28.7	38.5	29.0
Faculty of Science A-E	3833	32.8	832	43	276	44.4	21.7	13.6	33.2	33.1
Level A	1778	32.8	373	40.8	141	41.2	21.0	14.5	37.8	38.3
Level B	1354	34.3	294	47.5	86	49.4	21.7	12.3	29.3	28.6
Level C	543	30.2	113	44.1	26	43.3	20.8	11.6	23.0	24.8
Level D	96	33.9	28	49.1	11	52.4	29.2	14.5	39.3	38.5
Level E	62	25.9	24	27	12	50	38.7	31.9	50.0	26.1
Conservatorium of Music A-E	163	39.3	60	48.8	18	50	36.8	25.6	30.0	31.6
Level A	48	37.5	21	45.7	8	50	43.8	30.4	38.1	38.1
Level B	63	42	22	48.9	≤6	46.2	34.9	26.8	27.3	31.8
Level C	40	46	12	52.2	≤6	50	30.0	27.0	25.0	30.0
Level D	≤6	60	≤6	66.7	na	na	66.7	50.0	na	0.0
Level E	9	20	≤6	50	≤6	100	33.3	9.1	33.3	0.0
School of Architecture, Design & Planning A-E	763	42.1	159	46.4	50	50.5	20.8	16.7	31.4	28.0
Level A	278	49.1	72	54.6	29	61.7	25.9	20.5	40.3	29.8
Level B	199	44.4	38	44.7	14	45.2	19.1	17.8	36.8	40.5
Level C	157	37.7	25	39.7	≤6	36.4	15.9	14.3	16.0	19.4
Level D	80	32	15	34.9	≤6	25	18.8	15.9	13.3	19.2
Level E	49	37.1	9	45	≤6	50	18.4	9.6	11.1	14.3
University of Sydney Law School	182	36.8	52	47.3	18	54.6	28.6	16.4	34.6	31.3
Level A	17	37	≤6	44.4	≤6	60	23.5	18.5	75.0	40.0
Level B	65	37.8	26	42.6	10	52.6	40.0	28.6	38.5	32.1
Level C	73	36.1	7	41.2	≤6	33.3	9.6	8.1	14.3	20.0
Level D	20	35.7	10	71.4	≤6	66.7	50.0	11.1	20.0	25.0
Level E	7	36.8	≤6	55.6	≤6	66.7	71.4	11.1	40.0	100.0

TABLE 33 PERCENTAGE POOL THROUGH THE STAGES OF RECRUITMENT FOR ACADEMIC ROLES 2021-24: GENDER + FIRST NATIONS

Note: HC = Headcount; TGD = Trans & Gender Diverse; ND = Not Disclosed; Data verified by HR Workforce Information & Reporting 30 September 2025 and correct at the time of verification.

	TGD		Men		ND		Women	
	HC	% Pool	HC	% Pool	HC	% Pool	HC	% Pool
Applied								
Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander	≤6	0.0	81	0.2	≤6	0.0	118	0.3
Not Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander	204	0.5	22598	51.7	254	0.6	13291	30.4
Not Disclosed	28	0.1	3286	7.5	894	2.0	2953	6.8
Short-Listed								
Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander	0	0.0	33	0.4	0	0.0	81	1.0
Not Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander	42	0.5	2659	31.4	26	0.3	2344	27.6
Not Disclosed	10	0.1	1262	14.9	453	5.3	1569	18.5
Hired								
Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander	0	0.0	17	0.6	0	0.0	36	1.3
Not Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander	≤6	0.2	512	19.1	≤6	0.1	548	20.5
Not Disclosed	≤6	0.1	711	26.5	≤6	0.1	837	31.3

TABLE 34 AVERAGED CONVERSION RATE FROM (A) APPLIED TO SHORT-LISTED AND (B) SHORT-LISTED TO HIRED FOR ACADEMIC ROLES 2021-24: GENDER + FIRST NATIONS

Note: TGD = Trans & Gender Diverse; ND = Not Disclosed; Data verified by HR Workforce Information & Reporting 30 September 2025 and correct at the time of verification.

A

Conversion Applied to Short-Listed	Total	TGD	Men	ND	Women
Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander	55.9	0.0	40.7	0.0	68.6
Not Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander	14.0	20.6	11.8	10.2	17.6
Not Disclosed	46.0	35.7	38.4	50.7	53.1

B

Conversion Short-Listed to Hired	Total	TGD	Men	ND	Women
Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander	46.5	na	51.5	na	44.4
Not Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander	21.1	14.3	19.3	15.4	23.4
Not Disclosed	47.2	30.0	56.3	0.9	53.3

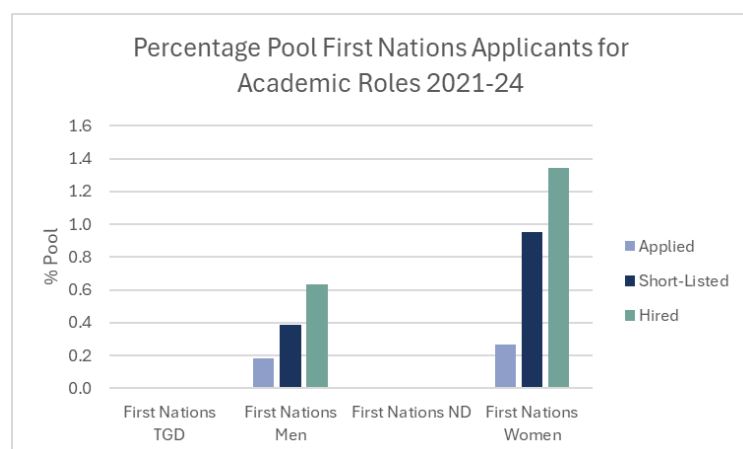


FIGURE 8 2021-24 AVERAGED PERCENTAGE POOL PROGRESSION OF FIRST NATIONS CANDIDATES THROUGH RECRUITMENT STAGES FOR ACADEMIC ROLES

Note: TGD = Trans & Gender Diverse; ND = Not Disclosed; Data verified by HR Workforce Information & Reporting 30 September 2025 and correct at the time of verification.

TABLE 35 PERCENTAGE POOL THROUGH THE STAGES OF RECRUITMENT FOR ACADEMIC ROLES 2021-24: GENDER + DISABILITY

Note: HC = Headcount; TGD = Trans & Gender Diverse; ND = Not Disclosed; Data verified by HR Workforce Information & Reporting 30 September 2025 and correct at the time of verification.

		TGD		Men		ND		Women	
		HC	% Pool	HC	% Pool	HC	% Pool	HC	% Pool
Applied									
	No Disability	116	0.3	18547	42.4	120	0.3	10798	24.7
	With Disability	41	0.1	335	0.8	14	0.0	252	0.6
	Not Disclosed	77	0.2	7083	16.2	1017	2.3	5312	12.2
Short-Listed									
	No Disability	26	0.3	2380	28.1	19	0.2	2311	27.3
	With Disability	≤6	0.1	57	0.7	0	0.0	79	0.9
	Not Disclosed	20	0.2	1517	17.9	460	5.4	1604	18.9
Hired									
	No Disability	≤6	0.0	606	22.6	≤6	0.1	713	26.6
	With Disability	≤6	0.1	18	0.7	0	0.0	29	1.1
	Not Disclosed	≤6	0.2	616	23.0	≤6	0.2	679.0	25.4

TABLE 36 AVERAGED CONVERSION RATE FROM (A) APPLIED TO SHORT-LISTED AND (B) SHORT-LISTED TO HIRED FOR ACADEMIC ROLES 2021-24: GENDER + DISABILITY

Note: TGD = Trans & Gender Diverse; ND = Not Disclosed; Data verified by HR Workforce Information & Reporting 30 September 2025 and correct at the time of verification.

A	Conversion Applied to Short-Listed	Total	TGD	Men	ND	Women
	No Disability	16.0	22.4	12.8	15.8	21.4
	With Disability	22.1	14.6	17.0	0.0	31.3
	Not Disclosed	26.7	26.0	21.4	45.2	30.2
B	Conversion Short-Listed to Hired	Total	TGD	Men	ND	Women
	No Disability	27.9	3.8	25.5	15.8	30.9
	With Disability	34.5	33.3	31.6	na	36.7
	Not Disclosed	36.3	30.0	40.6	1.1	42.3

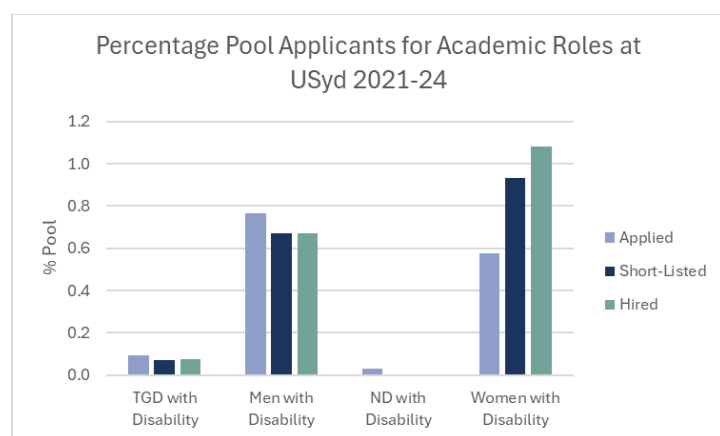


FIGURE 9 AVERAGED PERCENTAGE POOL PROGRESSION OF CANDIDATES WITH DISABILITY THROUGH RECRUITMENT STAGES FOR ACADEMIC ROLES

Note: TGD = Trans & Gender Diverse; ND = Not Disclosed; Data verified by HR Workforce Information & Reporting 30 September 2025 and correct at the time of verification.

TABLE 37 PERCENTAGE POOL THROUGH THE STAGES OF RECRUITMENT FOR ACADEMIC ROLES 2021-24: GENDER + COUNTRY OF BIRTH

Note: HC = Headcount; TGD = Trans & Gender Diverse; ND = Not Disclosed; Data verified by HR Workforce Information & Reporting 30 September 2025 and correct at the time of verification.

	TGD		Men		ND		Women	
	HC	% Pool	HC	% Pool	HC	% Pool	HC	% Pool
Applied								
Born in Australia	54	0.1	2914	6.7	98	0.2	3409	7.8
Born outside Australia	178	0.4	22851	52.3	450	1.0	12678	29.0
Not Disclosed	≤6	0.0	200	0.5	603	1.4	275	0.6
Short-Listed								
Born in Australia	15	0.2	1077	12.7	11	0.1	1671	19.7
Born outside Australia	35	0.4	2714	32.0	44	0.5	2139	25.2
Not Disclosed	≤6	0.0	163	1.9	424	5.0	184	2.2
Hired								
Born in Australia	≤6	0.1	441	16.5	≤6	0.1	709	26.5
Born outside Australia	≤6	0.1	688	25.7	≤6	0.1	587	21.9
Not Disclosed	≤6	0.1	111	4.1	≤6	0.0	125	4.7

TABLE 38 AVERAGED CONVERSION RATE FROM (A) APPLIED TO SHORT-LISTED AND (B) SHORT-LISTED TO HIRED FOR ACADEMIC ROLES 2021-24: GENDER + COUNTRY OF BIRTH

Note: TGD = Trans & Gender Diverse; ND = Not Disclosed; Data verified by HR Workforce Information & Reporting 30 September 2025 and correct at the time of verification.

A

Conversion Applied to Short-Listed	Total	TGD	Men	ND	Women
Born in Australia	42.8	27.8	37.0	11.2	49.0
Born outside Australia	13.6	19.7	11.9	9.8	16.9
Not Disclosed	71.6	100.0	81.5	70.3	66.9

B

Conversion Short-Listed to Hired	Total	TGD	Men	ND	Women
Born in Australia	41.7	26.7	40.9	36.4	42.4
Born outside Australia	26.0	8.6	25.4	6.8	27.4
Not Disclosed	30.9	100.0	68.1	0.2	67.9

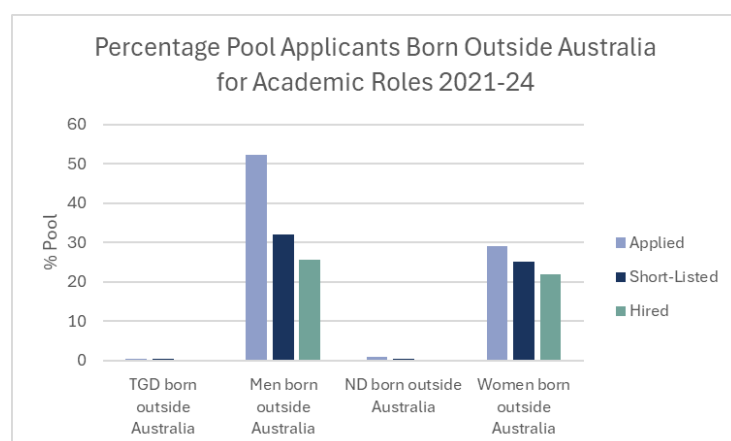


FIGURE 10 AVERAGED PERCENTAGE POOL PROGRESSION OF CANDIDATES BORN OUTSIDE AUSTRALIA THROUGH RECRUITMENT STAGES FOR ACADEMIC ROLES

Note: TGD = Trans & Gender Diverse; ND = Not Disclosed; Data verified by HR Workforce Information & Reporting 30 September 2025 and correct at the time of verification.

TABLE 39 2021-24 RESIGNATION RATES FOR ACADEMIC MEN AND WOMEN ON CONTINUING CONTRACTS

Note: HC = Headcount; TGD and ND not shown due to small numbers; Data verified by HR Workforce Information & Reporting 30 September 2025 and correct at the time of verification.

	HC Continuing Academic Men	HC Continuing Academic Men Resignations	% Resignations Continuing Academic Men	HC Continuing Academic Women	HC Continuing Academic Women Resignations	% Resignations Continuing Academic Women
2021	954	20	2.1%	763	36	4.7%
2022	946	36	3.8%	782	29	3.7%
2023	976	24	2.5%	822	23	2.8%
2024	1008	33	3.3%	877	27	3.1%
Average 21-24			2.9%			3.6%

TABLE 40 2021-24 UNIVERSITY RESIGNATION RATES FOR ACADEMIC MEN AND WOMEN ON CONTINUING CONTRACTS BY LEVEL

Note: TGD and ND not shown due to small numbers; Data verified by HR Workforce Information & Reporting 30 September 2025 and correct at the time of verification.

	Average 2021-24 % Resignations	
	Men	Women
Level A-C	3.1%	3.5%
Level D-E	2.5%	3.0%

“I still see myself working at the University of Sydney in two years’ time”

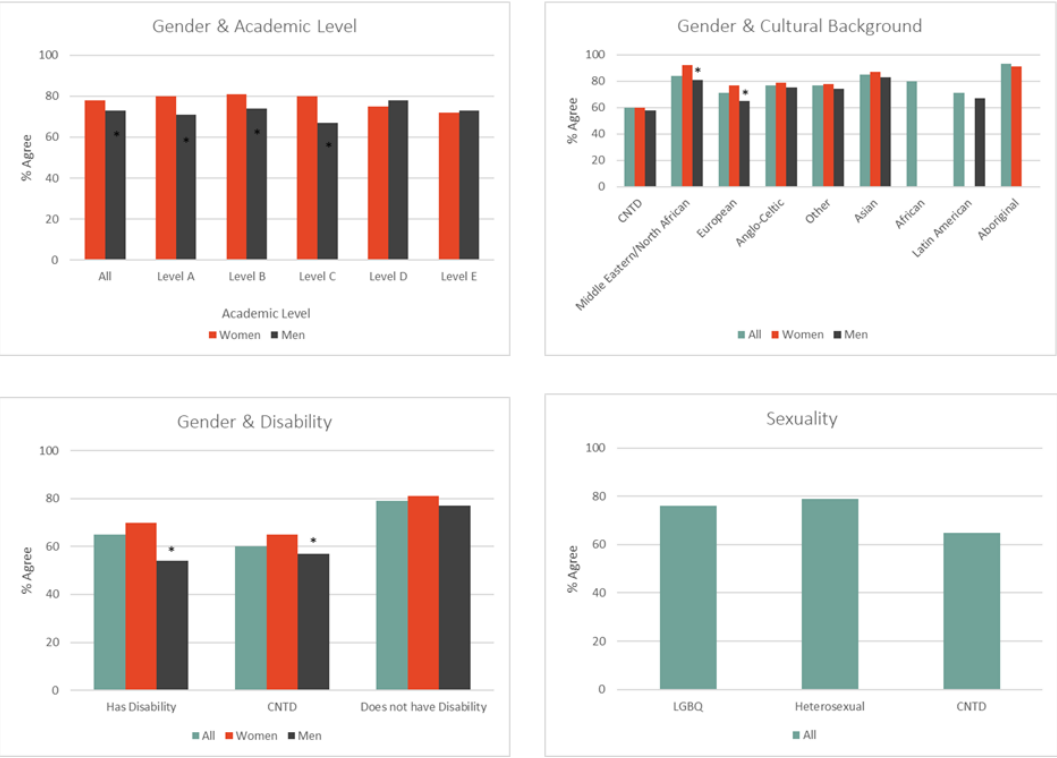


FIGURE 11 RESPONSES FROM ACADEMIC STAFF ON CONTINUING CONTRACTS TO 2025 SYDNEY LISTENS QUESTION RELATED TO INTENTION TO STAY BY GENDER AND ACADEMIC LEVEL

Note: * = ≥ 5 pt difference between men and women; CNTD = Choose not to disclose

TABLE 41 GENDER-INTERSECTIONAL BREAKDOWN OF RESIGNATIONS OF ACADEMIC STAFF ON CONTINUING EMPLOYMENT CONTRACTS

Note: Data verified by HR Workforce Information & Reporting 1 October 2025 and correct at the time of verification.

	% Resignations Continuing Academic Men	% Resignations Continuing Academic Women
First Nations	6.3%	9.5%
Born outside Australia	1.7%	2.1%
Born in Australia	4.1%	4.7%
With Disability	3.1%	4.8%
With No Disability	2.7%	3.6%

1.3.1.6 Uncertainty arising from the roll-out of the new Academic Excellence Framework

During 2023-2024 the University worked with staff to co-design a new Academic Excellence Framework (AEF) with supporting evidence menus. The AEF is designed to clarify the University’s expectations of academic staff at all performance levels and academic tracks, while also making it simpler for staff to navigate, and be supported through, their academic careers. In 2025 the AEF was launched as a tool to support career planning and goal setting during the AP&D process. In 2026 the AEF will be used to underpin promotion applications and decisions.

The AEF supports excellence and defines expectations across Education, Research, Service, and Collegiality, embedding inclusive behaviours and valuing service. Faculties have trained AP&D Advisers to support staff. However, feedback from the 2025 Sydney Listens Survey and SAGE Cygnet and Silver Focus Groups (notably collected prior to the rollout of the framework in late 2025) showed mixed awareness and scepticism (Table 42).

Staff also reported varied AP&D experiences unrelated to the introduction of the AEF, highlighting the need to better equip advisers and managers in general and more clearly communicate the purpose of the AP&D process to staff (Table 43).

TABLE 42 THEMES ARISING FROM 2025 SYDNEY LISTENS AND SAGE SILVER FOCUS GROUPS RELATING TO THE AEF

Note: 2025SL = Arising from thematic analysis of free text comments in the 2025 Sydney Listens All Staff Engagement Survey; SSFG = Arising from thematic analysis of SAGE Silver Focus Groups. Quotes are from SAGE Silver Focus Groups only and are used with permission.

Working Well	Working Less Well	Recommendations
Inclusive and Consultative Development The AEF was noted for being more consultative than other major initiatives, with staff feeling more involved in its development and rollout. (2025SL) Clarity and Structure in Advancement Some staff appreciated the clearer expectations and structured pathways the AEF provides for academic advancement. (2025SL) There were signs that the AEF will better support education-focused staff, including mentoring and clearer promotion criteria. (2025SL) Cultural Shift Toward Collegiality The addition of collegiality as a formal criterion was seen as a positive cultural shift, promoting collaboration and respectful engagement. (2025SL) Recognition of Diverse Contributions The framework was viewed by some as a step toward improving workplace culture, accountability, and recognition of diverse contributions. (2025SL)	Awareness and Accessibility Gaps Some staff were unaware of the new Academic Excellence Framework (AEF), while others expressed concern that it may further disadvantage those already facing systemic barriers. (SSFG, 2025SL) <i>“I’m trying to work out how on earth I’m going to write a promotion case under the new framework, which looks absolutely overwhelming. Also, as an education-focused academic, I’ve had a very different pathway to others.” – C36</i> <i>“I think we’re going to drown in it. That’s my frank assessment ... once you itemise things, which is what they’ve done in the AEF, it’s very hard to fit. Their thought was, we are giving such a diverse menu to you, you should be able to choose, But there’ll be a lot more people, who are not women and not culturally diverse, who will be able to tick the boxes.” — C38</i> Ambiguity and Demotivation Staff felt uncertain about what constitutes “exceptional” performance under the new framework, leading to demotivation and anxiety about future progression. (2025SL) Misalignment with Workload Realities The framework was seen as out of touch with actual workload pressures, particularly in education-focused and clinical roles. (2025SL)	Staff Engagement and Framework Development Continue to engage and inform staff about the AEF, its intentions, and use as a supportive tool for their career planning and development. Equity Monitoring and Analysis Monitor perceptions and use of AEF across academic streams through a gender-intersectional lens (to identify and address any remaining equity gaps in training and supported use of the AEF).

TABLE 43 THEMES ARISING FROM 2025 SYDNEY LISTENS AND SAGE SILVER FOCUS GROUPS RELATING TO AP&Ds

Note: 2025SL = Arising from thematic analysis of free text comments in the 2025 Sydney Listens All Staff Engagement Survey; SSFG = Arising from thematic analysis of SAGE Silver Focus Groups. Quotes are from SAGE Silver Focus Groups only and are used with permission.

Working Well	Working Less Well	Recommendations
Supportive Structures Some Faculties run programs where staff are teamed with advisers to help them through the AP&D process (including relative to opportunity considerations). (SSFG) Value of External and Objective Perspectives AP&D was seen by some as a useful framework for discussing career aspirations, especially when supervisors took the time to understand individual goals. (2025SL) External advisers can offer fresh ideas and a more objective view of achievements, complementing internal guidance. (SSFG) <i>"The guidance from my manager is helpful and targeted as she is aware of my background and current situation but always will include her perspective and is less objective. I noticed with having an external person as part of the AP&D that they presented new ideas to help with progression and also objective perspective on my achievements which was helpful." — C04</i>	Perceived Limitations of the AP&D System The AP&D system was felt by some to be outdated and overly focused on metrics like publication counts (described as superficial and more about self-congratulation than meaningful career planning). (2025SL) Many academic staff viewed AP&D as a tick-box exercise with little relevance to actual career development or performance improvement (goals were often forgotten, not revisited until the next cycle; reviews were irregular or superficial; some staff reported not having AP&D discussions for years or receiving vague, unhelpful feedback). (2025SL) Barriers for Staff with Caring Responsibilities (note: These will be explored further in Key Barrier 2: Parents & Carers) Parents and staff with additional caring responsibilities find it difficult to put in the extra hours, often associated with career development, or attend work-related events – especially if they involve travel. (SSFG) <i>"Having children and significant caring responsibilities makes it very difficult to travel internationally to develop the types of international connections (and referees) that seem to be so essential to achieving promotion at Level D and above." — C25</i> The impact of caring for a child with disability is not adequately captured in current frameworks. (SSFG) <i>"The question is always 'Do you have disability'? Well, I don't have disability, but where do you put [the impact of having a child with disability]. No, I'm not taking time off from work, I'm still doing my 7 and a half hours. But we all know that a lot of work happens outside of these working hours. Whether it should or not is a moot point." — C38</i>	Improve AP&D Review Quality Raise visibility with managers of tools and training to conduct effective AP&D reviews (encourage consistent, constructive feedback and career conversations). Goal Alignment and Career Planning Ensure AP&D goals are realistic and aligned with actual responsibilities (proactively utilise the AEF to link annual and long-term career planning). Reduce Administrative Burden Streamline systems and processes linked to AEF and AP&Ds (e.g., IRMA, workload models) to minimise documentation and administrative burden.

1.3.1.7 Uneven access to mentoring and development

Promotion information sessions are offered across all Faculties, but only Science, Medicine & Health, and Business provide deeper promotion mentoring and career planning.

This uneven support risks inequities, especially for marginalised staff with lower promotion success (see section 1.3.1.2).

Staff in the 2025 Sydney Listens Survey and SAGE Silver Focus Groups stressed the importance of mentoring, although experiences reported by staff varied (Table 44).

There were also perceptions of value hierarchies, where education-focused academics felt less valued than research-only staff.

TABLE 44 THEMES ARISING FROM 2025 SYDNEY LISTENS AND SAGE SILVER FOCUS GROUPS RELATING TO MENTORING & DEVELOPMENT

Note: 2025SL = Arising from thematic analysis of free text comments in the 2025 Sydney Listens All Staff Engagement Survey; SSFG = Arising from thematic analysis of SAGE Silver Focus Groups. Quotes are from SAGE Silver Focus Groups only and are used with permission.

Working Well	Working Less Well	Recommendations
Mentorship for Under-represented and Early-Career Staff Mentorship programs were recognised as valuable, especially when tailored to early-career academics, women, and under-represented groups. These programs can significantly influence career progression and confidence. (2025SL, SSFG) <i>"That was one of the programs which probably resulted in me applying for promotion. Otherwise, I think I would never do it. That has definitely been helpful over the last few years. There is a lot of visibility in terms of activities."</i> — C38	Mentoring Gaps and Needs Mentoring was uneven and often informal, leaving many staff unsupported. Staff expressed a desire for formal mentoring programs, especially for early-career academics. (2025SL, SSFG) <i>"I would like to take part in a mentoring program focusing on culturally diverse people. Outside AP&D I haven't taken part in a mentoring program, I was not aware these existed."</i> — C03 Managerial Support Career progression can be heavily influenced by the amount of support provided by managers. (SSFG, 2025SL) <i>"I did feel relatively well supported at times depending on who my line manager was. With a good boss, I was given opportunity ... Then I've had other bosses who have not done that at all and have not been very interested in my career progression or just pay lip service to it."</i> — C36 Barriers for Racially Diverse Staff (note: These will be explored further in Key Barrier 3: Racial Inclusion, Voice & Visibility) Racially diverse staff faced additional barriers, including lower confidence in pursuing promotions. (SSFG) <i>"I'm from another country, and you always feel, unfortunately, that you are a bit at another level in terms of how you express yourself, your language, your understanding of the culture here. So that's another dimension that plays when you are trying to apply for promotion."</i> — C35 Lack of role models makes it difficult for racially diverse staff to envision long-term academic careers. (SSFG) <i>"If I just take a snapshot of my own faculty, I'm struggling to find a diverse leader. So how do I actually see myself 20 years from now, how do I contribute? I'm disconnected, so I'm actually then going to go into private practice and do my own stuff rather than staying in academia, because I'm not seeing anybody who is there."</i> — C38	Expand and Equitably Deliver Mentoring Opportunities Develop consistent partnerships between the Academic Promotions Unit and Faculties and University Schools to offer mentoring programs beyond promotion information sessions (equitable access across the University). Seek to find pathways to work around potential low uptake from senior staff mentors. Utilise the alumni network to provide mentoring opportunities. Raise visibility among academic staff of the Women@Sydney Staff Network's small group mentoring program. Support for Fixed-Term and Casual Staff Offer career coaching sessions and development planning workshops to fixed-term and casual employees.

	Structural Challenges for Non-Traditional Academic Roles Education-focused academics and those in central roles not tied to a faculty felt stuck in limbo, with limited pathways to continuing roles and recognition. (SSFG, 2025SL) <i>"The education-focused academics are not properly visible. I think that's the word, we're not that visible. And there's no people with our same trajectory to support us." — C35</i>	
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1.3.1.8 Inconsistent understanding and application of Relative to Opportunity

Relative to Opportunity (RTO) is recognised in appointment, probation, confirmation, and promotion. For senior promotion panels (levels D and E), a representative from HR is present where possible on each Central Promotions Committee with a specific brief to ensure that DEI principles and RTO considerations are correctly applied in evaluations of promotion. For Faculty level promotion committees (Levels B and C) this is usually the role of the Academic Board Nominee, although not explicitly stated, providing an opportunity to build this more clearly into their role expectations.

A survey of recent promotion committee members (Table 45) indicated generally positive views of panel processes, with most trained in bias, inclusivity, and RTO. However, challenges remain for some in interpreting RTO submissions, ensuring diverse panel representation, and improving guidance and feedback to enhance equity and transparency.

Furthermore, some staff are unaware of RTO, fear stigma, or are unsure how committees apply RTO (Table 46).

TABLE 45 THEMES ARISING FROM STAFF WITH PROMOTION PANEL EXPERIENCE

Note: SSFG = Arising from thematic analysis of SAGE Silver Focus Group for staff with experience on academic promotion panels. Quotes are used with permission.

Working Well	Working less well	Recommendations
Positive Panel Experiences and Inclusive Practices About half the participants described their panel experiences using terms like fair, ethical, and respectful. (SSFG) <i>"I can only speak on behalf of the panel that I'm on. But I thought the process was ethical and thorough and professional."</i> — C30 Almost all participants recalled receiving resources and/or training around bias and inclusivity, with most noting that these topics were actively discussed by panels. (SSFG) <i>"The panel chair raised this topic, discussed it at length and invited panel members to reflect on these processes as we worked our way through applications."</i> — C62 RTO Provisions RTO provisions were generally well understood and applied by panel members. (SSFG) <i>"We have been advised to quantify RTO considerations whenever possible. For example, if a staff member had been working 0.8 FTE, we would multiply their contributions by 1.25 across all areas when considering their productivity and workload. If they were unable to carry out research for a year due to, say, illness, but contributed to teaching and service, we'd similarly scale up their research output to align with the amount of time served since last promotion."</i> — C34	Inconsistent Application of Bias and Inclusivity Principles Bias and inclusivity were not always explicitly discussed during panel processes; it often relied on the chair or panel members bringing their own lived experience. (SSFG) <i>"It is explained, however it does rely heavily on panel members to also have insight ... for example, lived experience may be shared with other panel members, where appropriate, to provide a more nuanced perspective and appreciation for areas of equity and inclusion."</i> — C57 Challenges in Applying RTO Consistently Some participants found it difficult to properly consider RTO submissions due to the complexity and variability of circumstances. Candidate submissions often lacked clarity or were overly complicated, making consistent evaluation challenging. (SSFG) <i>"When I read RTO accounts, I'm seeking guidance from the applicant on how to walk in their shoes. Panels need guidance on 'events' and 'ongoing conditions/life' that may have affected a candidate's trajectory. We don't yet ask the right questions about this in the 'special considerations' section. It's just vague."</i> — C53 <i>"There was no concrete guidance, and indeed in conversation there is huge differences in approach regarding reduced work (e.g., should someone employed half-time do half the amount, or wait for twice as many years till they have done the usual FTE period)?"</i> — C59 Gendered Barriers in Promotion Processes Concerns were raised regarding the lack of women candidates noted as resulting from the neglect of systemic barriers (e.g. high-load roles which were seen as typically assigned to women. These roles were considered to be undervalued. (SSFG) <i>"The most glaring observation I had walking out of the promotion panel process was that not a single female candidate had applied for or was</i>	Improve RTO Tools and Guidance Refine, test, and make the Full-Time Equivalent Year (FTEY) calculator available to staff (to improve equity and consistency of RTO considerations). Provide different and more detailed RTO case studies to better educate panel members and candidates. <i>"No one likes talking about disability or life events that impact work, but it would be helpful to give some case studies beyond child rearing and vague descriptions of illness or life events."</i> — C53 Offer clearer instruction and support for candidates completing RTO submissions (to help panels better understand individual circumstances). <i>"I think there needs to be clear guidance provided to applicants, so they understand 'how' to effectively write their special circumstances/RTO piece in the application, and guidance given to Heads of Schools about addressing this important aspect in their reports."</i> — C58 <i>"We don't actually give [candidates] a lot of coaching. I've seen some extremely convoluted performance-related opportunity statements, because I think there's a lot of emotion in them, you know people often reliving something traumatic."</i> — C31 Training and Panel Composition Training in bias, inclusivity, and RTO for panel members was supported, although concerns were raised about workload and training fatigue (suggestion: include mock panels as a training component).

	<i>being considered for promotion to Level D. In my view, this is a deeply concerning reflection of our institutional culture and leadership. Women are often expected to take on high-load, student-focused or administrative roles that are undervalued in promotion decisions and leave less time for research or strategic leadership activities that are more directly rewarded." — C51</i> <i>"Panels seem to look for a certain style which is often gendered. They want applicants to be confident, making large claims, and showing individual leadership [e.g., 'what project did you drive?']. There is less value on someone who ascribes things to the group ('we did' versus 'I led')." — C59</i>	<i>"I recommend that completion of diversity and inclusion training within a reasonable timeframe (e.g., the past three years) be a mandatory requirement for serving on promotions panels ... I also suggest that the training include an in-person component. Many academics are significantly overloaded ... When training is presented only as an e-module, there is a risk that they will rush through it without fully engaging with or internalising the content." — C51</i> Ensure panel members come from diverse backgrounds and understand how cultural norms may affect how candidates present themselves. Feedback and Support for Applicants Provide better feedback to unsuccessful candidates (to reduce perceptions of bias and improve future applications), and successful candidates (to support future growth). <i>"One thing that's really struck me is how poorly written some of the applications are. I know that people, when they're unsuccessful, will come away thinking that there's been bias ... Obviously, it's a very emotional process, so perhaps more work around unsuccessful candidates with some really meaningful feedback about how to put together a successful application." — C30</i>
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TABLE 46 THEMES ARISING FROM 2025 SYDNEY LISTENS AND SAGE SILVER FOCUS GROUPS RELATING TO RTO

Note: 2025SL = Arising from thematic analysis of free text comments in the 2025 Sydney Listens All Staff Engagement Survey; SSFG = Arising from thematic analysis of SAGE Silver Focus Groups. Quotes are from SAGE Silver Focus Groups only and are used with permission.

Working Well	Working Less Well	Recommendations
Recognition of Diverse Career Pathways There was support for more diverse approaches to promotion, with RTO seen as a way to level the playing field and provide fairer opportunities. (2025SL) RTO was acknowledged as a valuable framework for recognising diverse career trajectories and contributions, especially for staff who missed early career achievements due to personal or systemic barriers, including women and underrepresented groups. (2025SL) Variation in workload and responsibilities should be acknowledged when evaluating achievements, and RTO is seen as a mechanism to do this fairly. (2025SL)	Limitations and Misunderstandings of RTO Frameworks RTO frameworks were seen as overly focused on parenting, often failing to account for other real-world barriers such as disability, caregiving, or systemic exclusion. (2025SL) Some staff viewed RTO as a symbolic gesture rather than a functional mechanism for equity in career progression. (2025SL) Concerns About Transparency and Usability Staff expressed confusion and scepticism about RTO submissions in the promotion process, raising concerns about transparency and equity. (SSFG, 2025SL) <i>"I have been advised to consider a promotion, but it is like writing a grant application, which is a large time commitment. I have attended webinars and ... there seemed to be a lot of confusion about the [relative to opportunity program] at that seminar and the answers didn't give me a lot of faith that I could successfully apply." — C04</i> <i>"I would like to see greater transparency around how 'special circumstances' are evaluated. Is there a standard rubric? Is there a place where the panel has to specifically articulate how and whether it was taken into account?" — C25</i>	Strengthening RTO Implementation and Understanding Develop clear, consistent guidelines for how RTO is applied, measured, and interpreted across faculties and disciplines (include case studies and examples to illustrate how RTO can be used to recognise diverse career paths and contributions; explicitly include disability, chronic illness, caring responsibilities beyond children, cultural and community obligations, and systemic disadvantage or discrimination). Embed RTO in career conversations (encourage managers and AP&D Advisers to discuss RTO sensitively and proactively during AP&D and promotion planning; use RTO to help staff set realistic goals and identify appropriate support or adjustments). Introduce feedback mechanisms for staff to report how RTO was applied in their promotion or performance review (conduct regular reviews to ensure RTO is being used equitably).

1.3.2 Barriers for Professional Staff

1.3.2.1 Representation of men

Since 2021, men in professional roles increased by 1.2%, mostly at senior levels (Table 47). Men now make up one-third of professional staff, although gender-balance is reached only at Senior Professional Staff (SPS) Levels C–D.

TABLE 47 PERCENT CHANGE IN THE PERCENTAGE PROFESSIONAL MEN EMPLOYED BY THE UNIVERSITY OF SYDNEY 2021-2025

Note: Snapshots taken as at 31 March each year. HC = Headcount; HEO = Higher Education Employee level; SPS = Senior Professional Staff; Data verified by HR Workforce Information & Reporting 1 October 2025 and correct at the time of verification.

	2021	2025	%Δ Men
Total Professional Men	33% (HC: 1531)	33.4% (HC: 2031)	1.2%
HEO 1-4	31.9% (HC: 120)	30.7% (HC: 133)	-3.8%
HEO 5-7	30.2% (HC: 812)	30.1% (HC: 1019)	-0.3%
HEO 8-10	36.4% (HC: 406)	38.2% (HC: 638)	4.9%
SPSA-B	35.8% (HC: 86)	36.3% (HC: 126)	1.4%
SPSC-D	50.4% (HC: 69)	43.7 (HC: 69)	-13.3%

Representation gaps persist among professional staff. First Nations staff are few and increasingly under-represented at senior levels (Table 48). Staff born outside Australia show stable representation, although men are slightly enriched in the senior staff cohort and women under-represented relative to their respective workforce shares. Noting that disability is self-disclosed in Workday - meaning actual numbers could be higher - staff with disability maintain stable representation across levels, aligned with their low overall workforce share.

TABLE 48 WORKFORCE REPRESENTATION OF PROFESSIONAL MEN AND WOMEN AT THE INTERSECTIONS OF FIRST NATIONS, COUNTRY OF BIRTH, OR DISABILITY

NOTE: Snapshots taken as at 31 March 2025. ND staff are not shown; % = % all professional staff; Data verified by HR Workforce Information & Reporting 1 October 2025 and correct at the time of verification.

	First Nations Men		First Nations Women		First Nations TGD		Men born outside Australia		Women born outside Australia		TGD born outside Australia		Men with Disability		Women with Disability		TGD with Disability	
	HC	%	HC	%	HC	%	HC	%	HC	%	HC	%	HC	%	HC	%	HC	%
All (excluding Casual)	28	0.5	47	0.8	≤6	0.02	825	13.6	1685	27.7	≤6	0.1	36	0.6	62	1.0	≤6	0.1
Full-time	24	0.5	35	0.7	≤6	0.02	779	15.3	1438	28.2	≤6	0.1	32	0.6	40	0.8	≤6	0.0
Part-time	≤6	0.4	12	1.2	0	0.00	46	4.7	247	25.2	≤6	0.1	≤6	0.4	22	2.2	≤6	0.2
Casual	21	0.5	51	1.2	≤6	0.02	684	15.8	1232	28.3	11	0.2	33	0.7	68	1.6	8	0.2
Fixed-Term	11	0.5	31	1.3	0	0.00	288	12.3	662	28.2	≤6	0.2	12	0.5	27	1.2	0	0.0
Continuing	17	0.5	16	0.4	≤6	0.03	538	14.3	1028	27.4	≤6	0.0	24	0.6	35	0.9	≤6	0.1
HEO 1-4	≤6	1.2	≤6	0.7	0	0.00	50	11.5	106	24.5	0	0.0	7	1.6	≤6	0.9	≤6	0.2
HEO 5-7	15	0.4	33	1.0	≤6	0.03	405	12.0	1011	29.8	≤6	0.1	19	0.6	38	1.1	≤6	0.1
HEO 8-10	7	0.4	8	0.5	0	0.00	277	16.6	436	26.1	0	0.0	7	0.4	16	1.0	≤6	0.1
SPS A-B	≤6	0.3	≤6	0.9	0	0.00	57	16.4	90	25.9	0	0.0	0	0.0	≤6	0.9	0	0.0
SPS C-D	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.00	26	16.4	30	18.9	0	0.0	≤6	0.6	0	0.0	0	0.0
Senior Staff	≤6	0.2	≤6	0.6	0	0.00	83	15.8	119	22.6	0	0.0	≤6	0.6	≤6	0.6	0	0.0
Management Roles	≤6	0.2	≤6	0.4	0	0.00	173	12.9	326	24.3	0	0.0	≤6	0.4	13	1.0	≤6	0.1

1.3.2.2 Recruitment barriers for men

Recruitment barriers for men in areas typically dominated by women³ may contribute to their lower representation in our professional workforce (Tables 49–50, Figure 12).

TABLE 49 GENDER PROGRESSION THROUGH THE STAGES OF RECRUITMENT FOR PROFESSIONAL ROLES BY LEVEL 2021-24

Note: HC = Headcount; TGD = Trans & Gender Diverse; ND = Not Disclosed; HEO = Higher Education Employee level; SPS = Senior Professional Staff; Data verified by HR Workforce Information & Reporting 1 October 2025 and correct at the time of verification.

Applied	TGD		Men		ND		Women	
	HC	%	HC	%	HC	%	HC	%
Total	1022	0.8	47996	38.6	2043	1.6	73251	58.9
HEO1-4	184	1.3	4767	34.3	105	0.8	8825	63.6
HEO5-7	685	0.9	27232	35.5	796	1	48070	62.6
HEO8-10	131	0.5	12466	46.3	839	3.1	13508	50.1
SPSA-B	18	0.4	2665	52.8	199	3.9	2168	42.9
SPSC-D	≤ 6	0.2	866	52.4	104	6.3	680	41.1
Short-Listed								
Total	164	0.7	7500	31.3	729	3	15588	65
HEO1-4	17	0.8	606	29.1	25	1.2	1438	68.9
HEO5-7	124	0.8	4398	29.8	265	1.8	9954	67.5
HEO8-10	22	0.4	2003	34.7	324	5.6	3419	59.3
SPSA-B	≤ 6	0.1	392	37.1	50	4.7	613	58.1
SPSC-D	0	0	101	30.6	65	19.7	164	49.7
Hired								
Total	40	0.6	2022	30.5	13	0.2	4566	68.8
HEO1-4	7	1.1	179	28.7	≤ 6	0.5	434	69.7
HEO5-7	29	0.7	1190	29	≤ 6	0.2	2873	70.1
HEO8-10	≤ 6	0.3	533	34.5	≤ 6	0.3	1003	65
SPSA-B	0	0	91	31.5	0	0	198	68.5
SPSC-D	0	0	29	33.3	0	0	58	66.7

TABLE 50 CONVERSION RATES APPLICATION TO HIRED BY GENDER FOR PROFESSIONAL ROLES BY LEVEL

Note: HC = Headcount; TGD = Trans & Gender Diverse; ND = Not Disclosed; HEO = Higher Education Employee level; SPS = Senior Professional Staff; Data verified by HR Workforce Information & Reporting 1 October 2025 and correct at the time of verification.

Conversion Applied to Short- Listed	TGD	Men	ND	Women
	% HC	% HC	% HC	% HC
Total	16.0	15.6	35.7	21.3
HEO1-4	9.2	12.7	23.8	16.3
HEO5-7	18.1	16.2	33.3	20.7
HEO8-10	16.8	16.1	38.6	25.3
SPSA-B	5.6	14.7	25.1	28.3
SPSC-D	0.0	11.7	62.5	24.1

A

³ WGEA (2019) “Gender equitable recruitment and promotion”

Conversion Short-Listed to Hired	TGD	Men	ND	Women
	% HC	% HC	% HC	% HC
Total	24.4	27.0	1.8	29.3
HEO1-4	41.2	29.5	12.0	30.2
HEO5-7	23.4	27.1	2.3	28.9
HEO8-10	18.2	26.6	1.2	29.3
SPSA-B	0.0	23.2	0.0	32.3
SPSC-D	na	28.7	0.0	35.4

B

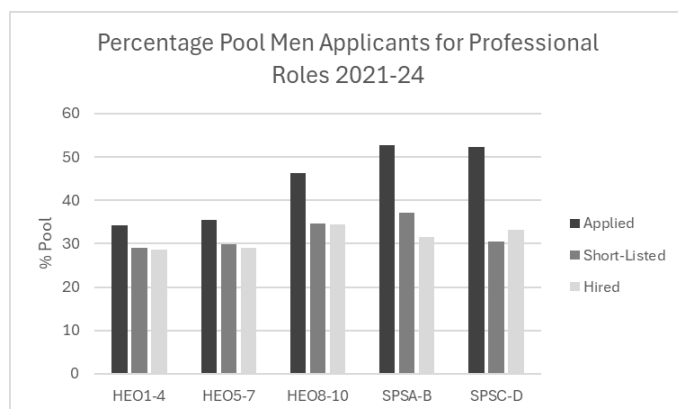


FIGURE 12 AVERAGE 2021-24 PROGRESSION OF MEN THROUGH RECRUITMENT STAGES FOR PROFESSIONAL ROLES BY LEVEL

Note: HEO = Higher Education Employee level; SPS = Senior Professional Staff; Data verified by HR Workforce Information & Reporting 1 October 2025 and correct at the time of verification.

Gender-intersectional recruitment barriers were identified. First Nations candidates for professional roles were enriched through recruitment (Tables 51–52, Figure 13), but overseas-born candidates were not (Tables 53–54, Figure 14). Applicants disclosing disability were few; women were consistently enriched, while men were slightly de-enriched (Tables 55–56, Figure 15).

TABLE 51 PERCENTAGE POOL THROUGH THE STAGES OF RECRUITMENT FOR PROFESSIONAL ROLES 2021-24: GENDER + FIRST NATIONS

Note: HC = Headcount; TGD = Trans & Gender Diverse; ND = Not Disclosed; Data verified by HR Workforce Information & Reporting 2 October 2025 and correct at the time of verification.

	TGD		Men		ND		Women	
	HC	% Pool	HC	% Pool	HC	% Pool	HC	% Pool
Applied								
Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander	40	0.0	377	0.3	11	0.0	474	0.4
Not Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander	913	0.7	41463	33.2	396	0.3	61069	48.8
Not Disclosed	84	0.1	6532	5.2	1674	1.3	12026	9.6
Short-Listed								
Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander	11	0.0	104	0.4	0	0.0	197	0.8
Not Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander	128	0.5	5071	21.0	41	0.2	10047	41.6
Not Disclosed	26	0.1	2389	9.9	710	2.9	5415	22.4
Hired								
Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander	≤6	0.0	35	0.5	0	0.0	72	1.1
Not Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander	31	0.5	1128	16.9	8	0.1	2496	37.4
Not Disclosed	8	0.1	871	13.1	≤6	0.1	2015	30.2

TABLE 52 AVERAGED CONVERSION RATE FROM (A) APPLIED TO SHORT-LISTED AND (B) SHORT-LISTED TO HIRED FOR PROFESSIONAL ROLES 2021-24: GENDER + FIRST NATIONS

Note: HC = Headcount; TGD = Trans & Gender Diverse; ND = Not Disclosed; Data verified by HR Workforce Information & Reporting 2 October 2025 and correct at the time of verification.

A	Conversion Applied to Short-Listed		Total	TGD	Men	ND	Women
	Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander		34.6	27.5	27.6	0.0	41.6
	Not Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander		14.7	14.0	12.2	10.4	16.5
	Not Disclosed		42.0	31.0	36.6	42.4	45.0
B	Conversion Short-Listed to Hired		Total	TGD	Men	ND	Women
	Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander		34.6	9.1	33.7	na	36.5
	Not Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander		24.0	24.2	22.2	19.5	24.8
	Not Disclosed		33.9	30.8	36.5	0.7	37.2

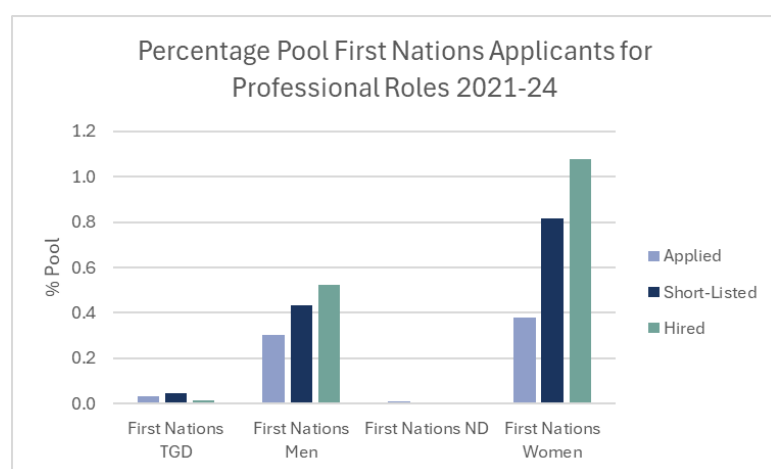


FIGURE 13 2021-24 AVERAGED PERCENTAGE POOL PROGRESSION OF FIRST NATIONS CANDIDATES THROUGH RECRUITMENT STAGES FOR PROFESSIONAL ROLES

Note: TGD = Trans & Gender Diverse; ND = Not Disclosed; Data verified by HR Workforce Information & Reporting 2 October 2025 and correct at the time of verification.

TABLE 53 PERCENTAGE POOL THROUGH THE STAGES OF RECRUITMENT FOR PROFESSIONAL ROLES 2021-24: GENDER + COUNTRY OF BIRTH

Note: HC = Headcount; TGD = Trans & Gender Diverse; ND = Not Disclosed; Data verified by HR Workforce Information & Reporting 2 October 2025 and correct at the time of verification.

	TGD		Men		ND		Women	
	HC	% Pool	HC	% Pool	HC	% Pool	HC	% Pool
Applied								
Born in Australia	605	0.5	16566	13.2	399	0.3	27439	21.9
Born outside Australia	431	0.3	31524	25.2	390	0.3	45424	36.3
Not Disclosed	≤6	0.0	282	0.2	1292	1.0	706	0.6
Short-Listed								
Born in Australia	117	0.5	3673	15.2	57	0.2	7539	31.2
Born outside Australia	47	0.2	3723	15.4	42	0.2	7736	32.0
Not Disclosed	≤6	0.0	168	0.7	652	2.7	384	1.6
Hired								
Born in Australia	34	0.5	1096	16.4	8	0.1	2424	36.3
Born outside Australia	≤6	0.1	848	12.7	≤6	0.1	1967	29.5
Not Disclosed	≤6	0.0	90	1.3	0	0.0	192	2.9

TABLE 54 AVERAGED CONVERSION RATE FROM (A) APPLIED TO SHORT-LISTED AND (B) SHORT-LISTED TO HIRED FOR PROFESSIONAL ROLES 2021-24: GENDER + COUNTRY OF BIRTH

Note: TGD = Trans & Gender Diverse; ND = Not Disclosed; Data verified by HR Workforce Information & Reporting 2 October 2025 and correct at the time of verification.

A	Conversion Applied to Short-Listed	Total	TGD	Men	ND	Women
	Born in Australia	25.3	19.3	22.2	14.3	27.5
	Born outside Australia	14.8	10.9	11.8	10.8	17.0
	Not Disclosed	52.8	100.0	59.6	50.5	54.4

B	Conversion Short-Listed to Hired	Total	TGD	Men	ND	Women
	Born in Australia	31.3	29.1	29.8	14.0	32.2
	Born outside Australia	24.5	10.6	22.8	11.9	25.4
	Not Disclosed	23.5	100.0	53.6	0.0	50.0

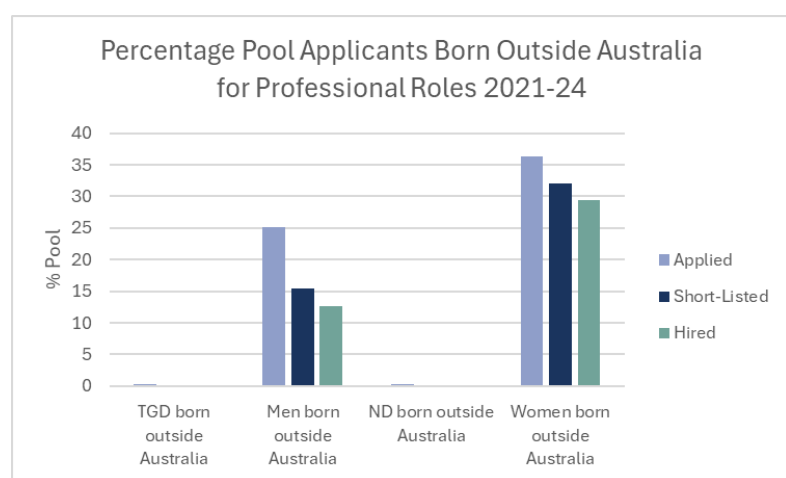


FIGURE 14 AVERAGED PERCENTAGE POOL PROGRESSION OF CANDIDATES BORN OUTSIDE AUSTRALIA THROUGH RECRUITMENT STAGES FOR PROFESSIONAL ROLES

Note: TGD = Trans & Gender Diverse; ND = Not Disclosed; Data verified by HR Workforce Information & Reporting 2 October 2025 and correct at the time of verification.

TABLE 55 PERCENTAGE POOL THROUGH THE STAGES OF RECRUITMENT FOR PROFESSIONAL ROLES 2021-24: GENDER + DISABILITY

Note: HC = Headcount; TGD = Trans & Gender Diverse; ND = Not Disclosed; Data verified by HR Workforce Information & Reporting 2 October 2025 and correct at the time of verification.

	TGD		Men		ND		Women	
	HC	% Pool	HC	% Pool	HC	% Pool	HC	% Pool
Applied								
No Disability	450	0.4	32920	26.3	236	0.2	48754	39.0
With Disability	110	0.1	819	0.7	21	0.0	976	0.8
Not Disclosed	477	0.4	14633	11.7	1824	1.5	23839	19.1
Short-Listed								
No Disability	61	0.3	4848	20.1	37	0.2	10122	41.9
With Disability	17	0.1	122	0.5	≤6	0.0	237	1.0
Not Disclosed	87	0.4	2594	10.7	711	2.9	5300	22.0
Hired								
No Disability	11	0.2	1205	18.1	7	0.1	2828	42.4
With Disability	≤6	0.1	29	0.4	≤6	0.0	71	1.1
Not Disclosed	23	0.3	800	12.0	≤6	0.1	1684	25.2

TABLE 56 AVERAGED CONVERSION RATE FROM APPLIED TO HIRED FOR PROFESSIONAL ROLES 2021-24: GENDER + DISABILITY

Note: TGD = Trans & Gender Diverse; ND = Not Disclosed; Data verified by HR Workforce Information & Reporting 2 October 2025 and correct at the time of verification.

A	Conversion Applied to Short-Listed	Total	TGD	Men	ND	Women
	No Disability	18.3	13.6	14.7	15.7	20.8
	With Disability	19.7	15.5	14.9	14.3	24.3
	Not Disclosed	21.3	18.2	17.7	39.0	22.2
B	Conversion Short-Listed to Hired	Total	TGD	Men	ND	Women
	No Disability	26.9	18.0	24.9	18.9	27.9
	With Disability	28.2	35.3	23.8	33.3	30.0
	Not Disclosed	28.9	26.4	30.8	0.7	31.8

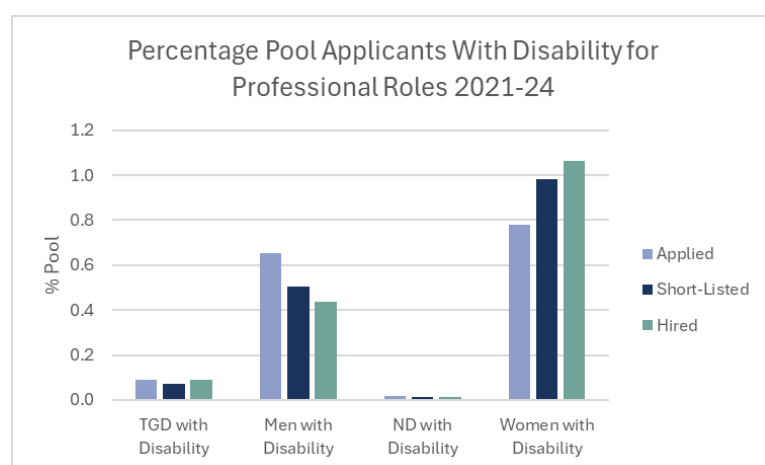


FIGURE 15 AVERAGED PERCENTAGE POOL PROGRESSION OF CANDIDATES WITH DISABILITY THROUGH RECRUITMENT STAGES FOR PROFESSIONAL ROLES

Note: TGD = Trans & Gender Diverse; ND = Not Disclosed; Data verified by HR Workforce Information & Reporting 2 October 2025 and correct at the time of verification.

1.3.2.3 Level-specific gender pay inequities

Most professional staff are at Levels 5–7, with minimal gender pay gaps (Table 57). At higher levels, though, some inequities appear, possibly due to salary negotiations, seniority, and a higher proportion of men.

TABLE 57 GENDER PAY GAPS ACROSS PROFESSIONAL LEVELS

Note: % >0 are in favour of men; % <0 are in favour of women. Percentages were calculated using the WGEA means calculation applied to the University's classification structure, using data as at 31 January 2025; HEO = Higher Education Employee level; SPS = Senior Professional Staff; Data provided by HR Performance, Workforce Planning and Insights.

Table redacted for privacy reasons

1.3.2.4 Higher resignation rates for professional staff

Overall, professional staff in continuing roles resigned more than academics, especially from low to mid-level roles. This may reflect perceptions of limited and opaque career development opportunities and pathways for professional staff (see Section 1.3.2.4). Resignation rates for senior staff were slightly higher for men than women (Tables 58–59).

In the 2025 Sydney Listens Staff Survey, professional men on continuing contracts across all levels and cultural backgrounds indicated lower intention to stay than women, especially at senior levels (Figure 16). Staff with disability expressed lower intention to stay than those without, but little difference was seen between LGBQ and heterosexual staff.

TABLE 58 2021-24 RESIGNATION RATES FOR PROFESSIONAL MEN AND WOMEN ON CONTINUING CONTRACTS

Note: HC = Headcount; Data verified by HR Workforce Information & Reporting 2 October 2025 and correct at the time of verification.

	HC Continuing Professional Men	HC Continuing Professional Men Resignations	% Resignations Continuing Professional Men	HC Continuing Professional Women	HC Continuing Professional Women Resignations	% Resignations Continuing Professional Women
2021	1014	71	7.0%	1741	125	7.2%
2022	1047	90	8.6%	1821	154	8.5%
2023	1196	73	6.1%	1992	117	5.9%
2024	1275	47	3.7%	2186	124	5.7%
Average 21-24			6.3%			6.8%

TABLE 59 2021-24 UNIVERSITY RESIGNATION RATES FOR PROFESSIONAL MEN AND WOMEN ON CONTINUING CONTRACTS BY LEVEL

Note: HEO = Higher Education Employee level; SPS = Senior Professional Staff; Data verified by HR Workforce Information & Reporting 2 October 2025 and correct at the time of verification.

	Average 2021-24 % Resignations	
	Men	Women
HEO3-6	2.0%	2.9%
HEO7-8	2.5%	2.2%
HEO9-10	1.1%	1.0%
SPSA-B	0.4%	0.3%
SPSC-D	0.3%	0.2%

“I still see myself working at the University of Sydney in two years’ time”

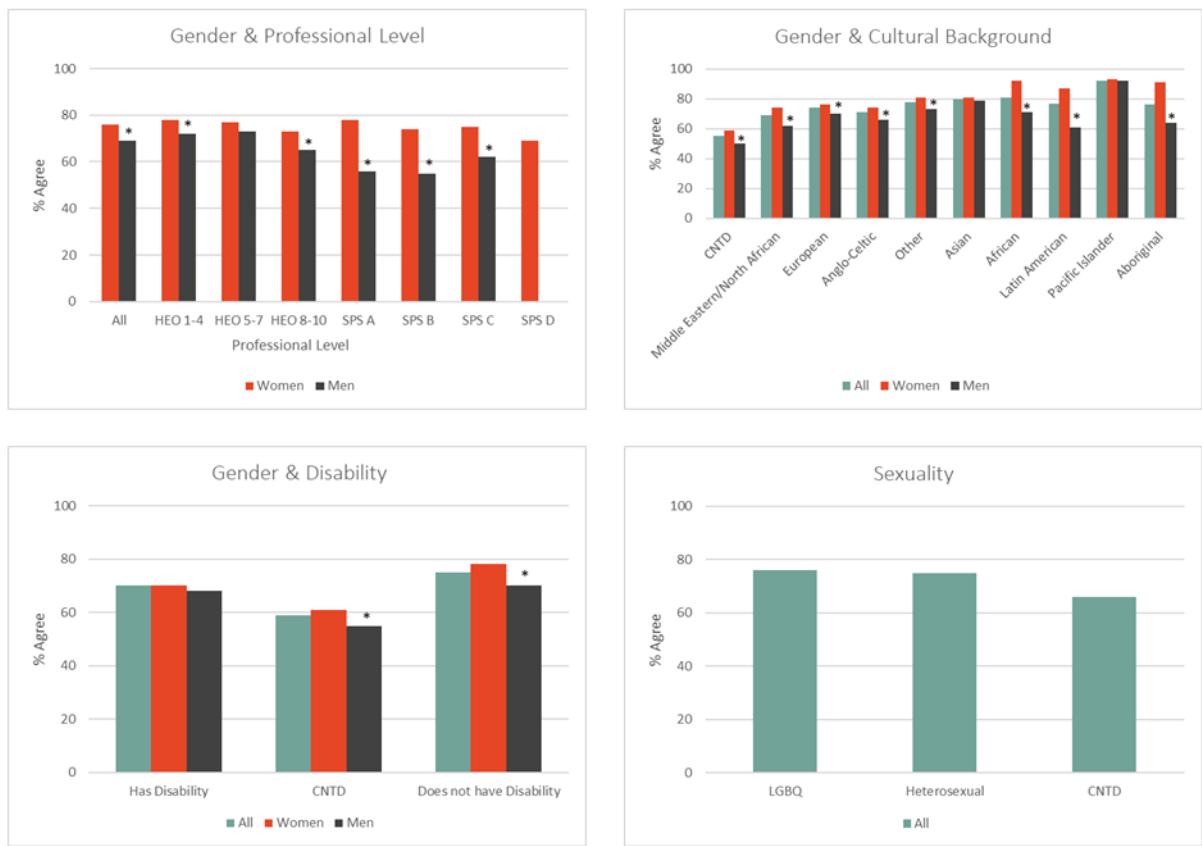


FIGURE 16 PROFESSIONAL STAFF RESPONSES TO 2025 SYDNEY LISTENS QUESTION RELATED TO INTENTION TO STAY BY GENDER AND LEVEL

*Note: CNTD = Choose not to disclose; HEO = Higher Education Employee level; SPS = Senior Professional Staff; * = ≥ 5pt difference between men and women*

Despite high intention to stay, resignation rates from 2021–24 were higher among professional First Nations staff on continuing contracts than other groups, although small headcounts may skew percentages (Table 60). Culturally diverse men also had slightly higher resignation rates than women, aligning with Sydney Listens findings.

TABLE 60 2021-24 GENDER-INTERSECTIONAL BREAKDOWN OF RESIGNATIONS OF PROFESSIONAL STAFF ON CONTINUING EMPLOYMENT CONTRACTS

Note: Data verified by HR Workforce Information & Reporting 2 October 2025 and correct at the time of verification.

	% Resignations Continuing Professional Men	% Resignations Continuing Professional Women
First Nations	15.1%	13.1%
Born outside Australia	7.1%	6.1%
Born in Australia	5.9%	7.3%
With Disability	4.0%	7.5%
With No Disability	5.8%	6.3%

1.3.2.5 Frustration with career planning and pathways for professional staff

Professional staff careers progress through role changes. In the 2025 Sydney Listens Survey, senior professional staff agreed that opportunities are equal across backgrounds, but lower-level staff, especially women, were less optimistic (Figure 17).

Career prospects were seen as limited, particularly at HEO 8–10. Perceptions of good career opportunities tended to be stronger among professional women from non-Anglo backgrounds. Pacific Islander and First Nations men were notably less optimistic than women and other cultural groups. Staff with disability also viewed opportunities less positively.

In Sydney Listens comments and SAGE Silver Focus Groups, professional staff felt undervalued compared to academics and showed mixed understanding of career pathways, highlighting areas for improvement (Table 61). Their experiences with performance appraisal were also varied (Table 62).

“People from all backgrounds have equal opportunities to succeed at the University of Sydney”

“I believe there are good career opportunities for me at the University of Sydney”



FIGURE 17 RESPONSES TO TWO 2025 SYDNEY LISTENS QUESTIONS RELATED TO CAREER OPPORTUNITIES AND EQUITY BY GENDER AND PROFESSIONAL LEVEL; CULTURAL BACKGROUND; DISABILITY; SEXUALITY

*Note: HEO = Higher Education Employee level; SPS = Senior Professional Staff; CNTD = Choose not to disclose * = ≥ 5pt difference between men and women*

TABLE 61 THEMES ARISING FROM 2025 SYDNEY LISTENS AND SAGE SILVER FOCUS GROUPS RELATING TO CAREER PATHWAYS FOR PROFESSIONAL STAFF

Note: 2025SL = Arising from thematic analysis of free text comments in the 2025 Sydney Listens All Staff Engagement Survey; SSFG = Arising from thematic analysis of SAGE Silver Focus Groups. Quotes are from SAGE Silver Focus Groups only and are used with permission.

Working Well	Working Less Well	Recommendations
Internal Mobility Genuine efforts to recruit from within and support movement across portfolios helped broaden career pathways. Some teams and leaders actively encouraged staff to pursue promotions or stretch roles. (SSFG, 2025SL) <i>"If there's a position vacant in any of our teams or Schools, they will say, 'Hey, that's a position vacant'. Or if there's career development opportunities, someone in my team will flag it with the rest of us."</i> — C33 Secondment opportunities were seen as a practical way to gain experience and broaden career pathways. (SSFG, 2025SL) <i>"My line manager has been very supportive in helping me progress in my career. This includes: offering informal secondments within the department to help me develop skills beyond my core role; providing mentoring opportunities allowing me to support new and junior staff as a senior team member; enrolling me in training programs and courses to build my project management capabilities and technical skills; and encouraging participation in faculty and university-wide networking events to broaden my understanding of the research landscape."</i> — C32	Unclear Career Pathways and Perceived Inequity Professional staff consistently reported unclear or limited pathways for career progression. Staff often navigate growth independently, without guidance or visibility of internal opportunities. (SSFG) <i>"Compared to working in the private sector, where you can say, oh, I've started at this point in the ladder, and I see I can go up this ladder, or I can go up that ladder, there doesn't seem to be any kind of even dotted line career path for professional staff [at the university]."</i> — C42 <i>"I am at a stage now where I don't know what can support my internal career aspirations. There is a good deal of lip service to professional development, but I feel this has a ceiling for anyone not white, male and popular."</i> — C07 There is a perception that academic career progression is more valued, reinforcing a two-tier system. (SSFG, 2025SL) <i>"The university pays quite well in my experience, but when will we address the huge disparity between professional staff and academic staff?"</i> — C09 Professional staff feel they must change roles to gain promotion or a pay rise, rather than being rewarded for excelling in their current role. (SSFG, 2025SL) <i>"Progression for professional staff is only achievable through changing roles. This is a double-edged sword, as many of us like our roles, but wish to be given more responsibility for a higher level of remuneration."</i> — C27 Barriers to Accessing Development Opportunities Lack of funding limits access to training and development opportunities. (SSFG) <i>"I'm aware of the career development resources available ... however, resources are sometimes limited, so our team takes turns each year, and occasionally I need to personally fund conferences that are of particular interest to me."</i> — C18	Enhance Career Development Infrastructure Build on the Career Capabilities Framework career portal for professional staff, with development and planning tools similar to those available to academic staff via the AEF (include links to internal mobility opportunities; promote equally to staff on fixed-term and continuing contracts). Clarify Career Pathways Continue to build on raising awareness of what career development and progression looks like for professional staff. Offer career planning and development workshops for professional staff. Foster Informal Mentorship Continue to encourage and build on informal micro-mentoring between staff and leaders. <i>"An informal mentoring program has started in our faculty, where you can have a coffee with one of the faculty leadership ... I found it really useful to not only humanise the leadership within our faculty, but also to be able to show up as a holistic person, rather than just what my job description is, or what my output is."</i> — C47

Flexible Work and Supportive Environments Flexible arrangements were seen as essential for balancing career aspirations with personal responsibilities, especially for carers and parents. (SL2025, SSFG) A collaborative and respectful team environment was linked to better career satisfaction and development. (SL2025, SSFG) <i>"Out of all of the places I have worked, there is more support for people with family commitments, but I can see this comes down to team culture and management."</i> — C12 Professional Development Programs and Mentoring The Professional Staff Development Fund (PSDF) was widely praised for enabling professional staff to attend conferences, training, and pursue career growth. (SL2025, SSFG) Professional leadership courses were seen as good initiatives, although access was limited due to manager nomination requirements. (SL2025, SSFG) Mentioned programs included: • Sydney Women's Leadership Program • Targeted leadership programs for culturally diverse staff • External mentoring programs through industry or other bodies • Mentorship and Informal Networks	<i>"The Professional Staff Development Fund for the research portfolio was already fully allocated for 2025 by May! The LGBTQIA+ Executive Fellowship is very competitive. I wish the University made it available to more staff."</i> — C19 Need for Diverse Career Progression Models A "one-size-fits-all" approach to career progression was seen as problematic. The current system favours movement into management roles, rather than recognising technical, specialist, or project-based expertise. (SSFG, 2025SL) <i>"Remuneration [in my field] is well below that in the private sector. Higher level positions are tied to management/supervisory roles. Staff with extensive experience and high levels of technical skills and specialisation ... find that two-year-out graduates are in salary bands beyond those which are available in the university."</i> — C16 Limited part-time positions, especially at senior professional levels, make it difficult for staff to progress without going full-time. (SSFG) <i>"Very limited part-time roles for professional staff and non-existent at HE06 or above. There is little to no job-sharing opportunities."</i> — C49 Transparency and Fairness in Appointments Perceived lack of transparency around appointments, with concerns about favouritism in filling vacancies or special assignments. (SSFG) <i>"A trend I have noticed is a lack of opportunity within my internal team for roles and even allocations of interviews for internal candidates ... This culture has built some discontent amongst the team I manage and those I am associated with."</i> — C28 Job Insecurity and Limited Pathways for Fixed-Term and Casual Staff Fixed-term and casual staff lack clear career pathways. Opportunities to transition to ongoing roles are ad hoc and poorly communicated. Job insecurity undermines morale and long-term planning. (SSFG, 2025SL) <i>"Job insecurity is a big one—I don't even know if I have a job next year most of the time, so how can I think about career progression when I don't even know if I'll have my current one next year."</i> — C10 <i>"I joined the Uni ... on a fixed-term contract. Since I have been here, there have been no continuing roles advertised, and some continuing positions are coming through as fixed-term. I didn't realise that there wouldn't be opportunity for a continuing role once here."</i> — C12 Managerial Support and Visibility	
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Informal mentorship networks are genuinely helpful in guiding career strategy and progression. (2025SL, SSFG) <i>"I have been an informal mentor for a colleague—it is something that occurred organically and is not structured in any real way. I am mainly there as a sounding board for them to chat about workplace situations, or decisions that they are faced regarding their career decisions." — C27</i> Managers can make excellent mentors. (SSFG) <i>"My manager has definitely mentored us a lot, each of us. It's her passion. She's taken the time in our one-on-ones to make sure we are ok, and she encourages us to stretch our boundaries and comfort zones and improve." — C33</i>	Career progression can be heavily influenced by the level of support provided by an individual's manager. (SSFG, 2025SL) <i>"I've been identified as someone that's capable, but in terms of my career aspirations that has not really been acknowledged or hasn't been fostered or empowered. It's been very much 'we'll keep you in this position, because that's where you're best placed'." — C24</i> Flexible work arrangements can reduce visibility and perceived readiness for promotion. (SSFG) <i>"Management has been very flexible in terms of WFH arrangements for my carer responsibilities. That said, because I do need to work from home more often, I feel that impacts my chance of promotion as others are 'seen' more, yet I can do the job from where I am." — C13</i> Cultural Norms and Self-Promotion Cultural upbringing can influence how staff engage with career development, particularly in environments that reward assertiveness and self-promotion. (SSFG) <i>"I feel like, you know, being Chinese, that is usually the case that people are more reserved, they're not going to speak up necessarily for themselves. They're not going to push the boundaries. They just want to keep the peace." — C32</i>	
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TABLE 62 THEMES ARISING FROM 2025 SYDNEY LISTENS AND SAGE SILVER FOCUS GROUPS RELATING TO PERFORMANCE APPRAISAL FOR PROFESSIONAL STAFF

Note: 2025SL = Arising from thematic analysis of free text comments in the 2025 Sydney Listens All Staff Engagement Survey; SSFG = Arising from thematic analysis of SAGE Silver Focus Groups. Quotes are from SAGE Silver Focus Groups only and are used with permission.

Working Well	Working Less Well	Recommendations
Effective Use of PP&D for Development When managers used the PP&D process effectively, it fostered meaningful conversations about performance and development. (SSFG, 2025SL) <i>"I feel like people still see the PP&D as a tick box exercise, whereas I'm lucky to have a line manager that does fortnightly check-ins. That's really important, because I feel she knows me as a person, and what I'm struggling with in terms of the actual project work." — C32</i> <i>"My manager's amazing. She's constantly encouraging us to develop career-wise and skill within our role, but also, she would encourage us to look outside of our role. If there's a position that you're interested in, it's like, 'Oh, why not go for it?' She is very focused on upskilling the team and cross training the team. She's very strict with us on our PP&Ds. She helps us map out what we want to do, to improve our position as an employee, and allows us to pave the way to future advancements." — C33</i> Recognition and Appreciation Recognition for long service and high performance was appreciated. (SL2025)	Inconsistent Use of PP&D as a Development Tool Some professional staff felt the PP&D cycle was a formality rather than a meaningful development tool. Reviews could be rushed or superficial, lacking genuine engagement. (SSFG, 2025SL) <i>"In a previous role I had a manager who regularly blew off PP&D meetings and had no interest in the meaningful progression of their staff." — C09</i> <i>"There were two years where I didn't even complete a performance planning and development plan. It was, well, I've been through the process so many times at the uni. I was there, prepared with my goals written out, some draft goals, in the SMART format, given to my manager for review. But it just kind of went nowhere, and after several follow-ups, it's still not a priority. You get to a point where you're feeling quite discouraged, what's the point? I can work on these goals myself, but there's no goals that kind of stretch me, help me to build skills that I want to build." — C24</i> Accessibility of Career Planning Systems Systems related to career planning and performance appraisal may not be user-friendly for staff with disability or who are neurodivergent. (SSFG) <i>"I have been informed by some staff members that have ADHD that our systems are very hard to use. Specific feedback has been around completing PP&Ds in Workday. Solutions that managers have implemented is that the manager and staff will set time to sit together and fill out the form together." — C37</i>	Improve PP&D Review Quality Continue to raise visibility with managers of tools and training to conduct effective PP&D reviews (encourage consistent, constructive feedback and career conversations). Clarify Performance Recognition Raise awareness and consistency around what constitutes higher performance ratings for professional staff (including the types of outcomes and rewards, such as bonuses, available to recognise exceptional performance).

1.4 Action Plan

Note: Some of these actions overlap with those outlined in other sections but are reiterated here in response to issues raised in this section. We have been deliberately non-prescriptive with the framing of our outputs, outcomes, and impacts in developing these actions. By framing actions in a non-prescriptive way, it gives us flexibility to develop a three-year implementation plan with responsible leads that aligns and sequences with current and planned work at the point of implementation. These leads are actively structuring delivery of the actions into planned work where appropriate, or factoring into workflow where actions are stand alone.

KEY BARRIER 1: CAREER PLANNING, PROGRESSION & EQUITY						
ID	Rationale/Evidence	Actions	Timeframe (start & end)	Person / Group Responsible for Implementing Action	Senior Leader Accountable for Action Delivery	Example Outputs, Outcomes, and Impacts
Academic Staff						
CP&P 1. Strengthening Strategic Readiness for Gender-Intersectional Performance Expectations The University has made meaningful strides in advancing gender equity and is well-positioned to build on this momentum. By enhancing data integration, aligning policies more closely, and deepening leadership engagement, there is a strong opportunity to further elevate support for intersectional staff experiences. While recruitment and career progression processes show areas of promise, refining these systems will enable more consistent, scalable inclusive practices and generate actionable insights across Faculties and Units.						
CP&P 1.1	While some Faculties have achieved gender balance across academic levels, others continue to show disparities, highlighting the ongoing need for Faculty-specific gender equity targets. Complementing this is the opportunity to deepen organisational understanding of intersectionality.	CP&P 1.1.1 Utilising Change Management (ADKAR: Awareness Desire Knowledge Ability Reinforcement) principles, build a roadmap to prepare the organisation to move from gender-only to gender-intersectional performance expectations.	2026-2028	SAGE Team, RISE Working Group, Workforce Information and Reporting Team	SAGE Academic Director	<i>Subject to final collaborative implementation and resourcing, example outputs and outcomes could include:</i> Output Measures Change roadmap developed using ADKAR principles. Communication materials created to build awareness of the limitations of gender-only performance expectations. Management and stakeholder engagement sessions held to foster desire and buy-in. Tools and templates provided to support implementation and reporting. Outcome Measures Gender-intersectional performance expectations established before 2032.

KEY BARRIER 1: CAREER PLANNING, PROGRESSION & EQUITY						
ID	Rationale/Evidence	Actions	Timeframe (start & end)	Person / Group Responsible for Implementing Action	Senior Leader Accountable for Action Delivery	Example Outputs, Outcomes, and Impacts
	This will help build support for evolving the current SAGE Deans' gender performance expectations to incorporate intersectional dimensions such as cultural background and disability, ensuring our equity measures reflect the full diversity of staff experiences.	<i>(Note: This action is replicated as CP&P 1.1.1 and RIV&V 2.1.1)</i>				Impact Measures <i>Feedback via focus groups, surveys, feedback forms indicating:</i> • Greater willingness among leaders and managers to adopt intersectional performance expectations. • Increased staff understanding of intersectionality and its relevance to equity measurement. • Strengthened institutional accountability for intersectional equity. • Supporting the University's <i>Sydney in 2032</i> strategic goals under the <i>Thriving Through Diversity</i> pillar. • Embedding the University values of <i>Excellence, Trust & Accountability</i>.
		CP&P 1.1.2 Support Leadership Teams across Faculties and University Schools to understand their workforce and staff experience through a gender-intersectional lens drawing on recruitment and workforce analytics, Sydney Listens, and local engagement via focus groups and structured interviews/surveys. <i>(Note: This action is replicated as CP&P 1.1.2 and RIV&V 2.1.2)</i>	2026-2028	SAGE Team, Workforce Information and Reporting Team, Faculty & University School Teams with carriage over DEI	SAGE Academic Director	<i>Subject to final collaborative implementation and resourcing, example outputs and outcomes could include:</i> Output Measures Gender-intersectional workforce analytics reports generated for each Faculty and University School. Disaggregated Sydney Listens data analysed annually. Focus groups, structured interviews, and/or surveys conducted locally to capture lived, discipline-specific experience. Summary reports and recommendations provided to Leadership Teams. Outcome Measures More informed and targeted equity actions at the local level. Enhanced capacity among leadership teams to interpret and act on intersectional data. Impact Measures <i>Feedback via focus groups, surveys, feedback forms indicating:</i> • Increased leadership awareness of intersectional workforce dynamics and staff experience. • Cultural shift toward data-informed, intersectional leadership practices. • Improved trust and engagement among diverse staff groups across Faculties and University Schools.

KEY BARRIER 1: CAREER PLANNING, PROGRESSION & EQUITY						
ID	Rationale/Evidence	Actions	Timeframe (start & end)	Person / Group Responsible for Implementing Action	Senior Leader Accountable for Action Delivery	Example Outputs, Outcomes, and Impacts
						- Supporting the University's <i>Sydney in 2032</i> strategic goals under the <i>Thriving Through Diversity</i> pillar. - Embedding the University values of <i>Excellence, Trust & Accountability</i>.
		CP&P 1.1.3 Pending completion of CP&P 1.1.1 and 1.1.2, continue to work with the SDVC&P's Office to set Faculty and Level-specific SAGE Deans' performance expectations for Academic women and TGD staff at Levels C, D and E. <i>(Note: This updates and replaces Career Progression & Development Cygnet Action 5; Recruitment Cygnet Action 2)</i>	Annually	SAGE Team, SDVCP Office	SDVC&P	<i>Subject to final collaborative implementation and resourcing, example outputs and outcomes could include:</i> Output Measures Annual development gender-based performance expectations for Deans. Outcome Measures Uptake of performance expectations in annual planning and performance review processes. Progress towards gender-balanced representation of academic women and TGD staff at Levels C–E across Faculties and University Schools. Impact Measures <i>Feedback via focus groups, surveys, feedback forms indicating:</i> - Strengthened institutional culture of accountability for equity and inclusion. - Alignment with the University's strategic goals under the <i>Thriving Through Diversity</i> pillar. - Supporting the University's <i>Sydney in 2032</i> strategic goals under the <i>Thriving Through Diversity</i> pillar. - Embedding the University values of <i>Excellence, Trust & Accountability</i>.
CP&P 1.2	The University's new Diversity Dashboard is close to completion but limited by our major data frameworks not being linked to one another.	CP&P 1.2.1 Continue to work towards harmonising University data systems under the Digital Sydney program. <i>(Note: This action is in progress. It is replicated as CP&P 1.2.1 and RIV&V 2.2.1,</i>	2025-2028	Workforce Information and Reporting Team, Information Communications & Technology (ICT), Workday Team, Advanced Analytics Planning & Enterprise Data	Chief Information Officer (CIO)	<i>Subject to final collaborative implementation and resourcing, example outputs and outcomes could include:</i> Output Measures Workday linked to Snowflake and one source of truth embedded across workforce analytic platforms. Outcome Measures Increased data consistency and reliability across University systems. Improved user experience for staff accessing and reporting data. Reduced duplication and manual data reconciliation efforts. Impact Measures

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		<i>aligns with RISE Action 3.8. It updates and replaces Career Progression & Development Cygnet Action 3; LGBTQIA+ Cygnet Action 3.4)</i>		Team (AAP), Privacy, HR D&I Team, RISE Working Group, SAGE Team		<i>Feedback via focus groups, surveys, feedback forms indicating:</i> • Stronger institutional capability for data-informed decision-making. • Greater efficiency and agility in responding to strategic priorities. • Supporting the University's <i>Sydney in 2032</i> strategic goals under the <i>Thriving Through Diversity</i> pillar. • Embedding the University values of <i>Excellence, Trust & Accountability</i>.
CP&P 1.3	The University has not yet mapped where intersectionality is considered (or missing) across policies, procedures, systems and frameworks.	CP&P 1.3.1 Work with Policy owners and the OGC Policy Team to continue to progressively review University policies and procedures to identify opportunities to better reflect staff and students' intersectional experiences and needs. <i>(Note: This action is replicated as CP&P 1.3.1 and RIV&V 2.3.1. It aligns with RISE Action 2.5 and supports the DIAP and Indigenous Workforce Plan 2025–2032)</i>	2026-2028	SAGE Team, HR D&I Team, RISE Working Group, OGC Policy Team, Workplace Relations	SAGE Program Manager, Senior Manager, HR D&I	<i>Subject to final collaborative implementation and resourcing, example outputs and outcomes could include:</i> Output Measures Number of policies and procedures reviewed. Briefing materials prepared for Policy Teams. Number of recommendations accepted. Outcome Measures Increased visibility of systemic barriers and exclusionary norms in current policies. Impact Measures <i>Feedback via focus groups, surveys, feedback forms indicating:</i> • More inclusive and accessible University policies that reflect diverse staff experiences. • Supporting the University's <i>Sydney in 2032</i> strategic goals under the <i>Thriving Through Diversity</i> pillar. • Embedding the University values of <i>Excellence, Trust & Accountability</i>.
		CP&P 1.3.2 Meet with the Digital Sydney team to discuss intersectionality and Universal Design, and whether and how these principles are currently included in assessments to improvements to systems	2026-2028	SAGE Team, RISE Working Group, HR D&I Team, Information, Communication & Technology (ICT), Respect@Work Team	SAGE Program Manager, Senior Manager, HR D&I	<i>Subject to final collaborative implementation and resourcing, example outputs and outcomes could include:</i> Output Measures Meeting held with Digital Sydney team to discuss current practices and opportunities. Summary of current inclusion of intersectionality and Universal Design in digital assessments. Recommendations developed for embedding these principles more

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		and frameworks currently underway. Reference processes dealing with leave and flexible hours as an example. <i>(Note: This action is replicated as CP&P 1.3.2, P&C 6.1.2, and RIV&V 2.3.2, and aligns with RISE Action 1.3 and Respect@Work Action 3.6)</i>				explicitly in system design and improvement processes. Follow-up actions agreed (e.g., inclusion criteria, design standards, consultation processes). Briefing note or report prepared for leadership and relevant stakeholders. Outcome Measures Increased awareness within the Digital Sydney team of intersectional and Universal Design principles. Greater consideration of diverse user needs in digital system planning and implementation. Reduction in digital barriers. Impact Measures <i>Feedback via focus groups, surveys, feedback forms indicating:</i> • More inclusive and accessible digital systems that reflect the diversity of staff and student experiences. • Enhanced trust and engagement with digital platforms across the University community. • Supporting the University's <i>Sydney in 2032</i> strategic goals under the <i>Thriving Through Diversity</i> pillar. • Embedding the University values of <i>Excellence, Trust & Accountability</i>.
CP&P 2. Building Inclusive Mentoring, Training, and Monitoring to Support Multiply Marginalised Academic Staff The University has an opportunity to further strengthen its promotion processes by recognising and addressing the nuanced barriers that intersectionally diverse staff may face. By embracing culturally responsive support, expanding inclusive mentoring options, and enhancing transparency in data reporting, we can ensure that all staff are equitably supported and feel fairly assessed. These efforts will help unlock the full potential of talented individuals and foster a more inclusive and representative leadership pipeline.						
CP&P 2.1	Promotion mentoring programs are not consistently available across faculties, creating discipline-based inequities.	CP&P 2.1.1 Encourage sharing and deploying Faculty and University School resources for mentoring programs and resources (e.g. SPAM or	2026-2028	Academic Promotions Unit, Academic Excellence Program, Organisational	Deans/Heads of Schools	<i>Subject to final collaborative implementation and resourcing, example outputs and outcomes could include:</i> Output Measures Update inventory and review of existing mentoring programs, including SPAM (cross-reference AEP mapping).

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	Smaller or less-resourced Faculties may lack the capacity to provide tailored support. Encouraging sharing of resources to support equity in promotion processes will reduce potential disparities and more equitably meet the needs of intersectionally diverse staff.	cross-disciplinary peer groups for promotion support) to support local implementation. <i>(Note: This updates and replaces Career Progression & Development Cygnet Action 1)</i>		Development team, Leadership Academy, SAGE Team, Faculty Associate Dean Career Development (where present)		Review existing development programs to assess which elements can be embedded to build greater consistency across Faculties and Schools. Consultations held with Faculties, University Schools, and equity stakeholders. Templates or toolkits for local implementation of mentoring programs. Outcome Measures Number of Faculties and University Schools actively sharing or adapting mentoring resources. Greater consistency of access to mentoring opportunities across the University. Enhanced collaboration between Faculties and University Schools on equity-focused career development. Impact Measures <i>Feedback via focus groups, surveys, feedback forms indicating:</i> • Positive feedback from diverse academic staff on relevance and inclusivity of mentoring resources. • Reduction in disparities in mentoring access and quality across disciplines. • Supporting the University's <i>Sydney in 2032</i> strategic goals under the <i>Thriving Through Diversity</i> pillar. • Embedding the University values of <i>Excellence, Trust & Accountability</i>.
		CP&P 2.1.2 Continue to build on the online promotion hub with resources, timelines, exemplars, and access to mentors. Take a gender-intersectional/universal design approach to each refresh.	2026-2028	Academic Promotions Unit, Academic Excellence Program, SAGE Team, HR Data and Analytics Team	Manager, Academic Promotions Unit	<i>Subject to final collaborative implementation and resourcing, example outputs and outcomes could include:</i> Output Measures Completion of gender-intersectional and universal design review of existing content. Updated resources shared with staff. Outcome Measures Increased relevance of resources for diverse academic staff. Uptake of resources in promotion support initiatives. Impact Measures

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		(Note: This aligns with RISE Action 1.3)				Feedback via focus groups, surveys, feedback forms indicating: • Positive feedback from users on accessibility, clarity, and inclusivity of resources. • Supporting the University's <i>Sydney in 2032</i> strategic goals under the <i>Thriving Through Diversity</i> pillar. • Embedding the University values of <i>Excellence, Trust & Accountability</i>.
		CP&P 2.1.3 Collect feedback from applicants (those who submitted an expression of interest but did not go onto to submit an application, as well as successful and unsuccessful applicants) to refine support strategies and provide high level reports to help Faculties and University Schools assess the equity impact of their promotion processes and supports.	Annually	Academic Promotions Unit, SAGE Team, Academic Excellence Program	Manager, Academic Promotions Unit, Deans and Heads of Schools	Subject to final collaborative implementation and resourcing, example outputs and outcomes could include: Output Measures Design and deployment of feedback mechanisms for promotion applicants (e.g. surveys, interviews) across streams and groups. Number of responses collected from successful and unsuccessful applicants each year. Development of a standardised reporting template for equity impact analysis, including intersectional data points (e.g. gender, cultural background, disability, TGD status). Annual reports delivered to Faculties and University Schools. Outcome Measures Improved understanding of applicant experiences and perceived barriers in the promotion process. Increased Faculty and University School engagement with equity data and feedback. Refinement of support strategies based on applicant insights (e.g. mentoring, workshops, communications). Impact Measures Feedback via focus groups, surveys, feedback forms indicating: • Positive feedback from Faculties and University Schools on the usefulness of reports. • Enhanced transparency and responsiveness in promotion support practices.

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						- Supporting the University's <i>Sydney in 2032</i> strategic goals under the <i>Thriving Through Diversity</i> pillar. - Embedding the University values of <i>Excellence, Trust & Accountability</i>.
		CP&P 2.1.5 Broaden Staff News reporting of promotion outcomes beyond gender (e.g. success rates by stream, diversity metrics that do not compromise privacy).	Annually	Academic Promotions Unit, SAGE Team, HR D&I Team, Provost	Manager, Academic Promotions Unit	<i>Subject to final collaborative implementation and resourcing, example outputs and outcomes could include:</i> Output Measures Staff News articles or features that include broader equity data and narratives. Inclusion of diverse staff voices and promotion stories across academic streams and backgrounds. Engagement metrics (e.g. views, shares, comments). Outcome Measures Increased visibility of diverse promotion pathways and success stories. Improved understanding across the University of the varied experiences and contributions of promoted staff. Impact Measures <i>Feedback via focus groups, surveys, feedback forms indicating:</i> - Positive feedback from staff on representation and inclusivity in promotion reporting. - Increased awareness and celebration of intersectional excellence in academic careers. - Alignment with the University's strategic goals under the <i>Thriving Through Diversity</i> pillar.
CP&P 2.2	Women remain underrepresented at Level E, and women at Level D are less likely to apply for promotion than more junior academic women. A focus on targeted mentoring to encourage and support Level D women to	CP&P 2.2.1 Explore feasibility of offering Level D women interested in promotion the opportunity to be paired with Level E mentors, and/or offer small-	2026-2028	Academic Promotions Unit, SAGE Team, Organisational Development, Vice-Provost	Manager, Academic Promotions Unit, Deans and Heads of Schools	<i>Subject to final collaborative implementation and resourcing, example outputs and outcomes could include:</i> Output Measures Number of Level D women invited to participate in mentoring opportunities. Number of Level E mentors recruited and matched. Number of small-group and asynchronous mentoring sessions offered. Development of mentoring guidelines and matching criteria.

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	progress to Level E will help the University achieve gender balance at Level E.	group or asynchronous mentoring options.				Participation rates across Faculties and disciplines. Outcome Measures Increased access to tailored promotion support for Level D women. Increased promotion success rates for Level D women to Level E. Establishment of a scalable mentoring model for other equity groups and career stages. Impact Measures <i>Feedback via focus groups, surveys, feedback forms indicating:</i> - Improved confidence and clarity around promotion pathways. - Positive feedback from mentees and mentors on the structure and value of the program. - Supporting the University's <i>Sydney in 2032</i> strategic goals under the <i>Thriving Through Diversity</i> pillar. - Embedding the University values of <i>Excellence, Trust & Accountability</i>.
CP&P 2.3	Staff from some culturally diverse backgrounds report discomfort with assertiveness and self-promotion, which may hinder career progression. Additionally, some gender-intersectional groups show lower-than-average promotion success rates, highlighting the need for tailored strategies.	CP&P 2.3.1 Explore opportunities to build gender-intersectional and racial literacy into promotion panel competencies, including for example: (i) Provide promotion panel guidance and case studies around how systemic racism can affect staff experience and opportunity, recognising racialised gatekeeping in how success is defined, understanding intersectionality (e.g., how race and gender, disability	2026-2028	Academic Promotions Unit, Academic Excellence Program, SAGE Team, RISE Working Group, HR D&I Team, Indigenous Strategy & Services (ISS), National Centre for Cultural Competence (NCCC), Respect@Work Team, Academic	Manager, Academic Promotions Unit	<i>Subject to final collaborative implementation and resourcing, example outputs and outcomes could include:</i> Output Measures Guidance materials developed for Promotion Panel members on gender-intersectionality, race, and racialised gatekeeping in academic progression. Exploratory framework or examples created to illustrate what valuing non-traditional contributions could look like in practice. Guidelines established to support ethno-racial and gender diversity in panel composition. Gender-intersectional data collection system implemented to monitor promotion experience and outcomes. Outcome Measures Greater diversity in promotion panel membership. Identification of equity gaps in promotion outcomes through disaggregated data. Impact Measures

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		and gender, sexuality and gender can compound disadvantage); understanding the racialised nature of feedback, collegiality, and communication norms; (ii) Explore what valuing non-traditional contributions in promotions could look like in practice; (iii) Encourage ethno-racial diversity as well as gender diversity on promotion panels (iv) Annually track promotion outcomes and experience by through a gender-intersectional lens, and report trends to leadership. (v) More clearly articulate the inclusion of a DEI lens in the role descriptions for Academic Board Nominees on Faculty-level promotion panels. <i>(Note: This action is replicated as CP&P 2.3.1 and RIV&V 1.3.2, and aligns with</i>		Excellence Program, Vice-Provost		<i>Feedback via focus groups, surveys, feedback forms indicating:</i> • Increased gender-intersectional and racial literacy confidence among Promotion Panel members in addressing equity issues. • More consistent application of inclusive promotion practices across faculties. • Supporting the University's <i>Sydney in 2032</i> strategic goals under the <i>Thriving Through Diversity</i> pillar. • Embedding the University values of <i>Excellence, Trust & Accountability</i>.

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		<i>Respect@Work Action 1.2 and RISE Action 1.3, the Indigenous Employment Plan, One Sydney, Many People, and the NCCC Strategic Plan.)</i> CP&P 2.3.2 Recognising that systemic inequities continue to shape CARM staff experiences of promotion, explore ways to support CARM staff while institutional barriers are being addressed, such as matching CARM staff with racially literate AP&D Advisers, offering promotion planning clinics to support CARM staff to map their experience and impact against AEF criteria, mock panels or review simulations to help CARM staff prepare with practice feedback in a safe, affirming environment. <i>(Note: This action is replicated as CP&P 2.3.2 and RIV&V 1.3.3, and aligns with Respect@Work Action 1.2 and RISE Actions 1.3 and 3.9)</i>	2026-2028	Academic Promotions Unit, Academic Excellence Program, SAGE Team, RISE Working Group, HR D&I Team, Indigenous Strategy & Services (ISS), National Centre for Cultural Competence (NCCC), Respect@Work Team	Manager, Academic Promotions Unit	<i>Subject to final collaborative implementation and resourcing, example outputs and outcomes could include:</i> Output Measures CARM staff matched with racially literate AP&D Advisers. Promotion planning clinics designed and delivered, tailored to CARM staff needs. Mock promotion panels or review simulations conducted, with structured feedback in affirming environments. Resource materials developed to support mapping experience and impact against AEF criteria. Feedback mechanisms established to evaluate the usefulness and accessibility of support offerings. Outcome Measures Increased promotion rates among CARM staff. Greater clarity for CARM staff on how their contributions align with AEF criteria. Improved quality and relevance of feedback received during promotion preparation for CARM staff. More equitable access to promotion preparation resources. Impact Measures <i>Feedback via focus groups, surveys, feedback forms indicating:</i> - Increased confidence among CARM staff in navigating promotion processes. - Strengthened relationships between CARM staff and AP&D Advisers. - Supporting the University's <i>Sydney in 2032</i> strategic goals under the <i>Thriving Through Diversity</i> pillar.

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						Embedding the University values of <i>Excellence, Trust & Accountability</i>.
CP&P 2.4	Despite efforts to recognise excellence across academic streams, inconsistent understanding and evaluation of education and service excellence, limited visibility of successful promotion pathways, and a lower focus in mentoring opportunities may disadvantage staff applying for education-focused and service-focused promotions. Without calibrated panels, clear exemplars, and transparent data, promotion processes risk reinforcing narrow definitions of academic success and overlooking diverse contributions.	CP&P 2.4.1 Speak with staff who have been promoted through Education-focused and Service-focused streams to understand their experience and recommendations for success. Continue to develop and promote stream-specific exemplars and impact narratives to guide applicants and panels.	2026-2028	Education and Learning, Academic Promotions Unit, Academic Excellence Program, Vice-Provost, SAGE Team	Manager, Academic Promotions Unit	<i>Subject to final collaborative implementation and resourcing, example outputs and outcomes could include:</i> Output Measures Interviews or feedback sessions conducted with staff promoted via Education-focused and Service-focused streams. Collection and analysis of recommendations for success from these staff. Additional examples of stream-specific exemplars and impact narratives. Publication and promotion of exemplars through the online promotion hub and Faculty and University School channels. Communications campaign highlighting examples of great teaching. Outcome Measures Increased visibility of Education-focused and Service-focused promotion pathways. Improved understanding among applicants and promotion panels of what constitutes excellence in these streams. Increased promotion success rates for staff in Education-focused and Service-focused streams. Increased visibility of great teachers and teaching models across the University. Impact Measures <i>Feedback via focus groups, surveys, feedback forms indicating:</i> - Enhanced confidence and clarity for staff preparing applications in Education-focused and Service-focused streams. - Positive shifts in Education-Focused staff satisfaction and engagement survey results related to career support and pathways. - Positive feedback from users on the relevance and usefulness of exemplars and narratives. - Positive shifts in Education-Focused staff satisfaction and engagement survey results related to career support and pathways.

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						- Supporting the University's <i>Sydney in 2032</i> strategic goals under the <i>Thriving Through Diversity</i> pillar. - Embedding the University values of <i>Excellence, Trust & Accountability</i>.
		CP&P 2.4.2 Investigate opportunities to promote and extend existing (e.g. Teaching Case Workshop) and/or develop new targeted support (e.g. mentoring) for education-focused staff.	2026-2028	Education and Learning, Academic Promotions Unit, Academic Excellence Program, SAGE Team	DVC-Education and Students	<i>Subject to final collaborative implementation and resourcing, example outputs and outcomes could include:</i> Output Measures Review of existing mentoring and support programs for Education-Focused staff. Stakeholder consultations to identify needs and gaps. Development of new or adapted mentoring models tailored to Education-Focused career pathways in response to identified need. Resource guides or toolkits for Faculties and University Schools to implement targeted support. Co-designed pilot programs launched in selected Faculties or Schools. Outcome Measures Increased access to mentoring and career development resources for Education-Focused staff. Enhanced confidence and engagement among staff pursuing Education-Focused careers. Impact Measures <i>Feedback via focus groups, surveys, feedback forms indicating:</i> - Enhanced confidence and clarity for staff preparing applications in Education-focused and Service-focused streams. - Positive shifts in Education-Focused staff satisfaction and engagement survey results related to career support and pathways. - Improved confidence and preparedness among Education-Focused staff for promotion applications. - Supporting the University's <i>Sydney in 2032</i> strategic goals under the <i>Thriving Through Diversity</i> pillar. - Embedding the University values of <i>Excellence, Trust & Accountability</i>.

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		CP&P 2.4.2 Explore options to improve transparency and consistency of promotion panel assessments such as, for example, implementing panel calibration sessions by sharing a subset of promotion cases across all promotion panels (as relevant) to compare and calibrate assessment outcomes. Raise visibility of this step with staff to increase perceptions of transparency and fairness in promotions process.	2026-2028	Academic Promotions Unit, Academic Excellence Program, SAGE Team	Manager, Academic Promotions Unit	<i>Subject to final collaborative implementation and resourcing, example outputs and outcomes could include:</i> Output Measures Development of stream-specific calibration materials (e.g. criteria guides, exemplars). Inclusion of intersectional equity principles in calibration content. Feedback collected from panel members post-session. Outcome Measures Increased consistency in panel evaluations across Education, Research, and Service streams. Improved understanding among panel members of stream-specific excellence and impact. Reduction in staff perceptions of variability of promotion outcomes due to panel interpretation. Uptake of calibration practices as standard procedure in promotion cycles. Impact Measures <i>Feedback via focus groups, surveys, feedback forms indicating:</i> • Positive feedback from applicants and panel members on fairness and clarity of assessments. • Improved confidence and preparedness among Education-Focused staff for promotion applications. • Supporting the University's <i>Sydney in 2032</i> strategic goals under the <i>Thriving Through Diversity</i> pillar. • Embedding the University values of <i>Excellence, Trust & Accountability</i>.
CP&P 2.5	Academic staff have expressed that promotion decisions could be opaque, and promotion panel members noted that panels could provide more constructive	CP&P 2.5.1 Provide promotion panels with case studies of how to provide constructive and sensitive feedback to unsuccessful candidates to reduce	2026-2028	Academic Promotions Unit, Academic Excellence	Manager, Academic Promotions Unit	<i>Subject to final collaborative implementation and resourcing, example outputs and outcomes could include:</i> Output Measures Development of resources illustrating best-practice feedback across all streams and a range of equity contexts (e.g. addressing RTO and FTEY considerations; career interruptions and non-linear trajectories;

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	feedback to unsuccessful applicants.	perceptions of bias and improve future applications. Have a clear assessment framework for committees' reports, reflecting the Academic Excellence Framework.		Program, SAGE Team		contributions in Education, Service, and Research streams). Integration of feedback guidance into panel training materials and promotion documentation. Collection of feedback from panel members on usefulness of resources. Outcome Measures Improved quality, clarity, and sensitivity of feedback provided to unsuccessful applicants. Impact Measures <i>Feedback via focus groups, surveys, feedback forms indicating:</i> - Increased panel confidence in delivering constructive feedback that supports future success. - Reduction in perceptions of bias or opacity in promotion outcomes. - Positive feedback from applicants on the usefulness and tone of feedback received. - Supporting the University's <i>Sydney in 2032</i> strategic goals under the <i>Thriving Through Diversity</i> pillar. - Embedding the University values of <i>Excellence, Trust & Accountability</i>.
CP&P 3. Building Trust and Monitoring for Equity in the Academic Excellence Framework The AEF provides a valuable foundation for fair, transparent, and inclusive career development across academic streams. Its potential to support long-term career planning and address equity barriers is significant. To fully realise this potential, there is an opportunity to strengthen awareness and understanding of the AEF's purpose and application among staff. Aligning AP&D goals more clearly with the AEF, offering inclusive and well-supported equity training for AP&D Advisers, and actively involving staff in refining the framework will enhance its relevance, consistency, and impact. These steps will empower staff to engage confidently with the AEF and foster a more equitable and strategic approach to academic career planning and progression.						
CP&P 3.1	At the time of Silver Self-Assessment, many staff were unaware of the AEF or unsure how to engage with its expectations, particularly education-focused academics.	CP&P 3.1.1 Continue the communications to and training for staff around the AEF. Run specific training for staff in focused academic roles. Incorporate AEF into targeted promotion and leadership development	2026-2028	Academic Excellence Program, Organisational Development,	Vice-Provost	<i>Subject to final collaborative implementation and resourcing, example outputs and outcomes could include:</i> Output Measures Numbers of staff attending meetings and training. Outcome Measures Improved staff knowledge of the AEF. Improved academic-Adviser conversations around using the AEF to support careers.

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	Staff expressed concerns about inconsistent valuation and support across academic streams and equity groups under the AEF. As the AEF becomes embedded, it will be critical to continue to help academic staff understand and apply the AEF to their career development.	programs across the University. Increase guidance for Advisers around how the AEF is applied in the academic lifecycle.				Improved staff ability to apply the AEF to their career planning and goal setting. Impact Measures <i>Feedback via focus groups, surveys, feedback forms indicating:</i> - Enhanced trust and transparency in the AEF. - Strengthened alignment between academic expectations and diverse career trajectories. - Supporting the University's <i>Sydney in 2032</i> strategic goals under the <i>Thriving Through Diversity</i> pillar. - Embedding the University values of <i>Excellence, Trust & Accountability</i>.
		CP&P 3.1.2 Explore opportunities to build gender-intersectional and racial literacy into AP&D Adviser core competencies, including: (i) Review for racialised and non-inclusive norms; confirm that equity-focused contributions is explicitly acknowledged in the Service pillar evidence menu; (ii) Provide AP&D Adviser guidance and case studies around how systemic racism can affect staff experience and opportunity, recognising racialised gatekeeping in how success is defined, understanding intersectionality (e.g., how	2026-2028	Academic Excellence Program, Academic Promotions Unit, SAGE Team, RISE Working Group, HR D&I Team, Indigenous Strategy & Services (ISS), National Centre for Cultural Competence (NCCC), Respect@Work Team	Vice-Provost	Output Measures Review AEF to identify potential unintentional racialised and non-inclusive norms, and confirm that equity-focused labour is explicitly acknowledged in the Service pillar evidence menu. Updated AP&D Adviser competency framework to include racial literacy, intersectionality, and systemic bias awareness. Guidance materials developed for AP&D Advisers on gender-intersectionality, race, and racialised gatekeeping in academic progression. Scripts, reflective questions, and validation tools created for AP&D Advisers to use in 1:1 sessions. Referral and escalation pathways established for systemic issues raised during AP&D conversations. Gender-intersectional data collection system implemented to monitor staff outcomes in academic lifecycle stages that use AP&D. Outcome Measures Identification of patterns of inequity in AEF outcomes through disaggregated data. More consistent and equitable application of AEF principles across faculties and disciplines.

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		race and gender, disability and gender, sexuality and gender can compound disadvantage); (iii) Equip AP&D Adviser with scripts and questions to surface equity issues in 1:1 sessions (e.g. "Do you feel any structural or cultural barriers to advancing within the AEF?"), guidance on how to validate experiences (without minimising, deflecting, or silencing), tools for referring or escalating when deeper systemic issues are raised. <i>(Note: This action is replicated as CP&P 3.1.2 and RIV&V 1.3.1. It aligns with Respect@Work Action 1.2 and RISE Action 1.3, the Indigenous Employment Plan, One Sydney, Many People, and the NCCC Strategic Plan. It updates and replaces Career Development & Progression Cygnet Actions 2, 8 & 10).</i>				Reduction in racial and gender-intersectional disparities in academic development and promotion. Impact Measures <i>Feedback via focus groups, surveys, feedback forms indicating:</i> • More inclusive and supportive AP&D conversations, particularly for marginalised staff. • Greater recognition of equity-focused labour in academic progression discussions. • Increased gender-intersectional and racial literacy confidence among AP&D Advisers in addressing equity issues. • Strengthened trust in the AEF process among staff from marginalised groups. • Supporting the University's <i>Sydney in 2032</i> strategic goals under the <i>Thriving Through Diversity</i> pillar. Embedding the University values of <i>Excellence, Trust & Accountability</i>.

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CP&P 3.2	Some academic staff felt that the AP&D process lacks depth and relevance to long-term career planning, often reduced to a compliance exercise. The introduction of the AEF presents a clear opportunity to align annual goals and performance reviews with long-term career aspirations, making AP&D a more strategic and developmental tool.	CP&P 3.2.1 Encourage staff and their managers to proactively utilise the AEF to link annual and long-term career planning and ensure AP&D goals are realistic and aligned with actual responsibilities.	2026-2028	Academic Excellence Program, SAGE Team	Vice-Provost	<i>Subject to final collaborative implementation and resourcing, example outputs and outcomes could include:</i> Output Measures Development and dissemination of AEF-aligned AP&D planning tools and guides for staff and managers. Training sessions or resources provided on integrating AEF into AP&D conversations. Inclusion of AEF prompts in AP&D templates and systems. Feedback collected on usefulness and clarity of AEF in career planning. Outcome Measures Strengthened career development outcomes for academic staff across all streams. Impact Measures <i>Feedback via focus groups, surveys, feedback forms indicating:</i> - Enhanced staff understanding of how AP&D and AEF can work together to support long-term career progression. - Reduction in misalignment or unrealistic expectations in AP&D goal-setting. - Supporting the University's <i>Sydney in 2032</i> strategic goals under the <i>Thriving Through Diversity</i> pillar. - Embedding the University values of <i>Excellence, Trust & Accountability</i>.
CP&P 4. Building Awareness, Trust, and Utility of Relative to Opportunity Relative to Opportunity (RTO) holds strong potential as an equity-focused tool. Strengthening consistent understanding and application across staff and promotion panels presents an opportunity to build greater confidence in its fairness and transparency. By expanding access to practical tools, inclusive training, and robust feedback mechanisms, we can empower staff and promotion panels to engage more fully with RTO, enhancing its credibility and impact as a driver of equitable career progression.						
CP&P 4.1	Some academic staff reported feeling unsure how to effectively use RTO in promotion applications. Likewise, promotion panel	CP&P 4.1.1 Explore the feasibility of making RTO a mandatory element of promotion cases.	2026-2028	Academic Promotions Unit, Academic Excellence Program,	Provost	<i>Subject to final collaborative implementation and resourcing, example outputs and outcomes could include:</i> Output Measures Review of current promotion documentation and systems for RTO integration.

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	members shared experiencing some challenges in interpreting and consistently assessing RTO submissions. Building on resources and guidance for staff and promotion panel members will help to normalise and embed			Organisational Development, SAGE Team		Completion of feasibility study to shift RTO from an optional field to mandatory field in promotion cases, including legal, policy, and procedural implications. Pending outcome of feasibility study, development of draft guidelines. Outcome Measures Improved consistency in how RTO is considered across promotion cases through normalisation. Uptake of RTO narratives in promotion applications across all academic streams. Establishment of RTO as a core principle in academic performance and promotion culture. Impact Measures <i>Feedback via focus groups, surveys, feedback forms indicating:</i> - Enhanced capacity of panels to assess achievement in context. - Positive feedback from staff on the fairness and clarity of RTO requirements. - Supporting the University's <i>Sydney in 2032</i> strategic goals under the <i>Thriving Through Diversity</i> pillar. - Embedding the University values of <i>Excellence, Trust & Accountability</i>.
		CP&P 4.1.2 Develop clear, consistent guidelines for staff and promotion panel members on how RTO is applied, measured, and interpreted. Include case studies and examples to illustrate how RTO can be used to recognise diverse career paths and contributions; explicitly include disability, chronic	2026-2028	Academic Promotions Unit, Academic Excellence Program, SAGE Team	Vice-Provost	<i>Subject to final collaborative implementation and resourcing, example outputs and outcomes could include:</i> Output Measures Development of comprehensive RTO guidelines for staff and promotion panel members. Inclusion of detailed case studies illustrating RTO application across diverse contexts, including for example: disability and chronic illness; caring responsibilities beyond children; cultural and community obligations. Outcome Measures Increased clarity and consistency in how RTO is understood and applied in promotion processes.

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		illness, caring responsibilities beyond children, cultural and community obligations. <i>(Note: This updates and replaces Career Development & Progression Cygnet Action 9)</i>				Uptake of RTO narratives in promotion applications across all academic streams. Impact Measures <i>Feedback via focus groups, surveys, feedback forms indicating:</i> - Improved confidence among staff in using RTO to articulate career achievements. - Enhanced panel capacity to assess achievement in context, reducing bias. - Positive feedback from staff and panel members on the usefulness and inclusivity of the guidelines. - Supporting the University's <i>Sydney in 2032</i> strategic goals under the <i>Thriving Through Diversity</i> pillar. - Embedding the University values of <i>Excellence, Trust & Accountability</i>.
		CP&P 4.1.3 Refine, test, and make the Full-Time Equivalent Year (FTEY) calculator we developed during our Cygnet assessment available to staff to improve equity and consistency of RTO considerations. Alternatively, explore a mechanism that shows staff their FTEY calculation derived from their Workday records. <i>(Note: This updates and replaces Caring & Flexibility Cygnet Action 10)</i>				<i>Subject to final collaborative implementation and resourcing, example outputs and outcomes could include:</i> Output Measures Technical refinement and validation of the FTEY calculator tool. Completion of user testing across diverse staff groups and career stages. Consultation with staff and stakeholders (including unions) Development of user guidance materials (e.g. FAQs, walkthroughs, examples). Integration of the calculator into relevant platforms (e.g. promotion hub, AP&D systems). Number of staff accessing and using the calculator. Outcome Measures Increased consistency in how career interruptions and part-time work are quantified in promotion applications. Uptake of FTEY data in promotion narratives and panel assessments. Impact Measures <i>Feedback via focus groups, surveys, feedback forms indicating:</i> Improved staff confidence in articulating RTO using FTEY data.

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						- Enhanced panel understanding of career timelines and achievement context. - Positive feedback from users on usability, clarity, and relevance of the calculator. - Supporting the University's <i>Sydney in 2032</i> strategic goals under the <i>Thriving Through Diversity</i> pillar. - Embedding the University values of <i>Excellence, Trust & Accountability</i>.
		CP&P 4.1.4 Explore options to run mock panels as a training component for how to apply RTO and FTEY.	2026-2028	Academic Promotions Unit, SAGE Team, Faculty and University School Leadership Teams, Organisational Development, HR D&I Team	Manager, Academic Promotions Unit	<i>Subject to final collaborative implementation and resourcing, example outputs and outcomes could include:</i> Output Measures Inclusion of diverse and intersectional FTEY and RTO case studies in mock panel exercises. Feedback collected from participants post-training. Outcome Measures Increased understanding of how to assess achievement in context across academic streams. Enhanced calibration and alignment of panel decision-making. Assessment of mock panel training as a potential standard offering for promotion preparation. Impact Measures <i>Feedback via focus groups, surveys, feedback forms indicating:</i> - Positive feedback from participants on the realism and usefulness of mock panels. - Improved panel member confidence and competence in applying RTO and FTEY consistently. - Supporting the University's <i>Sydney in 2032</i> strategic goals under the <i>Thriving Through Diversity</i> pillar. - Embedding the University values of <i>Excellence, Trust & Accountability</i>.
		CP&P 4.1.5 Support managers and AP&D Advisers to discuss RTO and	2026-2028	Academic Excellence	Vice-Provost	<i>Subject to final collaborative implementation and resourcing, example outputs and outcomes could include:</i>

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		FTEY sensitively and proactively during AP&D and promotion planning to help staff set realistic goals and identify appropriate support or adjustments.		Program, HR D&I Team, SAGE Team		Output Measures Development of conversation guides and training materials for managers and AP&D Advisers on RTO and FTEY. Inclusion of RTO and FTEY prompts in AP&D templates and planning tools. Feedback collected from staff and managers on the quality of these discussions and resources. Outcome Measures Improved alignment between staff goals, responsibilities, and career context. Uptake of RTO-informed planning across Faculties and Schools. Impact Measures <i>Feedback via focus groups, surveys, feedback forms indicating:</i> - Increased confidence among managers and AP&D Advisers in discussing RTO and FTEY constructively. - Enhanced staff understanding of how RTO can support realistic goal-setting and identify appropriate supports or adjustments. - Positive feedback from staff on the relevance and sensitivity of AP&D conversations. - Supporting the University's <i>Sydney in 2032</i> strategic goals under the <i>Thriving Through Diversity</i> pillar. - Embedding the University values of <i>Excellence, Trust & Accountability</i>.
		CP&P 4.1.6 Incorporate feedback mechanisms in existing post-promotion surveys and/or develop new mechanisms (e.g. focus groups) for staff to report how FTEY and RTO was used	2026-2028	Academic Promotions Unit, Academic Excellence Program, SAGE Team	Manager, Academic Promotions Unit	<i>Subject to final collaborative implementation and resourcing, example outputs and outcomes could include:</i> Output Measures Design and deployment of feedback tools (e.g. surveys, online forms, focus groups) for staff to report on FTEY and RTO application. Inclusion of feedback summaries in equity and promotions reporting cycles. Outcome Measures Increased transparency and accountability in how RTO is applied in

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		in their promotion or performance review.				promotion and performance reviews. Enhanced institutional understanding of staff experiences with RTO. Uptake of feedback insights in refining RTO guidelines and panel training. Impact Measures <i>Feedback via focus groups, surveys, feedback forms indicating:</i> - Improved staff confidence in the fairness and consistency of RTO considerations. - Positive feedback from staff on the opportunity to share their experiences. - Supporting the University's <i>Sydney in 2032</i> strategic goals under the <i>Thriving Through Diversity</i> pillar. - Embedding the University values of <i>Excellence, Trust & Accountability</i>.
CP&P 4.3	While RTO is considered in promotions, there is limited visibility into how consistently it is applied across other internal processes (e.g. performance reviews, workload allocation, development planning). Our Career Development & Progression Cygnet also suggested there was opportunity to further increase awareness of the broad range of Research Excellence and Inclusion programs (formerly equity	CP&P 4.3.1 Review inclusion of FTEY and RTO in other relevant internal processes. Ensure consistency of intersectional case studies and assessment.	2026-2028	SAGE Team, HR D&I Team, Academic Excellence Program, Education & Learning, Research Office	SAGE Academic Director	<i>Subject to final collaborative implementation and resourcing, example outputs and outcomes could include:</i> Output Measures Completion of review across key internal processes beyond promotion (e.g. recruitment, performance reviews, leadership development, internal grant applications). Identification of gaps or inconsistencies in RTO application and documentation. Review of existing case studies and assessment tools for intersectional coverage. Development of a standardised framework for RTO and FTEY inclusion and case study use. Outcome Measures Processes updated to reflect consistent RTO and FTEY and intersectional practice. Impact Measures <i>Feedback via focus groups, surveys, feedback forms indicating:</i>

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	programs) and grants available to staff.					- Enhanced staff and manager understanding of RTO and FTEY principles in varied contexts. - Positive feedback from equity groups and stakeholders on inclusivity and clarity. - Supporting the University's <i>Sydney in 2032</i> strategic goals under the <i>Thriving Through Diversity</i> pillar. - Embedding the University values of <i>Excellence, Trust & Accountability</i>.
		CP&P 4.3.2 More widely promote mentoring programs and equity prizes. <i>(Note: This updates and replaces Career Development & Progression Cygnet Action 7)</i>	2026-2028	SAGE Team, Academic Promotions Unit, MarComms, School General Managers	Head of Internal Communications	<i>Subject to final collaborative implementation and resourcing, example outputs and outcomes could include:</i> Output Measures Review current channels promoting mentoring programs and equity prizes, and identify gaps and opportunities to increase visibility. Development of promotional materials (e.g. flyers, digital assets, spotlight stories). Engagement metrics (e.g. nominations, click-through rates). Outcome Measures Increased awareness and participation in mentoring programs among diverse academic staff. Uptake of mentoring and prize opportunities in career planning and promotion narratives. Impact Measures <i>Feedback via focus groups, surveys, feedback forms indicating:</i> - Positive feedback from staff on accessibility and relevance of promoted initiatives. - Supporting the University's <i>Sydney in 2032</i> strategic goals under the <i>Thriving Through Diversity</i> pillar. - Embedding the University values of <i>Excellence, Trust & Accountability</i>.

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Professional Staff						
CP&P 5. Enhancing Career Clarity and Pathways for Professional Staff Professional staff bring valuable expertise and dedication to their roles, and with the Professional Staff Services Review underway, there is an opportunity to enhance their career development through increased role clarity, visibility, tailored resources, and clear recognition pathways. By strengthening access to planning tools, clarifying expectations, and fostering consistent feedback and reward practices, we can better support our professional staff in achieving their full potential.						
CP&P 5.1	Professional staff expressed frustration with limited or opaque opportunities to advance their careers, noting that to progress they must change role or institution. Additionally, senior career progression for professional staff is often tied to management roles, with limited recognition for technical or specialist expertise. Staff feedback indicated gaps in awareness of how and why professional roles differ from academic career pathways, as well as opportunities to better support professional staff career pathways within the context of what is possible.	CP&P 5.1.1 Building on the Careers Capability Framework, raise awareness for staff and managers of what career development and progression looks like for professional staff at different levels (including how and why it differs from academic career pathways). Encourage consideration of these in PP&D conversations.	2026-2028	Professional Services Review Team, Organisational Development, SAGE Team	Director, Organisational Development	<i>Subject to final collaborative implementation and resourcing, example outputs and outcomes could include:</i> Output Measures Create explainer materials (e.g. infographics, videos, FAQs) highlighting career progression for professional staff. Include comparisons with academic pathways to clarify differences in structure, criteria, and progression. Feature case studies of professional staff at different levels. Run communication campaigns (e.g. newsletters, intranet posts) referencing professional staff career pathways and development opportunities. Seek opportunities to build on and promote the Career Capabilities Framework career portal for professional staff. Outcome Measures Increased staff and manager understanding of professional career pathways and progression criteria. Enhanced use of the Career Capabilities Framework to support realistic and aspirational career planning. Impact Measures <i>Feedback via focus groups, surveys, feedback forms indicating:</i> - Improved quality of PP&D conversations for professional staff, with clearer goal-setting and development planning. - Positive feedback from professional staff on the relevance and clarity of career development resources.

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						- Supporting the University's <i>Sydney in 2032</i> strategic goals under the <i>Thriving Through Diversity</i> pillar. - Embedding the University values of <i>Excellence, Trust & Accountability</i>.
		CP&P 5.1.2 Through the Professional Services Review, clarify and standardise professional role structures and expectations at all levels across the University. Where professional roles deliver into academic and/or research contexts, include harmonisation of formal and informal reporting lines through PP&D career planning, development and performance assessments. <i>(Note: Cross-reference P&C 2.1.1)</i>	2026-2028	Professional Services Review Team, Organisational Development, SAGE Team	Executive Program Director, Professional Services Review	<i>Subject to final collaborative implementation and resourcing, example outputs and outcomes could include:</i> Output Measures Completion of a role structure framework across professional levels and roles. Development of guidance materials outlining how formal and informal reporting lines can be incorporated into PP&D career planning, development, and performance assessments. Updates made to HR systems to reflect standardised roles and expectations. Outcome Measures Enhanced equity and consistency in professional staff career development across the University. Clearer measures of performance. Reduction in role tension and burn-out due to clarified expectations. Stronger integration of professional roles within academic and research environments. Contribution to a more inclusive and strategically aligned workforce. Impact Measures <i>Feedback via focus groups, surveys, feedback forms indicating:</i> - Increased clarity among staff and managers about role expectations and career pathways. - Improved consistency in PP&D career planning and performance assessments. - Supporting the University's <i>Sydney in 2032</i> strategic goals under the <i>Thriving Through Diversity</i> pillar. - Embedding the University values of <i>Excellence, Trust & Accountability</i>.

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CP&P 5.2	In our LGBTQIA+ Cygnet and Silver Self-Assessment we identified that while Academic staff can be recognised for service such as mentorship, leading staff networks, and contributing to a collegial culture via the AEF, no such framework supported Professional Staff who go over and above BAU. In lieu of promotion, Professional staff can be awarded annual bonuses to reflect excellence, providing an opportunity to address above BAU performance and service load, as well as foster a sense of value for professional staff. However, our focus groups suggested variable visibility and inconsistent application of this mechanism to recognise and reward professional staff.	CP&P 5.2.1 Create and communicate a framework to guide managers and staff about what merits reward and bonus in end-of-year PP&D assessments. Within this broader framework, explicitly include professional contributions to a collegial culture over and above BAU, such as leadership and contributions to DEI and staff networks, and cultural and colonial load. Raise visibility of the ability to incorporate feedback from more than one person in PP&D reviews to help guide assessment. Ensure that this does not drive a culture exacerbating cultural and colonial overload but rather a valued, respectful and meaningful pathway to recognition and reward for professional staff. <i>(Note: This action is replicated as L&A 2.2.1 and CP&P 5.2.1, aligns with RISE Action 1.3, and updates and</i>	2026-2028	Professional Services Review Team, Organisational Development, SAGE Team	Director, Organisational Development	Output Measures Development of a clear, accessible framework outlining reward and bonus criteria for professional staff. Inclusion of examples of meritorious contributions such as leadership and initiative; contributions to DEI; active participation in staff networks; collegiality and collaboration beyond role expectations. Integration of the framework into PP&D guidance materials for staff and manager training. Raise visibility of existing Workday tools to incorporate multi-source feedback to validate exceeds expectations ratings. Outcome Measures Increased consistency and transparency in reward and bonus decisions across units. Impact Measures <i>Feedback via focus groups, surveys, feedback forms indicating:</i> - Improved professional staff understanding of what constitutes above-BAU contributions. - Enhanced manager confidence in recognising and assessing against expectations framework. - Positive feedback from staff on fairness and clarity of reward processes. - Increased sense for professional staff of feeling valued, with pathways for recognition and reward. - Supporting the University's <i>Sydney in 2032</i> strategic goals under the <i>Thriving Through Diversity</i> pillar. - Embedding the University values of <i>Excellence, Trust & Accountability</i>.

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		<i>replaces LGBTQIA+ Cygnet Action 2.3 and 2.4).</i>				
General issues						
CP&P 6. Gender-Intersectional Pay Equity The University has made strong progress in advancing gender pay equity, laying a solid foundation for deeper equity work. As we continue to grow in our understanding and practice, there is a powerful opportunity to apply a gender intersectional lens, recognising how cultural background, disability status, and tenure can intersect to influence pay equity. By building on existing achievements, we can ensure fair remuneration and progression for all staff, fostering a truly inclusive and equitable workplace.						
CP&P 6.1	Analysis of remuneration data revealed persistent and complex equity gaps. The largest gender pay disparities occur among long-tenured academics and senior professional staff, although some outliers favoured men at shorter tenures, highlighting the potential for slippage and the need for ongoing vigilance. Gender-intersectional inequities were also evident, with gaps between First Nations men and staff with disability, and within-cohort gaps favour men across most countries of birth.	CP&P 6.1.1 Review remuneration data by gender, with a lens on HRMS (Workday) declared cultural background, disability status as part of remuneration reviews. Identify patterns and outliers to inform targeted interventions. <i>(Note: This action is replicated as CP&P 6.1.1 and RIV&V 8.1.1, and is in progress)</i>	2026-2028	HR Performance, Workforce Planning and Insights Team, SAGE Team, Organisational Development, HR D&I Team, Reward & Remuneration Team, Recruitment Team, HR Partnering Team,	Senior Manager, HR Diversity & Inclusion, Chief Human Resources Officer (CHRO), DVC-Community & Leadership	<i>Subject to final collaborative implementation and resourcing, example outputs and outcomes could include:</i> Output Measures Completion of regular gender-intersectional pay equity reviews, comparing gender with cultural background, disability status using declared data in HRMS (Workday) system against the dominant group averages. Identification of patterns, outliers, systemic disparities and development of targeted intervention strategies based on review findings. Exploration of incorporating an equity lens checkpoint for remuneration of new senior appointments. Exploration of opportunities to increase transparency around identified issues identified and equity strategies. Outcome Measures Reduction in gender-intersectional pay gaps and disparities. Impact Measures <i>Feedback via focus groups, surveys, feedback forms indicating:</i> - Improved awareness among decision-makers of intersectional equity considerations. - Supporting the University's <i>Sydney in 2032</i> strategic goals under the <i>Thriving Through Diversity</i> pillar.

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						Embedding the University values of <i>Excellence, Trust & Accountability</i>.
CP&P 7. Equity in Mentoring & Development Mentoring is highly valued by staff and recognised as a powerful tool for fostering career development, inclusion, and leadership, particularly for equity groups. There is a significant opportunity to build on this enthusiasm by embedding mentoring more consistently across the University. By formalising workload recognition, scaling programs, and showcasing diverse mentoring models, we can elevate the visibility and impact of mentoring. Designing these initiatives with equity, sustainability, and inclusivity at their core will ensure mentoring is accessible, supported, and celebrated across all roles and communities.						
CP&P 7.1	The value of mentors was raised consistently through focus groups, however there has not always been allocated time to allow mentors and mentees to engage in a meaningful way. Additionally, our five Cygnets identified inequities in access to development and mentoring, to which we recommit to addressing here.	CP&P 7.1.1 Encourage recognition of formal mentoring in AP&Ds (via the Service pillar of the AEF) and PP&Ds.	2026-2028	Organisational Development, Academic Excellence Program, SAGE Team	Director, Organisational Development	<i>Subject to final collaborative implementation and resourcing, example outputs and outcomes could include:</i> Output Measures Prompts and materials to support discussion and documentation of mentoring contributions. Development of guidance materials for managers and staff on how to record and evaluate mentoring. Outcome Measures Increased visibility and recognition of mentoring as a valued contribution. Improved consistency in how mentoring is acknowledged across units and career stages. Enhanced staff engagement in mentoring programs, knowing their efforts are formally recognised. Uptake of mentoring contributions in promotion and reward considerations. Impact Measures <i>Feedback via focus groups, surveys, feedback forms indicating:</i> - Positive feedback from staff and managers on the clarity and fairness of mentoring recognition. - Supporting the University's <i>Sydney in 2032</i> strategic goals under the <i>Thriving Through Diversity</i> pillar. - Embedding the University values of <i>Excellence, Trust & Accountability</i>.
		CP&P 7.1.2 Explore opportunities to broaden	2026-2028	HR D&I Team, RISE Working	Senior Manager, HR D&I, SAGE	<i>Subject to final collaborative implementation and resourcing, example outputs and outcomes could include:</i>

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		academic and professional staff access to mentoring opportunities. For example: (i) Explore working with the alumni network to provide mentoring opportunities. (ii) Pilot a peer-mentorship program within the Pride Network (<i>Note: This updates and replaces LGBQIA+ Cygnet Action 2.2, and is underway as the AWEI Platinum Project</i>). (iii) Showcase the Women@Sydney Staff Network's small group mentoring program via all staff news and seek opportunities to adapt model to other cohorts; (iv) Build on existing leadership development opportunities for intersectionally marginalised staff, including CARM women and First Nations staff, through sponsorship, coaching, mentoring, and visibility initiatives. (v) Explore opportunities for reverse mentoring.		Group, SAGE Team, Academic Excellence Program, Organisational Development, Leadership Academy, Research Office, Education & Learning Office	Program Manager	Output Measures Communication campaign around the Women@Sydney Staff Network small group mentoring program, and assessment of opportunities to adapt for other cohorts. Pilot and assessment of a reverse mentoring program. Review and refresh existing programs (e.g. VC Sponsorship Program for Culturally Diverse Women) Design and launch of a peer-mentoring pilot within the Pride Network. Exploration of other opportunities to pilot mentoring programs. Outcome Measures Increased access to mentoring for diverse groups, including LGBTQIA+ staff and culturally diverse staff. Establishment of a diverse, multi-stream mentoring ecosystem across the University. Impact Measures <i>Feedback via focus groups, surveys, feedback forms indicating:</i> • Positive feedback from participants on the relevance, inclusivity, and impact of mentoring experiences. • Supporting the University's <i>Sydney in 2032</i> strategic goals under the <i>Thriving Through Diversity</i> pillar. • Embedding the University values of <i>Excellence, Trust & Accountability</i>.

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		<i>(Note: This action is replicated as CP&P 7.1.2 and RIV&V 3.1.4. It aligns with RISE Action 1.4 and is already underway).</i>				
		CP&P 7.1.3 Liaise with Leadership Academy to encourage applications from and monitor experience of graduates from diverse cohorts beyond gender. <i>(Note: This action is replicated as CP&P 7.1.3 and RIV&V 3.1.5. aligns with RISE Action 1.4, and updates and replaces LGBTQIA+ Cygnet Action 2.1).</i>	2026-2028	SAGE Team, RISE Working Group, Leadership Academy Team	Senior Manager, Organisational Development (Leadership Academy)	<i>Subject to final collaborative implementation and resourcing, example outputs and outcomes could include:</i> Output Measures Development of inclusive promotional materials encouraging applications from diverse cohorts (e.g. ethno-racially diverse, LGBTQIA+, staff with disability, first-in-family). Implementation of a tracking mechanism to monitor participant demographics, progression, and experience. Number of Leadership Academy graduates disaggregated by equity dimensions beyond gender. Inclusion of equity participation data in regular reporting and evaluation cycles. Outcome Measures Increased awareness and participation in Leadership Academy programs by underrepresented staff. Enhanced capacity of the Leadership Academy to support intersectional leadership development. Impact Measures <i>Feedback via focus groups, surveys, feedback forms indicating:</i> • Positive feedback from participants on inclusivity and relevance of the program. • Strengthened pipeline of diverse leaders across the University. • Supporting the University's <i>Sydney in 2032</i> strategic goals under the <i>Thriving Through Diversity</i> pillar.

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						Embedding the University values of <i>Excellence, Trust & Accountability</i>.
CP&P 8. Building Systems, Tools, and Practices to Attract and Support Diverse Talent Staff deeply value inclusive recruitment and onboarding experiences, and improvements since SAGE Bronze have laid a strong foundation for further progress. As we continue to evolve our practices, there is a meaningful opportunity to enhance equity and transparency, particularly for equity groups, by applying a Universal Design and gender-intersectional lens. By increasing visibility of diverse talent pools, clarifying communication around data use, and strengthening manager capability in providing feedback and connection, we can embed equity checkpoints and foster recruitment and onboarding processes that are inclusive, consistent, and empowering for all candidates.						
CP&P 8.1	Recruitment of women was not identified as a stand-alone barrier in our Silver Self-Assessment, however some gender-intersectional barriers were identified here as well as throughout our five Cygnet applications. To support moving from gender-only to gender-intersectional performance expectations through a diverse talent pipeline, we re-commit to updating and actioning these.	CP&P 8.1.1 Subject to resourcing, continue to work with Recruitment to explore approaches and resources to enhance a diverse candidate pool. <i>(Note: This updates and replaces Recruitment Cygnet Actions 1, 5 and 11)</i>	2026-2028	Recruitment Team, SAGE Team, Privacy Team, HR D&I Team	Director, Recruitment	<i>Subject to final collaborative implementation and resourcing, example outputs and outcomes could include:</i> Output Measures Opportunities to diversify candidate pool continuously explored. Outcome Measures Continued diversification of candidate pools across academic and professional roles. Impact Measures <i>Feedback via focus groups, surveys, feedback forms indicating:</i> - Positive feedback from applicants and hiring managers on inclusivity and clarity of recruitment processes. - Supporting the University's <i>Sydney in 2032</i> strategic goals under the <i>Thriving Through Diversity</i> pillar. - Embedding the University values of <i>Excellence, Trust & Accountability</i>.
		CP&P 8.1.2 Subject to resourcing, continue to work with Recruitment to explore approaches and resources to support and uplift the role of hiring managers in providing an inclusive recruitment experience for diverse candidates by:	2026-2028	Recruitment Team, HR D&I Team, SAGE Team	Director, Recruitment	<i>Subject to final collaborative implementation and resourcing, example outputs and outcomes could include:</i> Output Measures Mechanism to monitor uptake and impact of guidelines and resources. Inclusive Recruitment Guidelines created and disseminated. Resources developed to support pre-appointment engagement. Outcome Measures Managers and recruitment panels using the resources.

KEY BARRIER 1: CAREER PLANNING, PROGRESSION & EQUITY						
ID	Rationale/Evidence	Actions	Timeframe (start & end)	Person / Group Responsible for Implementing Action	Senior Leader Accountable for Action Delivery	Example Outputs, Outcomes, and Impacts
		(1) Creating and disseminating guidelines for inclusive recruitment, including expectations of completion of Hiring for Excellence within the last two years, checklists for Hiring Managers on how DEI was considered through the process, tips for chairing diverse and inclusive recruitment panels where all participants have voice across levels of seniority and discipline-specific expertise, and guidance on how to convey constructive feedback to unsuccessful candidates; (2) Developing resources to support a Keeping in Touch approach by managers for incoming staff members between acceptance of offer and appointment to try to facilitate feelings of connection. <i>(Note: This action is replicated as FoE 1.1.1 and CP&P 9.1.2, and updates and</i>				Managers using the Keeping in Touch approach where relevant. Completion rate of "Hiring for Excellence" training. Impact Measures <i>Feedback via focus groups, surveys, feedback forms indicating:</i> • Increased manager confidence and capability in delivering feedback and fostering connection with new hires. • Positive feedback from candidates and managers on the inclusivity and professionalism of the recruitment process. • Supporting the University's <i>Sydney in 2032</i> strategic goals under the <i>Thriving Through Diversity</i> pillar. • Embedding the University values of <i>Excellence, Trust & Accountability</i>.

KEY BARRIER 1: CAREER PLANNING, PROGRESSION & EQUITY						
ID	Rationale/Evidence	Actions	Timeframe (start & end)	Person / Group Responsible for Implementing Action	Senior Leader Accountable for Action Delivery	Example Outputs, Outcomes, and Impacts
		<i>replaces Recruitment Cygnet Actions 7 and 12. It aligns with/expands the Good Practice Guide, Disability Confident Recruiter, and planned work on inclusive TGD recruitment).</i>				
8.2	Our Silver Self-Assessment as well as the 2024 LGBTQIA+ and Recruitment Cygnets indicated low representation of some groups, but we do not have a clear understanding of whether this reflects low representation in the overall candidate pool, or barriers to attraction to the University.	CP&P 8.2.1 Undertake a benchmarking exercise utilising 2026 ABS census data and alternative data sources as required to understand the potential pool of job applicants through a gender-intersectional lens to better understand how the diversity of the University's candidate pool reflects potential. <i>(Note: This updates and replaces LGBTQIA+ Cygnet Action 3.7)</i>	2026-2028	SAGE Team	SAGE Program Manager	<i>Subject to final collaborative implementation and resourcing, example outputs and outcomes could include:</i> Output Measures Completion of a benchmarking methodology using 2026 ABS Census data (available via QuickStats, TableBuilder, and integrated datasets) [www.abs.gov.au], and supplementary sources such as Jobs and Skills Australia's Gender Framework, GEDSI Analysis Tool, and Advance HE benchmarking resources [https://www.jobsandskills.gov.au/data/employment-projections] [www.cufa.org.au] [www.advance-he.ac.uk] Disaggregation of workforce and applicant data by gender, First Nations status, cultural background, disability status, LGBTQIA+ identity Identification of gaps between the University's candidate pool and broader population benchmarks. Development of a benchmarking report with visualisations and recommendations. Outcome Measures Improved understanding of how the University's recruitment diversity compares to the potential applicant pool. Enhanced capacity to identify underrepresented groups and target outreach or support strategies. Gender intersectional dataset in workforce planning and performance

KEY BARRIER 1: CAREER PLANNING, PROGRESSION & EQUITY						
ID	Rationale/Evidence	Actions	Timeframe (start & end)	Person / Group Responsible for Implementing Action	Senior Leader Accountable for Action Delivery	Example Outputs, Outcomes, and Impacts
						expectations. Impact Measures <i>Feedback via focus groups, surveys, feedback forms indicating:</i> - Positive feedback from stakeholders on the clarity and usefulness of benchmarking insights. - Uptake of benchmarking findings in recruitment and retention strategies. - Supporting the University's <i>Sydney in 2032</i> strategic goals under the <i>Thriving Through Diversity</i> pillar. - Embedding the University values of <i>Excellence, Trust & Accountability</i>.
		CP&P 8.2.2 Conduct a literature review on gender diversity in professional roles to understand potential impacts of lower representation of men and TGD staff in professional roles at the University.	2026-2028	SAGE Team	SAGE Program Manager	<i>Subject to final collaborative implementation and resourcing, example outputs and outcomes could include:</i> Output Measures Literature review summarising gender diversity in professional roles, impacts of low representation of men and TGD staff, intersectional barriers and workplace culture implications. Outcome Measures Exploration of findings in recruitment, retention, and career development strategies. Impact Measures <i>Feedback via focus groups, surveys, feedback forms indicating:</i> - Increased awareness of the systemic impacts of gendered occupational segregation. - Supporting the University's <i>Sydney in 2032</i> strategic goals under the <i>Thriving Through Diversity</i> pillar. - Embedding the University values of <i>Excellence, Trust & Accountability</i>.
8.3	In 2024-25 the University took steps to improve the onboarding experience of new starters. Monitoring the outcomes will enable us to	CP&P 8.3.1 Monitor outcomes of recently improved onboarding processes for hiring managers to ensure a clear	2026-2028	Learning & Development Team, RISE	Director, Organisational Development	<i>Subject to final collaborative implementation and resourcing, example outputs and outcomes could include:</i> Output Measures Annual assessment of outcomes from onboarding survey provided to new starters and their managers through a gender intersectional lens.

KEY BARRIER 1: CAREER PLANNING, PROGRESSION & EQUITY						
ID	Rationale/Evidence	Actions	Timeframe (start & end)	Person / Group Responsible for Implementing Action	Senior Leader Accountable for Action Delivery	Example Outputs, Outcomes, and Impacts
	understand the impact of these.	and time-structured onboarding process for new staff, including information about key user systems, and support and staff network options. Assess new staff and their manager experiences of onboarding through a gender-intersectional lens, including ethno-racial. <i>(Note: This action is replicated as CP&P 9.3.1 and RIV&V 1.2.1. It aligns with RISE Action 2.5, and updates and replaces Recruitment Cygnet Action 13)</i>		Working Group SAGE Team		Outcome Measures Reduction in onboarding delays or gaps in information delivery. Increase in early engagement with staff networks and support services. Impact <i>Feedback via focus groups, surveys, feedback forms indicating:</i> • Increase in hiring managers reporting confidence in delivering structured onboarding. • Increase in new staff reporting clarity on systems, support options, and staff networks. • Improved onboarding experience for diverse staff. • Supporting the University's <i>Sydney in 2032</i> strategic goals under the <i>Thriving Through Diversity</i> pillar. • Embedding the University values of <i>Excellence, Trust & Accountability</i>.

KEY BARRIER 2: Parents & Carers

2.1 Executive Summary

TABLE 63 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY OF PARENTS & CARERS

Background
This section explores key barriers and enablers related to parental and carer responsibilities at the University of Sydney, with a focus on improving equity, flexibility, and support for all staff. It builds on progress made since the Bronze SAGE award and the Cygnet submission and aligns with the University's broader DEI aspirations. This barrier applies equally to academic and professional staff, although some role-specific issues are raised.
Data Sources
The analysis drew on: HR Diversity Dashboard 2025 Sydney Listens Staff Engagement Survey (quantitative and qualitative) SAGE Silver Focus Groups and Surveys: Lived experience of staff with parenting and caring responsibilities. Parents at Work Network feedback
Enablers Identified
Generous leave policies and flexible work arrangements which support an extended period of time of away from work to care for a child and a flexible return to work. Supportive managers and inclusive team cultures Resources such as the Primary Carers Toolkit and Parents at Work Network Achievement relative to opportunity Recognition of career interruptions in promotion processes
Barriers Identified
Binary “primary/secondary” carer definitions are outdated and misrepresent shared caregiving. Men with partners at the University cite the single provision of parental leave per child as a barrier to taking parental leave, noting that if their partner worked at another organisation, they would not face this barrier. Carers with multiple responsibilities face unique challenges, especially those caring for children with disability and/or elderly parents. Diverse staff (e.g. migrants) report systemic barriers and lack of tailored support. Staff with caring responsibilities report lower engagement, especially men caring for adults. Policies and systems relating to parents and carers can be confusing and difficult to navigate (e.g. Workday, leave forms). We need to raise visibility of models that can provide flexibility for staff with teaching load to take unplanned leave (e.g. carers leave).
Key Recommendations
<u>Inclusive Policy Reform</u> Outdated “primary/secondary” carer definitions for parental leave; allow both parents full access to leave; extend access to entitlement from 24 to 36 months post-birth. Recognise elder care and culturally diverse kinship structures in carers' leave; clarify broader use of personal leave for caregiving. Include superannuation contributions during unpaid parental/carer leave to reduce gender-based financial disparities. <u>Flexible Work and Career Progression</u> Promote leadership role-modelling; discourage meetings outside core hours. Raise visibility of options to support flexibility for staff with teaching load to take after unplanned leave; improve backfill planning for parental/carer leave. <u>Manager Capability and Support</u> Provide timely, automated resources; create a dedicated portal; train managers to understand diverse caregiving needs and foster inclusive cultures. <u>Resources, Toolkits, and Visibility</u>

Refine toolkits for diverse carers; provide practical examples of eligible leave scenarios; promote external resources like Carers Gateway.

Review and tag content for discoverability; explore accreditation through Carers NSW.

Inclusion of Diverse Carers

Use communications to broaden visibility of diverse carers and types of caring.

Raise awareness of multigenerational and overseas caregiving; strengthen partnerships between staff networks.

Operational Enhancements

Explore feasibility of a pilot to reserve a percentage of parking for parents with school drop offs; harmonise carer definitions across systems; review travel support equity across faculties.

2.2 Background

Since Bronze, the University has made strong progress in supporting parents and carers, expanding parental leave for all genders, access to flexible work options, and providing clearer resources. Our 2024 Caring & Flexibility Cygnet Award reflected this impact, however three clear issues remained:

- Men's uptake of leave and part-time work has increased but remains significantly lower than women's.
- We have not assessed whether our provisions are fully supporting staff with complex caring responsibilities, such as the "sandwich generation" - caring for both children and ageing parents, or staff caring for dependents with disability.
- A needs analysis is yet to be conducted for diverse staff, who may face unique challenges.

Speaking to provisions and culture at the University for parents and carers, senior leaders and key stakeholders noted progress made and opportunities for improvement (Table 64).

TABLE 64 SENIOR LEADER AND KEY STAKEHOLDER THOUGHTS ON PROVISIONS FOR PARENTS AND CARERS AT THE UNIVERSITY

Note: Arising from thematic analysis of structured interviews with Senior Leaders and staff in DEI leadership roles across the University, and an HR Partners Focus Group. Quotes are used with permission.

Working Well	Working Less Well
Supportive Workplace Policies for Parents and Carers Improved policies now better accommodate parents and carers, particularly through: • Greater flexibility in work arrangements; • Increased access to part-time roles; • Consideration of caregiving responsibilities in promotion pathways. <i>"There's been more visibility on academics and the part-time environment, that often suits people when they have caring responsibilities, and how that affects promotion. I think we now have lots of things in place to help people through that period of their life." – L08</i> • Flexible work arrangements, including remote work, contribute to a more equitable environment.	Limited Access to Part-Time and Job-Sharing Roles Lack of collaborative leadership models – such as part-time/job-share roles for senior positions – hinders participation for those with caring responsibilities. <i>"Professional roles are hard to come by in the part-time environment. The jobs aren't advertised ... for fractional appointments." — L08</i> <i>"I would like to see more collaborative leadership roles ... When I first returned from maternity leave and the kids were all sick, I couldn't have put my hand up for a leadership position. There were so many days I couldn't be there [through family sickness]. Whereas if I had a shared role with somebody, and we could be backing each other up, I think I would have been more likely to put my hand up." — L05</i> Inflexible Meeting Times for Carers Early morning or late afternoon and evening meetings exclude parents managing school or daycare routines and can conflict with other caregiving duties. <i>"I know colleagues who have said they've had to dash to a senior leadership meeting that was starting at 8am. And I find that a very un-inclusive start</i>

<i>"Our working from home policies help make the place a little bit more equitable ... I think having a flexible workplace is good in that sense." — L25</i> Increased Participation of Men in Carer Roles More men are now accessing part-time work, parental leave, and carers leave provisions. <i>"It is positive that more men are taking up part-time work and paternal leave, and carers leave. It was a great improvement to get that policy to men, because men are also carers and need to be part of that equation." — L19</i>	<i>time when we're trying to encourage more females to participate in senior leadership meetings, and there could be, you know, drop-off situations happening at that time." — L30</i>
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2.2.1 Related activities & programs of work

TABLE 65 RELATED ACTIVITIES AND PROGRAMS OF WORK

Related Portfolios & Initiatives	Description	Linkages
DVC-Community & Leadership	Development of over-arching DEI Framework and Strategy for the University.	Need for a coherent strategy, leadership, advocacy, and meaningful engagement.
Parents At Work	A network for Parents and Carers at the University.	Connection, support, awareness.
Academic Excellence Framework	The Framework seeks to create a supportive academic culture by clarifying excellence, streamlining processes, equipping supervisors, and fostering a collegial community across the University.	AEF, Relative to Opportunity.
Wellbeing	The University strives to be a psychologically healthy workplace where all staff and students can thrive. Its Psychological Health and Wellbeing Framework, supported by the 2023–2026 Health and Wellbeing Program, outlines actions at individual, leadership, and University levels to achieve this goal.	Connection, support, awareness, burnout.
Incoming WGEA Targets	The University is selecting WGEA stretch targets for 2026.	Parents and Carers

2.2.2 Data sources used in this section

TABLE 66 DATA SOURCES USED IN THIS SECTION

Source	Type of Data	Details	Limitations
University of Sydney HR Diversity Dashboard	Uptake of Parental and Carers' Leave across different demographics	Linked to central data warehouse, Snowflake. Includes demographic questions around gender, country of origin, disability status, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander, and age. Allows for intersectional representation across uptake of Parental and Carers' Leave.	Does not include questions relating to ethno-racial background or sexuality.
2025 Sydney Listens All Staff Engagement Survey Quantitative data	% Favourable responses by Caring Responsibilities	Open to staff May 2025.	Both cultural background and ethno-racial demographics are available, but much lower disclosure of the latter, leading to more limited availability of gender-intersectional data due to Culture Amp privacy parameters. For this reason, and to better align with workforce data, which does not capture ethno-racial data, cultural background is used more frequently here. TGD headcounts are too low to be shown across cultural and ethno-racial groupings and so have been excluded from analyses.
2025 Sydney Listens All Staff Engagement Survey Qualitative data	Thematic analysis of 2025 Sydney Listens anonymous free text feedback from staff.	Thematic analysis of the total of 3032 free text comments - 69% of participants contributed at least one comment, with a median of 3 comments/commentor. We used Microsoft CoPilot to interrogate the datasets, asking whether positive or negative themes were raised in free text comments relating to each of the identified sub-barriers, and if any suggestions were raised by staff to address the issues. Themes were verified by humans.	We do not have permission to use direct quotes from staff.
SAGE Silver Focus Groups & Surveys	Thematic analysis of lived experience of staff with caring responsibilities. Focus groups and Surveys Offered: • Men • Women • LGBTQIA+	<u>Demographics</u> As we especially wanted to explore the experience of men with parental and carers leave – and noting that during the Cygnet phase the parenting and caring focus groups were dominated by women – one survey especially targeting men was promoted through personal networks of people active within SAGE. The result was a total of 75 participants, with 40 men, 32 women, with lower TGD and ND	

- Staff with multiple caring responsibilities (e.g. any combination of children, dependents, older people, other forms of caring)
- Staff caring for an older person/s

participants. Participants were asked to indicate whether they had 'primary', 'secondary' or 'shared' caring responsibilities.

	Primary	Secondary	Shared	None	Not specified
Man	9	≤6	22	≤6	0
Woman	22	≤6	7	0	≤6
TGD	0	0	≤6	0	0
Not specified	≤6	0	0	0	0

Having multiple caring responsibilities (e.g. caring for children and elderly parents and/or a child or adult with a disability) was equally the most common caring role, alongside caring for a child or children.

Job category	
Academic	47
Professional	27
Not specified	≤6
Ethnicity	
Anglo-Celtic	25
European	15
Asian	13
Latin American	≤6
Middle Eastern/North African	≤6
Not specified	16
Disability	
Yes	≤6
No	54
Not specified	15
LGBTQIA+	
Yes	≤6
No	57
Not specified	13
Caring responsibilities	
Child or children	19
Child with disability or illness	≤6
Older person	≤6
More than one type	19
Caring role, not specified	30
No caring responsibilities	≤6

		Quotes are used with permission. Individuals are represented by participant numbers (Pxx) to preserve anonymity. The letter immediately after indicates whether the participant registered as a (W)oman, (M)an or (TGD) for trans/gender diverse. If there is no letter, they did not specify a gender.	
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2.3 Evidence of the Barrier and Contributing Factors

2.3.1 Barriers for men

2.3.1.1 Lower uptake of Parental Leave by men compared to women

Between 2019-24, men primarily accessed Partner Leave, whereas women dominated the uptake of Parental, Primary Caregiver, and unpaid parental provisions (Figure 18).

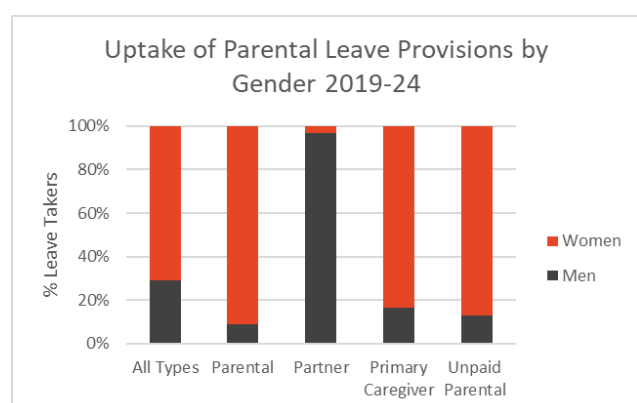


FIGURE 18 UPTAKE OF PARENTAL LEAVE PROVISIONS BY MEN AND WOMEN 2019-24 COMBINED

Note: Only eight TGD and ND staff members accessed any type of leave provisions and so have been excluded from these data. All types = All types of Parental Leave combined; Parental Leave (Maternity leave) = Up to 14 weeks leave available to birth or adoptive parent. A partner at the University can take up to 10 weeks of the 14 weeks (14 weeks shared by partners); Partner leave = 5 days paid partner leave + 20 days paid personal leave + 20 days unpaid partner leave; Primary Caregiver leave = Up to 22 weeks paid primary care giver leave, in addition to maternity leave, available to birth giver and partner if they both work at the University (with 1 year service). Either birth giver or partner can access the 22 weeks paid primary care giver leave or they can share the leave. Unpaid Parental leave = Up to 52 weeks available to either parent, extended to 104 weeks with manager approval. Data verified by HR Workforce Information & Reporting 5 September 2025 and correct at the time of verification.

Men's share of total Parental Leave rose from 29.2% in 2019 to 31% in 2024, while women's declined from 70.8% to 68.5% (Table 67). Adjusted for workforce representation, men's uptake increased from 3.7% to 4.3%.

With respect to Primary Caregiver Leave, men's uptake rose from 0.5% in 2019 to 1.7% in 2024, increasing their share from 10.3% to 21.6%. Women's share dropped from 89.7% to 68.5%, with uptake falling from a 2022 peak of 5% to 4.2% in 2024, although still above 2.9% in 2019.

Academic staff were slightly less likely than professional staff to access Primary Caregiver Leave (Table 68), potentially reflecting role-specific barriers raised by staff and discussed below.

Staff most accessed Primary Caregiver Leave between ages 30-39. Women had a stronger pre-peak (20-29) and dropped off rapidly after, while men declined more gradually, with higher uptake in the 40-49 bracket (Figure 19).

TABLE 67 UPTAKE OF PARENTAL LEAVE PROVISIONS BY GENDER AND YEAR 2019-24

Note: Only eight Trans & Gender and gender not disclosed staff members accessed any type of leave provisions and so have been excluded from these data; HC = Headcount; Data verified by HR Workforce Information & Reporting 5 September 2025 and correct at the time of verification.

	Men				Women			
	HC Fixed & Continuing Staff	HC Parental Leave Takers	% Fixed & Continuing Staff Uptake Parental Leave	% Parental Leave Takers	HC Fixed & Continuing Staff	HC Parental Leave Takers	% Fixed & Continuing Staff Uptake Parental Leave	% Parental Leave Takers
All Types								
2019	3445	129	3.7	29.2	4761	313	6.6	70.8
2020	3527	113	3.2	29.1	4906	275	5.6	70.7
2021	3358	134	4.0	27.2	4724	357	7.6	72.4
2022	3420	142	4.2	27.8	4928	367	7.4	71.8
2023	3658	154	4.2	30.4	5256	352	6.7	69.4
2024	3957	171	4.3	31	5788	378	6.5	68.5
Parental								
2019	3445	65	1.9	25.7	4761	188	3.9	74.3
2020	3527	51	1.4	22.1	4906	180	3.7	77.9
2021	3358	13	0.4	4.9	4724	249	5.3	94.7
2022	3420	≤ 6	0.1	1.3	4928	234	4.7	98.3
2023	3658	0	0.0	0	5256	230	4.4	100
2024	3957	≤ 6	0.0	0.4	5788	253	4.4	99.6
Partner								
2019	3445	100	2.9	88.5	4761	13	0.3	11.5
2020	3527	85	2.4	94.4	4906	≤ 6	0.1	5.6
2021	3358	155	4.6	98.7	4724	≤ 6	0.0	1.3
2022	3420	153	4.5	99.4	4928	≤ 6	0.0	0.6
2023	3658	183	5.0	97.9	5256	≤ 6	0.1	2.1
2024	3957	184	4.6	97.4	5788	≤ 6	0.1	2.6
Primary Caregiver								
2019	3445	16	0.5	10.3	4761	140	2.9	89.7
2020	3527	25	0.7	15.9	4906	131	2.7	83.4
2021	3358	35	1.0	13.8	4724	218	4.6	72.4
2022	3420	46	1.3	15.8	4928	245	5.0	71.8
2023	3658	52	1.4	18.1	5256	236	4.5	69.4
2024	3957	67	1.7	21.6	5788	243	4.2	68.5
Unpaid Parental								
2019	3445	21	0.6	13.9	4761	130	2.7	86.1
2020	3527	9	0.3	8.2	4906	101	2.1	91.8
2021	3358	18	0.5	13.5	4724	115	2.4	86.5
2022	3420	11	0.3	7.8	4928	129	2.6	91.5
2023	3658	18	0.5	13	5256	119	2.3	86.2
2024	3957	26	0.7	20.3	5788	102	1.8	79.7

TABLE 68 PRIMARY CAREGIVER LEAVE TAKERS BY ROLE TYPE 2019-24

Note: HC = Headcount; Data verified by HR Workforce Information & Reporting 5 September 2025 and correct at the time of verification.

	HC Fixed & Continuing Staff	HC Primary Carer Leave Takers	% Fixed & Continuing Staff Uptake Primary Carer Leave	% Primary Carer Leave Takers	HC Fixed & Continuing Staff	HC Primary Carer Leave Takers	% Fixed & Continuing Staff Uptake Primary Carer Leave	% Primary Carer Leave Takers
Academic								
2019	1892	8	0.4	15.7	1722	43	2.5	84.3
2020	1940	17	0.9	26.2	1757	47	2.7	72.3
2021	1831	19	1.0	21.4	1645	70	4.3	78.7
2022	1810	19	1.0	21.4	1679	70	4.2	78.7
2023	1876	25	1.3	26.6	1770	69	3.9	73.4
2024	1982	30	1.5	30.6	1895	69	3.6	69.4
Professional								
2019	1554	8	0.5	7.6	3042	97	3.2	84.3
2020	1594	8	0.5	8.7	3157	84	2.7	72.3
2021	1531	16	1.0	9.6	3086	151	4.9	90.4
2022	1616	27	1.7	13.2	3258	177	5.4	86.3
2023	1783	27	1.5	13.9	3490	167	4.8	86.1
2024	1977	37	1.9	17.4	3899	176	4.5	82.6

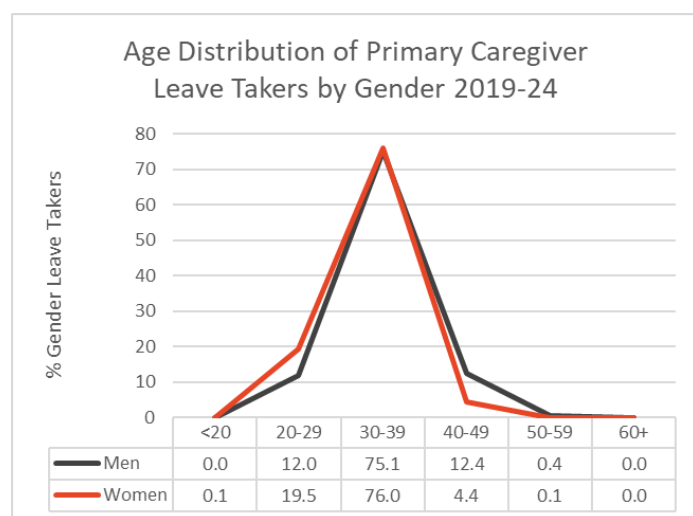


FIGURE 19 AGE DISTRIBUTION OF PRIMARY CAREGIVER LEAVE TAKERS BY GENDER

Note: Data verified by HR Workforce Information & Reporting 5 September 2025 and correct at the time of verification.

2.3.1.2 Lived experience

Men may hesitate to take full leave entitlements due to career concerns, perceptions that management will have a negative view of them taking leave, or the work unit culture (Table 69). Low uptake and visibility can consequently discourage others, reinforcing low uptake. More broadly, cultural beliefs that caregiving is ‘women’s work’ continue to persist, and men also questioned the terms ‘primary’ and ‘secondary’ carers, saying they don’t reflect modern, fluid parenting and caring arrangements.

However, thematic analysis of 2025 Sydney Listens staff free text comments and SAGE Silver Focus Groups highlighted that many barriers to men taking parental leave were shared across genders, including career

(Table 70), systems and resources (Table 71), workplace culture (Table 72), and management of workload (Table 73).

Continuing to work on removing or mitigating the barriers often faced by women, especially around career and workload, could also encourage more men to take leave.

TABLE 69 THEMES ARISING FROM 2025 SYDNEY LISTENS AND SAGE SILVER FOCUS GROUPS RELATING TO MEN AND CARING RESPONSIBILITIES

Note: 2025SL = Arising from thematic analysis of free text comments in the 2025 Sydney Listens All Staff Engagement Survey; SSFG = Arising from thematic analysis of SAGE Silver Focus Groups. Quotes are from SAGE Silver Focus Groups only and are used with permission.

Working Well	Working Less Well	Recommendations
Desire for Equitable Parental Leave Among Men Men expressed a strong desire to take time away from work at the birth of their children and to share caregiving responsibilities. They emphasised that parental leave should be accessible to all genders, acknowledging the diversity of family structures. (SSFG) <i>“Personally, I love being a dad and don't feel a stigma about being a male carer or parent at all. It takes a village, and parenting should be equal, while parents have distinct roles by personality.” – P67(M)</i> Women’s Perspectives on Shared Parenting Women appreciated that when men took more leave, it helped alleviate the burden of being the primary carer and fostered stronger paternal bonds. (SSFG) <i>“Generous uni leave allowed my husband ... to develop a stronger bond and become more involved in parenting from the start.” – P23(W)</i> Leave Access Supporting Women’s Career Development Some men described how their access to parental leave enabled their partners to	Transactional Views of Work and Leadership Disconnects Some men described their relationship with work as purely transactional, lacking emotional or personal depth. Others noted a cultural or generational disconnect between leadership and staff, particularly in understanding carer needs - executive leaders often lacked school-aged children, leading to non-inclusive decisions (e.g. early meetings, parking policies). (2025SL) Persistent Gender Norms and Stereotypes Participants highlighted enduring societal expectations that women are the primary carers and men the breadwinner. These norms were reinforced by workplace policies and cultural assumptions. (SSFG) <i>“When we took my daughter for her first needles, my GP asked [my wife] what are you doing regarding work? And she said, ‘I’m going to take the year off,’ and he said it jokingly, but he said I just needed to work harder so that she didn’t have to go back to work. And he said it again at the 6-month injections. And I’m just like; you have no idea what that means ... I felt that pressure, right? Which is very 1950s thinking, but I felt that pressure.” — P34(M)</i> <i>“While I was at the tail end of my parental leave, I came back for a session for carers, and I was surprised that everyone there was female. You would think there would be some men, but no, they were all women. I felt in a fortunate position because my husband does take up a lot of care duty, and he doesn’t assume any gender stereotypes that way.” — P33(W)</i> Financial Pressures and Career Trade-Offs Financial considerations, often shaped by the gender pay gap, played a significant role in determining who took parental leave. Men described making career sacrifices to accommodate caregiving. (SSFG) <i>“My role has a lot more earning potential than my wife’s role. So, we had to prioritise, we had to go OK, I need to do more employed work, because there’s potential for me</i>	Reform Parental Leave Policy Through EA Negotiations Remove the “primary” and “secondary” carer definitions and adopt a default assumption of shared care, allowing all staff equal access to parental leave entitlements (EA Negotiation Recommendation) Ensure that both parents employed by the University can access full or extended parental leave entitlements, rather than splitting or forfeiting benefits (EA Negotiation Recommendation) Extend the eligibility window for parental leave from 24 to 36 months post-birth, enabling parents to better balance career and caregiving over a longer period (EA Negotiation Recommendation) <i>“It is great that a primary caregiver is entitled to 22 weeks’ leave. I think it would be beneficial to extend the [application] to within 36 months of the birth ... The first 3 years of a baby’s life are crucial, not just the first 12 months, and the partner should have an opportunity to take that 22 weeks and be there for the baby any time within that 3-year window.” — P55(M)</i> Leadership Visibility and Role Modelling Encourage senior leaders to visibly take parental or carers leave to challenge stereotypes and normalise caregiving across genders. <i>“Honestly, I think the main barrier is old stereotypes. Some men just don’t feel comfortable taking this kind of leave (or staying home to care for the baby). The best way forward is to normalise it. I thought it was</i>

resume or grow their careers more easily. (SSFG) <i>"[My wife] had a part-time job one day a week, but she was able to get up to four days a week. I've been able to support her doing that, and I think that's been good for her in terms of her confidence and being able to grow." – P30(M)</i> Changing Societal Views on Male Carers Across genders, participants noted a positive shift in societal attitudes toward men's involvement in caregiving. Role models who visibly balanced fatherhood and careers were seen as influential. (SSFG) <i>"I did have people say to me. 'Oh, so, are you coming back in two weeks?' Like, the very cliché thing ... But I also had some of the newer professors, who are male, taking parental leave and taking a large amount of it. I could definitely see this new wave of very senior academics supporting junior staff." – P34(M)</i> <i>"It's definitely shifting from what I can see in my inner circle. I have a couple of friends, and the father took half a year of leave after the mother took leave, and they did like a swap. So that was really good to see." – P28(W)</i>	<i>to earn more money. We've just got those cost-of-living pressures, we really can't do much about it." — P34(M)</i> <i>"My wife's hours are more rigid than mine but are financially worth far more. So, I do take on the caring responsibilities, getting kids ready for school, picking them up, which is all OK [but] I've sort of resigned myself to not progressing beyond where I am. I can see no prospect or have no real desire for advancement. That's my way of managing it basically." — P37(M)</i> Outdated Carer Definitions and Policy Limitations Men expressed frustration with rigid definitions of "primary" and "secondary" carers, which failed to reflect the shared and dynamic nature of modern parenting. These definitions impacted access to leave and institutional support. (SSFG, 2025SL) <i>"You can only take [the full amount of] parental leave if your partner goes back to work full-time and you are the primary carer. This forces your partner to either go back earlier or for you to take annual leave, which is not deducted from workload." — P20(M)</i> <i>"You know, the idea of a primary carer or a secondary carer. Well, I don't know. Today I'm probably secondary carer because my wife is not working today. Tomorrow I'm the primary carer because my wife is working tomorrow." — P36(M)</i> <i>"Both me and my partner work for USyd. This means that only one of us is entitled to the full paid parental leave, otherwise we need to split between us which is not really feasible. If I worked for another institution, I would be able to take primary carers' paid parental leave once my partner finished her leave. It is not fair that we are punished by working at the same institution." — P03(M)</i> Career Risks for Men Taking Parental Leave Some men feared that taking parental leave would negatively affect their professional reputation and research record, even outside the university context. (SSFG) <i>"The problem is more how it impacts on one's professional research record. There is a persistent bias for male parental leave to not be viewed in the same light as females, so many of us are hesitant to take advantage of it." – P75(M)</i>	<i>great when our Head of School took this time. It made it visible to staff that men do take parental leave, and that it's a healthy, normal thing to do." — P70(M)</i> Improving Access to Leave Information and Support Refine the parental leave toolkit/portal to better support men and gender diverse staff in understanding entitlements and accessing relevant resources and networks.
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TABLE 70 THEMES ARISING FROM 2025 SYDNEY LISTENS AND SAGE SILVER FOCUS GROUPS RELATING TO GENERAL CAREER BARRIERS FOR PARENTS AND CARERS

Note: 2025SL = Arising from thematic analysis of free text comments in the 2025 Sydney Listens All Staff Engagement Survey; SSFG = Arising from thematic analysis of SAGE Silver Focus Groups. Quotes are from SAGE Silver Focus Groups only and are used with permission.

Working Well	Working Less Well	Recommendations
Generous Leave Entitlements and Positive EA Changes Leave provisions for parents and carers at the University of Sydney are widely regarded as generous and industry-leading. The 2023–26 Enterprise Agreement (EA) changes, which allowed carers to access leave within 12 months of employment, were positively received. (2025SL, SSFG) <i>“Speaking with other male partners about their leave [in other workplaces], they do not receive anything close to what USyd offers. My manager and organisational unit have been very vocal and supportive about me accessing the entire allotment of provisions available. This is very supportive for my partner and baby as we do not have alternate carers available to us. As such, I am extremely grateful.” – P02(M)</i> <i>“I feel like the University is very accommodating with the very generous amount of leave entitlements ... My partner was really ill for a few weeks last month, and I had to drive him around to appointments and stuff. And then I had to step in as primary carer [of our child]. So I've been able to take leave for that and in that way I feel quite assured.” – P33(W)</i> Flexible Work Arrangements Supporting Care Formal and informal flexible working arrangements were universally praised for enabling staff to balance caregiving and professional responsibilities. (2025SL, SSFG)	Lack of Role Flexibility and Unclear Promotion Pathways Carers, particularly women, reported feeling trapped at their current level due to limited flexibility, lack of recognition for higher-level work, and unclear progression pathways for professional staff. Senior roles are perceived as demanding longer hours and reduced flexibility, discouraging parents/carers from applying and leading managers to assume they are unwilling or unable to take on more responsibility. (2025SL, SSFG) <i>“I feel that in the coming years, time required to provide support for my elderly mother will only increase. This makes me slightly hesitant to apply for more senior roles that will possibly, by their nature, require me to be more readily contactable during working hours, including the need to attend in-person meetings on campus.” – P26(M)</i> <i>“I have been in my position for 8 years and have never been asked to step up into my boss' position or take on a delegation when they are on leave, unlike my counterparts [who don't have caring responsibilities].” – P16(W)</i> Senior roles are rarely offered on a part-time basis, limiting opportunities for advancement while maintaining flexibility and caring responsibilities. (SSFG) <i>“I've been working part-time for a couple of years, and that's my choice, but I do think it limits you career-wise. There's such few jobs advertised as job-share or part-time, you have to hold on to the job you have. I think there's quite a lot of people working part-time who would like to do step up and do higher roles, but you never see them advertised.” – P40(W)</i> Presenteeism and Scheduling Can Undermine Flexibility Some carers, especially women, felt judged or penalised for taking carer's leave or requesting flexibility or part-time hours. Career progression was perceived to be tied to presenteeism. (2025SL, SSFG) <i>“I didn't feel like I was in a position to say, ‘Hey, I'm sorry, I don't work that day, I can't be there.’ Because I felt if I said that, then they'd think ‘she doesn't want this job’, especially being a fixed-term appointment. You know how precarious that is. So you push yourself to do everything you possibly can.” – P38(W)</i>	Normalise Flexibility Through Leadership Messaging Promote internal stories and leadership communications, especially from executive teams, that reinforce the message that flexible work and parental leave are supported and do not hinder career progression. <i>“I was able to negotiate a flexible working arrangement to not take my primary carers leave full-time so I could continue supervising PhD students and postdocs. This has been great as my research projects have continued but I've still been able to take a sizeable amount of time off. I've since shared this configuration with others as something that is possible.” – P51(M)</i> Promote Family-Friendly Scheduling Discourage meetings and events scheduled outside core working hours to ensure inclusivity for staff with caregiving responsibilities.

<i>"My centre is very flexible with my working hours to allow me to work from home three days a week, which allows me to do school drop-offs and pick-ups and make up the hours. My centre and manager also allow me to attend school events and activities if it works with my work schedule, and again make up the hours." – P04(W)</i> <i>"My youngest one has an intellectual disability. It's not severe, but it's enough that she needs a lot of support from us, from myself and my wife, to help her. This morning I had to drop her off at her usual Wednesday [activity]. So I had to be flexible because that's like a 9.30 drop-off. And of course, 9.30 is within working hours." – P30(M)</i> Consideration of Care in Promotion Processes There is recognition that relative to opportunity provisions are factored into promotion panel deliberations, acknowledging the impact of caregiving breaks (SSFG). <i>"When we look at things like the promotions process, we do need to take into account breaks, what could this person have achieved in that period of time they were off caring, for instance. I am aware that that is a stipulation of how we make decisions regarding promotions." – P72</i> Valuing Work-Life Balance and Institutional Loyalty Staff expressed appreciation for being able to contribute meaningfully at work while remaining present for their families. This balance was linked to increased motivation and loyalty to the University. (2025SL, SSFG) <i>"There is no rule or mandate that we must be on campus, and I love it. Like, I absolutely love it. I think I would struggle a lot if there was a you-need-to-be-on-campus mandate. I think it's outdated." – P34(M)</i>	Staff who rely on flexible arrangements to manage caregiving responsibilities felt sidelined when meetings or events were scheduled at conflicting times, including evenings and weekends. (2025SL, SSFG) <i>"I've been expected to work during holidays and weekends. This appears to be the norm for team members without caring responsibilities. As a result, I feel I'm viewed as less committed simply because I have responsibilities outside of work. This is both unfair and disheartening." – P12(W)</i> Inadequate Recognition of Career Interruptions Both men and women expressed frustration that career interruptions due to caring responsibilities were not adequately recognised in promotion or grant processes. Some stopped disclosing interruptions due to the burden of documentation or fear of stigma. (2025SL, SSFG) <i>"There isn't the focus on achievement relative to opportunity that there should be. It's not normalised among academics and it's certainly not normalised among the people that are serving on [promotion] panels. I have seen it time and time again that people are passed over for certain rewards or opportunities simply because they don't have the same quantity of outputs as people who don't have caring responsibilities." – P41(W)</i> <i>"Research is an international 'rat race'. If you are taking time off whilst your 'competitors' are still researching away, you risk falling behind in your field." – P71(M)</i> Travel and Networking Barriers Expectations to travel for conferences or attend after-hours networking events were seen as incompatible with caregiving responsibilities, disadvantaging parents in career advancement. (SSFG) <i>"Being childless puts you at a stark advantage over your peers who are parents, as you can travel to conferences more easily, work late hours, socialise with peers and benefit from the career advancement that comes with that." – P48(M)</i>	Expand Flexible Pathways to Senior Roles Explore structural barriers that prevent senior academic and professional roles from being offered as job-share or part-time, and develop strategies to make these options viable. Improve Travel Support for Carers Conduct a stocktake of Faculties and Schools that currently offer travel support for staff with caring responsibilities. Advocate for consistent support and fill identified gaps. Embed RTO and FTEY in Institutional Processes Ensure that Relative to Opportunity (RTO) and Full-Time Equivalent Years (FTEY) are embedded across all systems, awards, and opportunities. Provide training for AP&D Advisers and selection/promotion panel members to apply RTO principles consistently and fairly.
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TABLE 71 THEMES ARISING FROM 2025 SYDNEY LISTENS AND SAGE SILVER FOCUS GROUPS RELATING TO RESOURCE AND SYSTEM BARRIERS FOR PARENTS AND CARERS

Note: 2025SL = Arising from thematic analysis of free text comments in the 2025 Sydney Listens All Staff Engagement Survey; SSFG = Arising from thematic analysis of SAGE Silver Focus Groups. Quotes are from SAGE Silver Focus Groups only and are used with permission.

Working Well	Working Less Well	Recommendations
Accessibility and Usefulness of Carer Resources Participants who accessed the primary carers toolkit found it helpful, although some noted that resources were difficult to locate initially. (SSFG) <i>"I think it can be difficult to find university information, but once I did find it on the Intranet, it was all there. There were some questions that I had ... but in terms of finding the actual policies and provisions and resources, I thought it was all right."</i> – P34(M) <i>"I think the university is very good in how it posits the leave availability to all genders, whether it's the birthing parent or the non-birthing parent. I don't think there's any discrimination there."</i> – P72 Awareness of Support Networks Some participants mentioned the existence of the parent and carers' network, although others were unaware of its availability or purpose. (SSFG) Travel Support for Parents There is some funding available for parents who need to travel with children, although awareness and access may vary. (SSFG)	Systemic Gaps in Leave Processes and Carer Recognition Systems and forms often fail to reflect the complexity of carer roles, such as joint caregiving or dual responsibilities for children and elderly parents. Staff also reported difficulty navigating parental leave processes and a lack of clarity around entitlements. (2025SL, SSFG) <i>"The process and system for booking parental leave was convoluted, confusing and not fit for purpose. I needed to use multiple systems to apply for multiple different types of leave. These all needed to be approved separately and ended up needing me to follow up multiple times to actually get them processed."</i> – P03(M) <i>"Taking unpaid leave has impacted my sick/carer's leave entitlements. I didn't realise this before I extended my paid leave with a period of unpaid leave, and it might have changed my decision if I had had this information beforehand."</i> – P22(W) Confusion Around Carer's Leave Eligibility Staff expressed uncertainty about what qualifies as carer's leave, especially in situations involving school refusal, learning disabilities, or non-medical caregiving. (SSFG) <i>"I've sometimes wondered can I take this as carer's leave or not? You know, my child isn't sick, but I couldn't work for the first two hours of the day because he wouldn't go to school. So I was sort of dealing with school issues. Is that a personal leave thing? Is that a carer's leave thing? Sometimes the policies aren't clear for me."</i> – P39(W) Parking Access as a Barrier for Carers The lack of accessible parking disproportionately affected carers who cannot arrive early due to school or childcare drop-offs. This leads to missed meetings, reduced campus presence, and in some cases, turning down roles or promotions due to logistical challenges (2025SL).	Clarify Carer's Leave and Promote Support Resources Provide clearer definitions and practical examples of what qualifies as carer's leave, including, for example: • School refusal or behavioural support • Non-medical caregiving scenarios • Support for children with learning disabilities Promote existing resources more effectively, including: • Parental leave entitlements • The Parents and Carers Network • Support services for diverse family structures Review intranet pages to ensure: • Key resources are tagged with relevant search terms • Navigation is intuitive and inclusive • Visibility of carer-related content is improved across platforms

TABLE 72 THEMES ARISING FROM 2025 SYDNEY LISTENS AND SAGE SILVER FOCUS GROUPS RELATING TO WORKPLACE CULTURE BARRIERS FOR PARENTS AND CARERS

Note: 2025SL = Arising from thematic analysis of free text comments in the 2025 Sydney Listens All Staff Engagement Survey; SSFG = Arising from thematic analysis of SAGE Silver Focus Groups. Quotes are from SAGE Silver Focus Groups only and are used with permission.

Working Well	Working Less Well	Recommendations
Supportive and Trust-Based Management Supportive managers who foster flexible, trust-based work environments significantly improve the experiences of parents and carers. (2025SL, SSFG) <i>"[My team] is really embracing of parents, uplifting them. It's perfectly normal that someone will say, 'I'm going to be working from home this week because I'm sole parenting while my wife goes interstate' and the team members respond, 'If you need anything, any support, let us know.' That's been really lovely." — P19(W)</i> <i>"In terms of coming back, I had the option of part-time, full-time, you know. All that was very well communicated, and my manager was fully supportive of me going either way." — P28(W)</i>	Discrepancy Between Inclusion Rhetoric and Action While diversity and inclusion were frequently discussed, carers felt that institutional actions did not align with the rhetoric. Wellbeing initiatives were sometimes perceived as superficial or performative, especially when core issues like parking access and workload were left unaddressed. (2025SL) Micromanagement and Bias Against Carers Carers often felt more scrutinised than colleagues without caregiving responsibilities. Despite strong performance, some were excluded from projects or denied flexibility. A persistent perception exists that working from home equates to reduced commitment, even when productivity remains high. (2025SL, SSFG) <i>"My own experience is that attempts to discuss caring responsibilities and impacts has been met with suspicion (as if I was trying to evade work or responsibilities to the institution). I should note that this is from both managers identifying as male or female." – P60</i> Managerial Inconsistency and Its Impact on Team Expectations Experiences with managers varied widely. While some were described as supportive and empathetic, others were rigid, dismissive, or punitive. This inconsistency created a culture of uncertainty and inequity, particularly around flexible work arrangements. (2025SL, SSFG) <i>"Although I have a formal flexible working arrangement in place, my manager recently attempted to remove it. It was only through escalating the issue to HR that I was able to retain it. This situation placed an incredible amount of stress on both me and my family." – P12(W)</i> <i>"Following the birth of my firstborn, I had an acting line manager who was, put bluntly, unsympathetic to my request for parental leave. They basically informed me that it was my problem if I was away the first weeks of semester and my responsibility to sort out coverage for my teaching." – P50(M)</i> The culture set by leaders inevitably filters down to team members. In some cases, colleagues expected carers to continue working during leave periods, undermining the legitimacy of parental leave (SSFG).	Strengthen Institutional Partnerships and Accreditation Develop a formal partnership between the Wellbeing Team and the Parents & Carers Network to identify and implement meaningful support initiatives for staff with caring responsibilities. Scope the feasibility of pursuing accreditation through Carers NSW to formally recognise and enhance the University's commitment to supporting carers. Shift Culture Toward Trust and Output-Based Work Role model team cultures that prioritise outcomes over presenteeism, especially in leadership and management practices. Train and encourage managers to foster supportive, flexible environments that trust staff to manage their responsibilities effectively. <i>"I think the overall issue is cultural. We need to trust parents to do their best, give them flexibility to vary their jobs and keep communication channels open." – P11(W)</i> <i>"All people across the gender spectrum have caring responsibilities. It's about time the University trained its middle managers in this area. Attitudes need to shift." – P60</i> Equip Managers with Timely, Practical Resources Explore mechanisms to automate the delivery of targeted resources to managers at key moments, such as when staff are planning, taking, or returning from parental/carers leave.

	<i>"My colleagues seem to have an expectation that I will continue working while on secondary carer parental leave. For example, I have been booked in to deliver lectures during this period, and I have also been scheduled to participate in other work activities during this leave period, even after I have stated that I'll be on parental leave." – P49(M)</i> Gaps in Managerial Knowledge of Leave Policies There was concern that some managers lacked awareness of leave policies or did not know where to find relevant information to support their staff (SSFG). <i>"The fundamental question is, does my supervisor know what is to be done?" – P36(M)</i>	Ensure managers know where to find help and guidance, especially when navigating unfamiliar leave processes. <i>"I think training should have vignettes, anecdotes and actual real world experiences, so that managers might get a better feel for what's happening for people they're managing." – P38(W)</i>
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TABLE 73 THEMES ARISING FROM 2025 SYDNEY LISTENS AND SAGE SILVER FOCUS GROUPS RELATING TO WORKLOAD BARRIERS FOR PARENTS AND CARERS

Note: 2025SL = Arising from thematic analysis of free text comments in the 2025 Sydney Listens All Staff Engagement Survey; SSFG = Arising from thematic analysis of SAGE Silver Focus Groups. Quotes are from SAGE Silver Focus Groups only and are used with permission.

Working Well	Working Less Well	Recommendations
Team Structures Supporting Carer Flexibility Some teams are intentionally structured to allow colleagues to step in and cover work when staff are unexpectedly called away for caregiving responsibilities. This approach helps reduce stress and maintain continuity without penalising carers. (SSFG) <i>"I am thankful that my team has in place a very robust back-up system. We keep really close notes, we ask for recordings to meetings. My team is cross-trained, so if one of us can't be there for a week we can just step in. Me and another teammate, we buddy and are each other's backup. We don't have to be on leave and worry that the ball is going to get dropped. I'm aware not all teams do that."</i> — P33(W)	Inconsistent Visibility of Mechanisms to Support Carer Flexibility Carers reported that workloads could become difficult to manage during unplanned leave (e.g. carers' leave) when proactive arrangements to support flexibility were not in place. (SL2025, SSFG) <i>"I had a PhD student at the time who was very patient, but felt that there was no support for him while I was on parental leave so I used to come in to make sure he knew what he was doing."</i> – P24(W) <i>"If I need to teach and my son has a 39-degree fever that evening, that's a nightmare. It's a panic attack. I'm a single parent. And I have no support basically. My parents are not living here, I'm actually supporting my mum at a distance since my dad died. So there may be a lot of days we can take for leave but the work is accumulating. I'm scared to take any leave because I end up working anyway. When you are a sole carer ... I have no words to describe that."</i> – P32(W) Overload on Return from Parental Leave Staff returning from parental leave to a part-time arrangement often found themselves overloaded, retaining full-time responsibilities despite reduced hours. In some cases, they felt compelled to accept lower-level roles to achieve a manageable work-life balance, even though their skills and experience remained unchanged. (SSFG) <i>"I am a primary carer of a young child. When I returned to work, I felt largely unsupported as I requested flexible work arrangements to work 4 days a week, which was approved, however the work was not adjusted to an 0.8 FTE workload so I was working additional hours and eventually compromised to a compressed working week. This put strain on my wellbeing and I did not feel like my manager made proactive steps to support me despite me feeling overwhelmed and emotional at work."</i> – C28(W)	Investigate Barriers to Backfill Despite Central Funding Parental Leave is centrally funded, which should remove financial obstacles to backfilling roles. Explore remaining operational, cultural, or structural barriers that prevent effective backfill when staff take Parental Leave, such as potentially: • Lack of planning or staffing flexibility • Managerial reluctance or lack of awareness • Gaps in communication between HR and academic units Support Teaching Staff During Unplanned Leave Review arrangements currently successfully utilised by academic staff to support flexibility during unplanned leave, and raise visibility of those across Faculties and Schools. Consider: • Flexible teaching coverage models • Shared teaching pools • Reasonable expectations for catch-up work

2.3.1.3 2025 Sydney Listens: Primary and Secondary Carers

The 2025 Sydney Listens Survey (Table 74) revealed two key patterns: (1) men without caring responsibilities scored the University less favourably than women across many engagement factors, with men primary carers becoming even more favourable; (2) the pattern reversed for secondary carers, where women were less positive, possibly due to workload, societal expectations, and secondary caring pressures. Additionally, the categorisation of Primary and Secondary Carers in the survey demographics, reflects the issues raised by men that binary categorisations do not reflect fluid shared care that is increasingly the case.

TABLE 74 SYDNEY LISTENS STAFF SURVEY 2025: PERCENTAGE FAVOURABLE RESPONSES ACROSS ENGAGEMENT FACTORS FOR MEN AND WOMEN WITH PRIMARY AND SECONDARY CARING RESPONSIBILITIES

Light orange shading = Gender with type of caring responsibilities 1-4pp lower than same gender without caring responsibilities; Dark orange shading = Gender with type of caring responsibilities 5pp or more lower than same gender without caring responsibilities; No shading = No difference between gender with type of caring responsibilities and same gender without caring responsibilities; Light green shading = Gender with type of caring responsibilities 1-4pp higher than same gender without caring responsibilities; Dark green shading = Gender with type of caring responsibilities 5pp or more higher than same gender without caring responsibilities; Green font = Men higher than women; Red font = Men lower than women; Black font = no difference between women and men. Note: Data for TGD staff were hidden by Culture Amp due to small sample sizes and so are not shown here. PR = Participation rate.

	Women, No caring responsibilities (n=1803; PR=96%)	Men, No caring responsibilities (n=1351; PR=98%)	Δpp Men v. Women, No caring responsibilities	Women, Secondary carer (another person carries out main caring role) (n=169; PR=97%)	Men, Secondary carer (another person carries out main caring role) (n=277; PR=99%)	Δpp Men v Women, Secondary carer (another person carries out main caring role)	ΔΔpp Men v. Women with secondary caring responsibilities v those without	Women, Primary carer of a child or children (under 18 years) (n=1343; PR=97%)	Men, Primary carer of a child or children (under 18 years) (n=673; PR=98%)	Δpp Men v Women, Primary carer of a child or children (under 18 years)	ΔΔpp Men v. Women with primary caring responsibilities v those without
Engagement	70%	68%	-2	68%	71%	3	5	75%	69%	-6	-4
Company Confidence	51%	50%	-1	50%	55%	5	6	54%	51%	-3	-2
Alignment & Involvement	74%	74%	0	69%	74%	5	5	75%	72%	-3	-3
Collaboration & Communication	60%	59%	-1	54%	60%	6	7	60%	57%	-3	-2
Enablement	64%	62%	-2	56%	62%	6	8	63%	59%	-4	-2
Feedback & Recognition	59%	59%	0	51%	59%	8	8	58%	55%	-3	-3
Innovation	55%	53%	-2	53%	53%	0	2	58%	49%	-9	-7
Leadership	46%	43%	-3	39%	46%	7	10	50%	45%	-5	-2
Learning & Development	68%	65%	-3	62%	66%	4	7	68%	63%	-5	-2
Management	78%	78%	0	73%	76%	3	3	76%	74%	-2	-2
Service & Quality Focus	54%	51%	-3	50%	53%	3	6	52%	48%	4	7
Social Connection	59%	57%	-2	60%	64%	4	6	61%	58%	-3	-1
Teamwork & Ownership	69%	67%	-2	67%	64%	-3	-1	69%	65%	-4	-2
Work & Life Blend	68%	67%	-1	66%	68%	2	3	70%	67%	-3	-2
Action	53%	47%	-6	49%	51%	2	8	56%	50%	-6	0
Diversity & Inclusion	63%	65%	2	59%	63%	4	2	65%	60%	-5	-7
Safety	83%	85%	2	84%	84%	0	-2	84%	82%	-2	-4

2.3.1.4 Parents at Work

Our Parents at Work Network has 658 members, but only 5% have disclosed as men, compared to 56% women and 38% undisclosed, highlighting an opportunity to increase visibility among men.

Most members (94%) are parents. Of the 34 members who shared challenges via the platform survey, top issues were juggling family needs (41%) and managing wellbeing (32%). Partnering with the University's Wellbeing team on targeted initiatives may help address burnout and stress for parents and carers.

2.3.2 Barriers for staff with multiple or complex caring responsibilities

2.3.2.1 Uptake of Carers Leave by men and women

More women accessed Carers Leave than men by both proportion of leave takers and gender cohort (Table 75).

Academic staff accessed substantially less Carers Leave than Professional staff (Table 76), potentially reflecting barriers raised by staff relating to career progression and managing workload flexibly.

Unlike Parental Leave, age distribution for women and men accessing Carers Leave was nearly identical, suggesting similar age-related needs (Figure 20).

TABLE 75 CARERS LEAVE TAKERS 2021-24

Note: HC = Headcount; TGD = Trans & Gender Diverse; ND = Not Disclosed; Data verified by HR Workforce Information & Reporting 5 September 2025 and correct at the time of verification.

	HC Fixed & Continuing Staff	HC Carers Leave Takers	% Fixed & Continuing Staff Uptake Carers Leave	% Carers Leave Takers
Men				
2021	3358	644	19.2	31
2022	3420	746	21.8	31.2
2023	3658	849	23.2	30.5
2024	3957	861	21.8	29.7
Women				
2021	4744	1428	30.1	68.7
2022	4949	1639	33.1	68.4
2023	5279	1919	36.4	68.9
2024	5788	2010	34.7	69.7
TGD				
2021	13	≤6	23.1	0.1
2022	16	≤6	31.3	0.2
2023	20	10	50.0	0.4
2024	43	8	18.6	0.3
ND				
2021	16	≤6	25.0	0.2
2022	19	≤6	26.3	0.2
2023	17	≤6	35.3	0.2
2024	24	9	37.5	0.3

TABLE 76 CARERS LEAVE TAKERS BY ROLE TYPE 2021-24

Note: HC = Headcount; TGD = Trans & Gender Diverse; ND = Not Disclosed; Data verified by HR Workforce Information & Reporting 5 September 2025 and correct at the time of verification.

	Men Continuing & Fixed Term (Total Staff)	Men Carers Leave Takers (Total Staff)	% Men Fixed Term & Continuing Carers Leave Takers	% Men Total Carers Leave Takers	Women Continuing & Fixed Term (Total Staff)	Women Carers Leave Takers (Total Staff)	% Women Fixed Term & Continuing Carers Leave Takers	% Women Total Carers Leave Takers
Academic								
2021	1831	181	9.9	33.9	1645	351	21.3	30.1
2022	1810	232	12.8	37.0	1679	393	23.4	29.1
2023	1876	225	12.0	33.5	1770	442	25.0	29.6
2024	1982	234	11.8	33.0	1895	472	24.9	28.6
Professional								
2021	1531	466	30.4	65.7	3086	1079	35.0	69.6
2022	1616	517	32.0	62.7	3258	1249	38.3	70.4
2023	1783	626	35.1	65.9	3490	1480	42.4	69.9
2024	1977	627	31.7	66.6	3899	1544	39.6	70.8

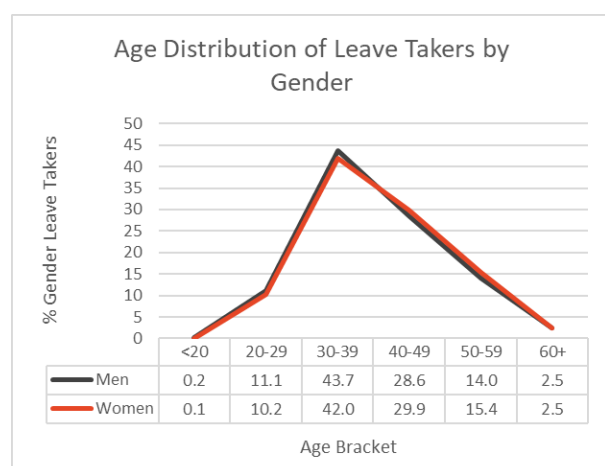


FIGURE 20 AGE DISTRIBUTION OF CARERS LEAVE TAKERS BY GENDER 2021-24

Note: Data verified by HR Workforce Information & Reporting 5 September 2025 and correct at the time of verification.

2.3.2.2 Lived experience

The “sandwich generation” of staff caring for both children and elderly parents faces increased pressures, as do staff with complex caring responsibilities, such as those who care for children/adults with disability or elderly friends or relatives. Managing these responsibilities adds complexity to balancing work and life that is not always recognised at the University (Table 77).

TABLE 77 THEMES ARISING FROM 2025 SYDNEY LISTENS AND SAGE SILVER FOCUS GROUPS RELATING TO BARRIERS FOR STAFF WITH MULTIPLE OR COMPLEX CARING RESPONSIBILITIES

Note: 2025SL = Arising from thematic analysis of free text comments in the 2025 Sydney Listens All Staff Engagement Survey; SSFG = Arising from thematic analysis of SAGE Silver Focus Groups. Quotes are from SAGE Silver Focus Groups only and are used with permission.

Working Well	Working Less Well	Recommendations
Valued Leave Entitlements Carer’s leave, personal leave, and parental leave were explicitly acknowledged as critical supports, particularly for those managing long-term or complex care situations. Staff noted the positive impact these entitlements had on their lives. (2025SL, SSFG) <i>“The generous personal leave provisions, especially carer’s leave, have been very helpful in providing care for my elderly mother. This has allowed me to take time off when needed to help her attend medical appointments.” – P26(M)</i> Flexibility Supports a Range of Caring Responsibilities Many staff, especially women, expressed deep appreciation for the flexible working arrangements that allowed them to accommodate complex and evolving caregiving needs. (2025SL, SSFG) <i>“As well as being primary carer for my children (one with disabilities), I am a secondary carer for a parent who has dementia. The ability to have Zoom meetings has meant I can be there to provide care while also being available for meetings. Also the flexibility to work one day per week or fortnight remotely is helpful.” – P24(W)</i> Supportive Managers and Teams Several staff highlighted the role of managers and teams who went above and beyond to accommodate their needs. These supervisors were described as trusting, proactive in supporting wellbeing, and respectful of HR processes for carers. (2025SL)	Invisibility of Adult and Complex Carer Roles Staff caring for elderly parents, adults, or family members with disabilities reported feeling overlooked in workplace policies and culture. Despite the comparable stress to parenting, these roles were often excluded from surveys, systems, policies and tailored support. Those with dual or complex care responsibilities, such as caring for both children and elderly parents, or children with disabilities, highlighted the need for more nuanced and inclusive support structures. (2025SL, SSFG) <i>“Line managers really do not have any true understanding of carer needs for elderly carers ... Working from home at least 1–2 additional days would ease my 3-hour daily commute. Being a single person and carer, this has been a most challenging time. Children do eventually grow up. Elderly parents are just as important.” – P17(W)</i> <i>“USyd in general is pretty good at supporting you going on parental leave. But then I find that whole idea of caring responsibilities being ongoing and dynamic, isn’t as well understood or supported ... I do feel that not just as a parent, but as a parent with a child with a disability, I have needed even more flexibility than usual.” – P39(W)</i> Reluctance to Disclose Due to Fear of Discrimination Some staff expressed hesitation to disclose personal caregiving circumstances, particularly when caring for a child with a disability, due to fears of stigma, reduced opportunities, or being perceived as less capable. (SSFG) <i>“Maybe it’s my fault that, in 17 years, I haven’t really looked up any information, but I’ll be shut off as, you know, a person who’s caring for a child with disability ... Do any of my supervisors know? It’s not something that I want to bring up. Like what am I going to do at AP&D? Talk about it?” – P36(M)</i>	Clarify and Expand Carers Leave Entitlements through EA Negotiations Revise the Carers Leave clause, clarifying that all personal leave may be used for caring responsibilities, beyond the currently specified 10 days (EA negotiation recommendation) Ensure procedures explicitly state that Carers Leave can be used to support ageing parents, and consider adding an “Elder Care” option in leave request systems to reflect this. Develop and Promote a Comprehensive Carers Support Toolkit Create an accessible toolkit for staff caring for elderly parents or other dependants, including: • Clear guidance on how to use Carers Leave • Easy-to-navigate resources for both staff and managers • Diverse scenarios and case studies to illustrate real-world applications Ensure the toolkit is well-promoted and searchable across internal platforms. <i>“It would be great to have something to help carers, especially those that are not parents. Much of what is available seems to be focussed on child carers.” – P18(W)</i>

Despite challenges, some carers with complex needs felt a strong sense of community and collegiality within their local teams, especially where diversity and inclusion were actively practised and celebrated. (2025SL) Loyalty and Motivation Several carers expressed a deep sense of loyalty and motivation to contribute meaningfully to the University, citing the support they had received. This included long-serving staff who felt proud to work at The University and wanted to give back. (2025SL)	<i>"You can't tell anyone because they might not think that you can do your job or they'll start taking opportunities away from you." – P38(W)</i> Inconsistent Application of Flexible Work Arrangements While some staff felt supported, others reported inconsistent application of flexible work arrangements across units. Managers sometimes denied or discouraged flexibility, even when policies were in place. Approval processes were described as bureaucratic and slow, particularly for carers of adults. (2025SL, SSFG) <i>"My youngest has learning disabilities and was needing to school from home and required a lot of help and attention [but] when I asked if I could take some carer's leave as a result of, you know, evidence she's got learning disabilities my boss said, take it out of your long service leave." – P38(W)</i>	Promote External Resources and Manager Training Actively promote Carers Gateway resources to all staff. Provide targeted training for managers on how to support employees caring for elderly parents, including: • Recognising diverse care needs • Navigating leave entitlements • Creating inclusive and flexible team cultures
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2.3.2.3 2025 Sydney Listens: Multiple or complex caring responsibilities

Staff with complex or multiple caregiving responsibilities reported lower satisfaction across engagement factors than non-carers (Table 78). Women rated their experience more positively overall, but men caring for adults with disabilities or older adults were markedly less favourable towards the University compared to men with no caring responsibilities.

Interestingly, primary carers of children with disabilities, especially men, reported higher favourability towards the University than did non-carers and other carers with different kinds of intensive caring duties, suggesting the impact of caregiving varies by role.

TABLE 78 SYDNEY LISTENS STAFF SURVEY 2025: PERCENTAGE FAVOURABLE RESPONSES ACROSS CATEGORIES FOR MEN AND WOMEN WITH MULTIPLE OR COMPLEX CARING RESPONSIBILITIES

Light orange shading = Gender with type of caring responsibilities 1-4pp lower than same gender without caring responsibilities; Dark orange shading = Gender with type of caring responsibilities 5pp or more lower than same gender without caring responsibilities; No shading = No difference between gender with type of caring responsibilities and same gender without caring responsibilities; Light green shading = Gender with type of caring responsibilities 1-4pp higher than same gender without caring responsibilities; Dark green shading = Gender with type of caring responsibilities 5pp or more higher than same gender without caring responsibilities; Green font = Women higher than men; Red font = Women lower than men; Black font = no difference between women and men. PR = Participation rate; "Caregiver to more than one of the above" = staff has more than one type of parental or caring responsibility.

	Women, No caring responsibilities (n=1803; PR=96%)	Men, No caring responsibilities (n=1351; PR=98%)	Δpp Men v. Women, No caring responsibilities	Women, Primary carer or assistant for an adult or adults who have disability (18 years and over) (n=62; PR=97%)	Men, Primary carer or assistant for an adult or adults who have disability (18 years and over) (n=29; PR=100%)	Δpp Men v Women, Primary carer or assistant for an adult or adults who have disability (18 years and over)	Women, Caregiver to more than one of the above (n=219; PR=99%)	Men, Caregiver to more than one of the above (n=94; PR=98%)	Δpp Men v Women, Caregiver to more than one of the above	Women, Primary carer or assistant for an older person or people (65 years and over) (n=175; PR=97%)	Men, Primary carer or assistant for an older person or people (65 years and over) (n=46; PR=96%)	Δpp Men v Women, Primary carer or assistant for an older person or people (65 years and over)	Women, Primary carer of a child or children who have disability or has a health condition or illness, or temporary care needs (under 18 years) (n=95; PR=97%)	Men, Primary carer of a child or children who have disability or has a health condition or illness, or temporary care needs (under 18 years) (n=47; PR=98%)	Δpp Men v Women, Primary carer of a child or children who have disability or has a health condition or illness, or temporary care needs (under 18 years)
Engagement	70%	68%	-2	65%	68%	3	67%	68%	1	69%	63%	-6	74%	75%	1
Company Confidence	51%	50%	-1	51%	49%	-2	51%	54%	3	50%	51%	1	51%	55%	4
Alignment & Involvement	74%	74%	0	73%	61%	-12	71%	69%	-2	73%	71%	-2	72%	75%	3
Collaboration & Communication	60%	59%	-1	53%	47%	-6	54%	57%	3	52%	55%	3	57%	61%	4
Enablement	64%	62%	-2	58%	43%	-15	55%	53%	-2	60%	59%	-1	57%	62%	5
Feedback & Recognition	59%	59%	0	54%	52%	-2	49%	53%	4	52%	57%	5	56%	61%	5
Innovation	55%	53%	-2	41%	41%	0	47%	53%	6	50%	49%	-1	55%	57%	2
Leadership	46%	43%	-3	44%	44%	0	45%	43%	-2	41%	40%	-1	48%	50%	2
Learning & Development	68%	65%	-3	62%	59%	-3	59%	59%	0	60%	63%	3	70%	71%	1
Management	78%	78%	0	67%	72%	5	74%	73%	-1	71%	76%	5	77%	81%	4
Service & Quality Focus	54%	51%	-3	41%	45%	4	50%	54%	4	49%	46%	-3	53%	61%	8
Social Connection	59%	57%	-2	57%	48%	-9	52%	50%	-2	53%	48%	-5	66%	72%	6
Teamwork & Ownership	69%	67%	-2	62%	62%	0	63%	63%	0	63%	64%	1	67%	66%	-1
Work & Life Blend	68%	67%	-1	62%	57%	-5	61%	64%	3	65%	72%	7	66%	71%	5
Action	53%	47%	-6	52%	45%	-7	56%	47%	9	51%	49%	-2	62%	51%	9
Diversity & Inclusion	63%	65%	2	57%	52%	-5	57%	61%	4	53%	51%	-2	65%	66%	1
Safety	83%	85%	2	76%	78%	2	79%	84%	5	83%	83%	0	83%	90%	7

2.3.3 Barriers for diverse staff with caring responsibilities

2.3.3.1 Gender-intersectional uptake of parental leave

Low headcounts for staff with Disability and First Nations limited robust data (Table 79). Uptake by staff born outside Australia was variable relative to workforce share, although men born overseas were more likely to take parental leave relative to their workforce share, potentially reflecting fewer family support networks available.

TABLE 79 INTERSECTIONAL UPTAKE OF PARENTAL LEAVE OPTIONS 2021-24

Note: As noted in Table 66, parental leave data in our Diversity Dashboard does not include the option to view uptake by sexuality. Data verified by HR Workforce Information & Reporting 5 September 2025 and correct at the time of verification.

	% Men Leave Takers	% Women Leave Takers
Average Gender Workforce Representation 2021-24		
Disability	1.5% (~HC: 53)	2.1% (~HC: 108)
First Nations	1% (~HC: 36)	1.2% (~HC: 63)
Born in Country Outside Australia	45% (~HC: 1622)	39.9% (~HC: 2066)
All Types Parental Leave		
Disability	1% (HC: ≤6)	1.3% (HC: 19)
First Nations	0.7% (HC: ≤6)	1% (HC: 15)
Born in Country Outside Australia	43.8% (HC: 263)	41.2% (HC: 599)
Parental Leave		
Disability	5.9% (HC: ≤6)	0.9% (HC: 9)
First Nations	0	1% (HC: 10)
Born in Country Outside Australia	58.8% (HC: 10)	42.2% (HC: 408)
Partner Leave		
Disability	1.4% (HC: ≤6)	0
First Nations	0.7% (HC: ≤6)	0
Born in Country Outside Australia	43.8 (HC: 194)	33.3% (HC: ≤6)
Primary Caregiver Leave		
Disability	0.5% (HC: ≤6)	1.7% (HC: 16)
First Nations	0.5% (HC: ≤6)	0.7% (HC: 7)
Born in Country Outside Australia	44.2% (HC: 88)	40.9% (HC: 386)
Unpaid Parental Leave		
Disability	1.4% (HC: ≤6)	1.1% (HC: ≤6)
First Nations	0	1.9% (HC: 9)
Born in Country Outside Australia	32.9% (HC: 24)	38.8% (HC: 180)

2.3.3.2 Lived experience

Staff born outside Australia can face additional challenges with caring responsibilities, with those without nearby family or community support particularly reliant on workplace flexibility and understanding. Moreover, staff who have migrated may need to take leave to care for family overseas. Navigating systems or leave policies may also be a barrier for some. Given the high proportion of staff born outside Australia at the University, supporting those with complex caring needs warrants consideration.

Thematic analysis of 2025 Sydney Listens free text comments and our SAGE Silver Focus Groups (Table 80) suggested those reporting greatest intersectional difficulty were ethno-racially diverse staff, especially those with ageing parents overseas, although other groups raised unique challenges.

TABLE 80 THEMES ARISING FROM 2025 SYDNEY LISTENS AND SAGE SILVER FOCUS GROUPS RELATING TO NEEDS OF CARERS FROM DIVERSE BACKGROUNDS

Note: 2025SL = Arising from thematic analysis of free text comments in the 2025 Sydney Listens All Staff Engagement Survey; SSFG = Arising from thematic analysis of SAGE Silver Focus Groups. Quotes are from SAGE Silver Focus Groups only and are used with permission.

Working Well	Working Less Well	Recommendations
Support Drives Inclusion and Empowerment for Carers When support from managers, teams, or the University was present, staff with diverse caring responsibilities reported feeling valued, included, and empowered. This support fostered a sense of belonging and enabled carers to contribute meaningfully while managing their responsibilities. (2025SL, SSFG) <i>"I feel incredibly supported in terms of my caring abilities, like my queerness doesn't impact my caring responsibilities from a university perspective, and I don't know if that's because I'm female-passing or whatever. But just from management and from my team, it doesn't matter, as long as you are there and do the work and you're a kind, good person." — P72</i> <i>"My manager has been very accommodating, because quite a few of my colleagues are also neurodivergent, and she's been making accommodations. She encourages us to take leave for parental and carer duties. She always looks out for our wellbeing, and emphasises that we have to take care of our health outside of work, to be able to perform well during work hours." — P33(W)</i>	Unequal Treatment of LGBTQIA+ and Ethno-Racially Diverse Carers Some LGBTQIA+ and ethno-racially diverse carers reported feeling judged or treated differently when requesting flexibility. Non-parents and carers of adults were sometimes excluded from entitlements or informal support networks, despite having significant caregiving responsibilities. (2025SL) Cultural Expectations and Multi-generational Care Ethno-racially diverse staff described unique caregiving expectations shaped by cultural upbringing, such as caring for elders, supporting multigenerational households, or managing responsibilities across borders. These realities were often not reflected in workplace policies, survey design, or support systems. (2025SL, SSFG) <i>"We might work multiple jobs at a time to, you know, pay the bills and get a little bit ahead [and] we do tend to have this responsibility to care for our elders as well. A lot of times we live in multi-generation households. My job is not just to support myself and my child, but possibly one or even 2 other generations." — P28(W)</i> Overseas Caregiving and Remote Work Limitations Staff with ageing parents living overseas expressed a need for more flexible arrangements, including the ability to work remotely from abroad. They also faced challenges in processing carer leave due to difficulties obtaining documentation from overseas medical providers. (SSFG) <i>"I would really like to take some leave during the year and travel back to spend some quality time with my parents. But I'm not allowed to work remotely from there. I'm not even allowed to take my laptop there." — P31(W)</i> Challenges Faced by Carers with Disability A few staff with disability shared experiences or fears of discrimination related to their parenting journey. These included prejudiced assumptions and a lack of understanding about their life circumstances. (SSFG)	Recognise and Support Culturally Diverse Care Models Increase awareness across the University of different cultural approaches to caregiving, including multigenerational households, overseas care, and non-nuclear family structures. Advocate in EA negotiations to expand the definition of carers' leave to include extended family, reflecting culturally diverse understandings of kinship. <i>"I would extend carers' leave to include not just immediate family, but also extended family, for people with culturally diverse understandings of 'family'. Currently, definitions of 'kinship' appear to be limited to Indigenous peoples." — R18</i> Strengthen Peer Support for Diverse Carers Develop a partnership between Mosaic and the Parents and Carers Staff Networks to promote peer-based support for culturally diverse and international staff. Ensure these networks are visible, inclusive, and equipped to address the unique challenges faced by staff from diverse backgrounds. Address Limitations of Remote Work for Overseas Carers The University's flexible work policy does not apply to staff employed outside of Australia. Managers cannot approve flexible work arrangements that involve working remotely from overseas, due to the complexities of staff working overseas (including employment, tax and visa laws). Within that context:

	<i>"I experienced a lot of prejudices from older women about getting married and having a family. One person even said 'You're too young to have children', as if I haven't gone through puberty? I have a reduced life expectancy because of my disability. I am on a slightly accelerated timeframe for achieving life milestones." – P05(W)</i>	• Raise visibility of existing provisions and limitations to set realistic staff expectations. • Explore if there are alternative ways to support staff caring for family overseas.
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2.3.3.3 2025 Sydney Listens: Gender-intersectional

Analysis across intersectional demographics indicated women with caring responsibilities were more engaged than those without, especially among women with disabilities, bisexual and queer women, and those from Anglo-Celtic and Asian backgrounds (Table 81). In contrast, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women and African women showed reduced engagement.

Among men, bisexual, African, and Latin-American men showed increased engagement, with a small uplift for men with disability. Gay men and those from European and Middle Eastern/North African backgrounds showed declines.

Overall, caring responsibilities had a gendered, variable impact, underscoring the need for resources that celebrate and respect differences and support unique needs.

TABLE 81 SYDNEY LISTENS STAFF SURVEY 2025: OVERALL ENGAGEMENT FACTOR AT THE INTERSECTIONS OF GENDER, CARING RESPONSIBILITIES AND (A) DISABILITY (B) ABORIGINAL AND/OR TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER (C) CULTURAL BACKGROUND (D) SEXUALITY

Light orange shading = men 1-4pp lower than women; Dark orange shading = men 5pp or more lower than women; No shading = No difference between men and women; Light green shading = men 1-4pp higher than women; Dark green shading = men 5pp or more higher than women. Red font = caring responsibilities lower than without; Green font = caring responsibilities higher than without. PR = Participation Rate.

A	No Caring Responsibilities		Caring Responsibilities		Δ Caring
	# Responses	% Engagement	# Responses	% Engagement	
Women					
With Disability	352 (PR: 97%)	65	345 (PR: 98%)	70	5
Without Disability	1366 (PR: 96%)	72	1658 (PR: 98%)	74	2
Men					
With Disability	181 (PR: 97%)	59	110 (PR: 95%)	61	2
Without Disability	1118 (PR: 98%)	70	1038 (PR: 98%)	71	1

B	No Caring Responsibilities		Caring Responsibilities		Δ Caring
	# Responses	% Engagement	# Responses	% Engagement	
Women					
Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander	26 (PR: 93%)	75	25 (PR: 96%)	65	-10
Not Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander	1765 (PR: 96%)	70	2051 (PR: 97%)	73	3
Men					
Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander	18 (PR: 95%)	56	N/A	N/A	N/A
Not Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander	1318 (PR: 98%)	69	1177 (PR: 98%)	69	0

C		No Caring Responsibilities		Caring Responsibilities		Δ Caring
		# Responses	% Engagement	# Responses	% Engagement	
	Women					
	African	18 (PR: 95%)	85	15 (PR: 100%)	77	-8
	Anglo-Celtic	733 (PR: 97%)	68	792 (PR: 98%)	72	4
	Asian	468 (PR: 96%)	76	552 (PR: 97%)	78	2
	CNTD	91 (PR: 92%)	59	133 (PR: 97%)	58	-1
	European	270 (PR: 96%)	69	346 (PR: 98%)	71	2
	Latin American	39 (PR: 100%)	78	43 (PR: 100%)	77	-1
	Middle Eastern/North African	41 (PR: 98%)	66	52 (PR: 96%)	70	4
	Other	123 (PR: 95%)	72	152 (PR: 97%)	72	0
	Paciific Islander	N/A	N/A	14 (PR: 100%)	88	N/A
	Men					
	African	12 (100%)	65	17 (PR: 100%)	76	11
	Anglo-Celtic	507 (PR: 99%)	66	401 (PR: 98%)	68	2
	Asian	351 (PR: 98%)	76	318 (PR: 98%)	79	3
	CNTD	75% (PR: 96%)	52	111 (PR: 96%)	52	0
	European	240 (PR: 97%)	65	205 (PR: 99%)	63	-2
	Latin American	34 (PR: 100%)	63	39 (PR: 98%)	72	9
	Middle Eastern/North African	37 (PR: 100%)	72	43 (PR: 98%)	69	-3
	Other	81 (PR: 98%)	69	64 (PR: 100%)	67	-2
	Paciific Islander	N/A	N/A	12 (PR: 100%)	83	N/A

D		No Caring Responsibilities		Caring Responsibilities		Δ Caring
		# Responses	% Engagement	# Responses	% Engagement	
	Women					
	Bisexual	129 (PR: 98%)	68	86 (PR: 97%)	77	9
	Gay	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
	Heterosexual	1267 (PR: 96%)	72	1532 (PR: 98%)	74	2
	Lesbian	51 (PR: 100%)	80	31 (PR: 97%)	80	0
	Queer	62 (PR: 95%)	55	36 (PR: 95%)	61	6
	Questioning	15 (PR: 100%)	75	N/A	N/A	N/A
	CNTD	266 (PR: 94%)	65	12 (100%)	60	-5
	Men					
	Bisexual	61 (PR: 98%)	62	55 (PR: 100%)	83	21
	Gay	248 (PR: 98%)	71	24 (PR: 96%)	57	-14
	Heterosexual	854 (PR: 98%)	69	885 (PR: 98%)	71	2
	Lesbian	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
	Queer	12 (PR: 92%)	58	N/A	N/A	N/A
	Questioning	N/A	N/A	13 (PR: 93%)	58	N/A
	CNTD	165 (PR: 98%)	64	231 (PR: 98%)	58	-6

2.4 Action Plan

Note: Some of these actions overlap with those outlined in other sections but are reiterated here in response to issues raised in this section. We have been deliberately non-prescriptive with the framing of our outputs, outcomes, and impacts in developing these actions. By framing actions in a non-prescriptive way, it gives us flexibility to develop a three-year implementation plan with responsible leads that aligns and sequences with current and planned work at the point of implementation. These leads are actively structuring delivery of the actions into planned work where appropriate, or factoring into workflow where actions are stand alone.

KEY BARRIER 2: PARENTS AND CARERS						
ID	Rationale/Evidence	Actions	Timeframe (start & end)	Person / Group Responsible for Implementing Action	Senior Leader Accountable for Action Delivery	Example Outputs, Outcomes, and Impacts
1. Reform policies to reflect inclusive, flexible, and equitable caregiving support Current parental and carers' leave policies present a valuable opportunity to evolve in ways that better reflect the diverse realities of modern caregiving. By moving beyond traditional definitions such as "primary" and "secondary" carers, and expanding eligibility for full parental and carers' leave, we can foster a more inclusive and equitable environment. Embracing flexible and culturally responsive leave provisions empowers all staff to participate meaningfully in caregiving and community life. Enhancing these policies, such as by including superannuation on unpaid parental leave, can also contribute to closing the gender pay gap and affirming the vital role of care in our society. Through proactive advocacy and thoughtful reform, we can build a workplace culture that truly values and supports the many ways our people care for others.						
P&C 1.1	In 2024, men took only 21.6% of Primary Caregiver leave at the University. Current policy settings that contribute to this include: - Leave provisions contingent on outdated binary 'primary/secondary' carer definitions that do not represent the modern fluidity of shared caregiving; - The provision of a quantum of parental leave per child rather than per parent	<i>Advocate in EA negotiations that:</i> P&C 1.1.1 The University remove 'primary' and 'secondary' carer definitions and consider all care is 'shared' by default, and that the full provision of parental leave to be available to staff irrespective of whether they are "primary" or "secondary", to enable both parents to be home together or to share care flexibly (noting other organisations may maintain "primary" and "secondary" limitations) <i>(Note: This aligns with proposed University WGEA targets for 2026)</i>	2025-2026	HR Workplace Relations, SAGE Team, Enterprise Bargaining Team, HR D&I Team	SAGE Program Manager, Senior Manager, HR D&I	<i>Subject to final collaborative implementation and resourcing, example outputs and outcomes could include:</i> Output Measures Drafted and submitted EA negotiation proposal reflecting inclusive parental leave reforms. Engagement with key stakeholders (e.g. HR, unions, staff networks). Comparative benchmarking of parental leave policies across the sector. Communication materials outlining proposed changes and rationale. Outcome Measures Consideration of revised parental leave provisions in EA negotiations.

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	penalised men whose partners were also employed by the University, and to whom they deferred care; The 24 month from birth cap on accessing parental leave not reflecting shared care over a longer period of time that is becoming increasingly preferred.	P&C 1.1.2 That if both parents are employed by the University of Sydney, that each can access the full parental leave provision or alternatively a larger shared provision, with a percentage reserved for each partner (e.g. at least 35% Partner A, at least 35% to be taken by Partner B, and the remaining 30% to be distributed as preferred). <i>(Note: This aligns with proposed University WGEA targets for 2026)</i>				Increased awareness and support among staff and leadership for shared and flexible parental leave. Greater uptake of parental leave by all genders, reflecting shared caregiving. Impact Measures <i>Feedback via focus groups, surveys, feedback forms indicating:</i> - Improved staff satisfaction with parental leave options and flexibility. - Supporting the University's Sydney in 2032 strategic goals under the <i>Thriving Through Diversity</i> pillar. - Embedding the University values of <i>Excellence, Trust & Accountability</i>.
P&C 1.2	Current carers' leave policies at the University do not adequately reflect the diversity and complexity of caregiving responsibilities. The 10-day carer's leave cap, narrow definitions of eligible family members, and lack of explicit recognition for elder care create confusion, inequity, and exclusion, particularly for staff supporting ageing parents, extended family, or culturally diverse kinship structures. These limitations discourage disclosure, complicate access to entitlements, and undermine the University's commitment to	<i>Advocate in EA negotiations that:</i> P&C 1.2.1 The Carers' Leave clause be revised to clarify that all personal leave may be used for caring responsibilities, beyond the 10 days explicit Carers Leave accrued annually. Ensure procedures explicitly state that Carers Leave can be used to support ageing parents, as well as support staff with multiple caring responsibilities. Add additional fields in leave request systems to reflect this. P&C 1.2.2 The definition of Carers' Leave be expanded to include extended family, reflecting culturally diverse understandings of kinship.	2025-2026	HR Workplace Relations, SAGE Team, Enterprise Bargaining Team, HR D&I Team	SAGE Program Manager, Senior Manager, HR D&I	<i>Subject to final collaborative implementation and resourcing, example outputs and outcomes could include:</i> Output Measures Drafted and submitted EA negotiation proposal reflecting clarified Carers' Leave clauses and definitions. Engagement with key stakeholders (e.g. HR, unions, staff networks). Communication materials outlining proposed changes and rationale. Revised HR guidance and procedures clarifying use of personal leave for care. Updated leave request systems with fields reflecting diverse caring responsibilities. Outcome Measures Consideration of revised Carers' Leave clauses in EA negotiations. Greater uptake of Carers' Leave across diverse staff groups, including those with intergenerational and extended family

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	inclusive and family-responsive workplace practices.					responsibilities. Enhanced cultural responsiveness in HR practices and systems. Impact Measures <i>Feedback via focus groups, surveys, feedback forms indicating:</i> - Increased staff awareness of their entitlements and flexibility in using leave for care. - Improved consistency in supervisor understanding and application of leave policies. - Reduced stress and improved wellbeing for staff managing complex or culturally specific care responsibilities. - Supporting the University's <i>Sydney in 2032</i> strategic goals under the <i>Thriving Through Diversity</i> pillar. - Embedding the University values of <i>Excellence, Trust & Accountability</i>.
P&C 1.3	Between 2019–2024, women at the University took nearly 90% of unpaid parental leave, yet the University does not currently pay superannuation during these periods. This policy disproportionately affects women, compounding lifetime gender pay inequity and undermining efforts to close the superannuation gap. Without reform, unpaid parental leave continues to penalise those who take on the majority of caregiving	<i>Advocate in EA negotiations that:</i> P&C 1.3.1 Superannuation be included on both paid and unpaid parental leave to contribute to closing the gender pay gap. <i>(Note: This aligns with proposed University WGEA targets for 2026)</i>	2025-2026	HR Workplace Relations, SAGE Team, Enterprise Bargaining Team, HR D&I Team	SAGE Program Manager, Senior Manager, HR D&I	<i>Subject to final collaborative implementation and resourcing, example outputs and outcomes could include:</i> Output Measures Drafted and submitted EA negotiation proposal reflecting superannuation reform for parental leave. Comparative analysis of sector practices regarding superannuation on unpaid leave. Engagement with finance, HR, and union stakeholders to assess feasibility and cost implications. Communication materials explaining the rationale and benefits of the reform. Outcome Measures Consideration of superannuation on unpaid parental leave in EA negotiations.

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	responsibilities, most often women, by reducing long-term financial security.					Improved uptake of parental leave by all genders, with reduced financial penalty. Reduction in the gender superannuation gap over time. Impact Measures <i>Feedback via focus groups, surveys, feedback forms indicating:</i> - Enhanced staff confidence in the University's commitment to gender equity. - Supporting the University's <i>Sydney in 2032</i> strategic goals under the <i>Thriving Through Diversity</i> pillar. - Embedding the University values of <i>Excellence, Trust & Accountability</i>.
2. Flexible Work and Career Progression The University has an opportunity to lead in creating flexible work environments that support the diverse needs of our staff, particularly those with caregiving responsibilities. By expanding access to part-time and job-share arrangements at all levels - including senior roles - we can foster a culture where flexibility is not only available but actively encouraged. Strengthening support for unplanned leave and ensuring effective backfill through sharing best practice operational processes will help distribute workloads more sustainably. With visible leadership modelling and consistent, systemic support, we can ensure that flexibility is experienced equitably across the institution, reinforcing our commitment to inclusion, wellbeing, and excellence. <i>Note: This section builds on several actions relating to flexibility, RTO and FTEY in Key Barrier 1: Career Planning, Progression & Equity.</i>						
P&C 2.1	Despite formal policies supporting flexibility and parental leave, cultural norms, rigid scheduling, and structural gaps continue to disadvantage staff with caregiving responsibilities. Flexibility is unevenly modelled, senior roles are rarely offered part-time, and meetings outside core hours exclude carers.	P&C 2.1.1 Work with stakeholders to identify pathways to raise awareness and manager/leadership capability around flexible working options when creating roles and jobs. Explore structural barriers to offering senior roles as job-share or part-time. <i>(Note: This updates and replaces Caring & Flexibility Action 12)</i>	2026-2028	Recruitment Team, HR Partnering, SAGE Team	Director, Recruitment	<i>Subject to final collaborative implementation and resourcing, example outputs and outcomes could include:</i> Output Measures Review conducted to identify structural, cultural, and policy barriers to job-share and part-time arrangements in senior roles. Case studies or benchmarking research compiled from peer institutions or sectors. Recommendations developed. Outcome Measures Identification of opportunities to incorporate job-share or part-time approaches to senior roles.

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	Additionally, in our Caring & Flexibility Cygnet, staff noted that increased flexible work has blurred boundaries, with rising expectations to work while unwell or caring.					Expanded access to senior roles for staff with caring responsibilities or other flexibility needs. Impact Measures <i>Feedback via focus groups, surveys, feedback forms indicating:</i> - Increased awareness of the limitations and opportunities in current role design and workforce planning. - Greater openness among leadership to flexible senior role arrangements. - Supporting the University's <i>Sydney in 2032</i> strategic goals under the <i>Thriving Through Diversity</i> pillar. - Embedding the University values of <i>Excellence, Trust & Accountability</i>.
		P&C 2.1.2 Build on the University's existing Wellbeing Principles to encourage Deans to set clearer guidelines at Faculty and University School levels for flexible work, core hours for meetings, wellbeing measures such as encouraging a weekly meeting-free day or empowering staff to proactively block out time for deep work, and email response expectations. Identify and communicate digital settings for staff who wish to block emails and Teams messages out of hours. Provide pathways for escalation if local implementation is not consistent with Faculty expectations.	2026-2028	SAGE Team, HR D&I Team, MarComms, Wellbeing Team, Information Communications & Technology (ICT), Faculty and University School Senior Leaders and Teams with carriage over DEI, Workplace Relations Team	DVC-Community and Leadership, Deans	<i>Subject to final collaborative implementation and resourcing, example outputs and outcomes could include:</i> Output Measures Normalise flexibility for parents and carers through leadership messaging and role modelling. Development and dissemination of Faculty and University School guidelines on flexible work, core hours, and communication norms. Options explored and documented for staff to opt into settings that block emails and Teams messages outside working hours. Inclusion of wellbeing principles in induction, team planning, and performance conversations. Awareness campaign launched to promote inclusive scheduling and digital wellbeing. Number of Faculties and Schools adopting and communicating these guidelines locally.

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		(Note: This action is replicated as P&C 2.1.2 and FoE 4.1.1).				Communication of clear escalation pathways (e.g. contact point, reporting form, or review process). Feedback mechanisms established to assess staff preferences and experiences. Outcome Measures Uptake of wellbeing tools or practices (e.g. calendar blocks for deep work, meeting-free periods). Increased consistency in the application of flexible work and communication expectations across teams. Greater staff clarity and confidence in navigating flexible work arrangements. Improved responsiveness to concerns about inconsistent or inequitable implementation. Enhanced team planning and collaboration through shared understanding of core hours and boundaries. Impact Measures <i>Feedback via focus groups, surveys, feedback forms indicating:</i> • Increased awareness among managers and staff of the impact of out-of-hours scheduling on carers and work-life balance. • Reduction in staff stress and burnout related to unclear or inconsistent expectations. • Enhanced digital wellbeing and reduced pressure to respond outside working hours. • Improved equity in access to flexible work, especially for carers and staff with accessibility needs. • Supporting the University's <i>Sydney in 2032</i> strategic goals under the <i>Thriving Through Diversity</i> pillar. • Embedding the University values of <i>Excellence, Trust & Accountability</i>.

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P&C 2.2	Some staff - particularly academic - face workload challenges when taking unplanned carers' leave or planned parental leave.	P&C 2.2.1 Review existing approaches and models taken by Faculties and Schools to proactively support flexibility in the cases of unplanned leave for academic staff. Raise visibility of what works across Faculties and Schools. Consider: • Shared unit coordination structures (for educational unit coordinators). • Shared teaching pools or relief staffing. • Sharing of practice by Heads of School and other managers around how they manage unplanned absence of teaching staff during semester.	2026-2028	Education and Learning Office, Research Office, Heads of School, SAGE Team, SDVCP Office, Organisational Development	Deans, Heads of Schools	<i>Subject to final collaborative implementation and resourcing, example outputs and outcomes could include:</i> Output Measures Development and dissemination of flexible teaching coverage models (e.g., modular teaching plans, team-teaching frameworks). Pilot/s or showcases of existing shared teaching pool or relief staffing register with qualified academic staff available for short-term coverage. Discussion in Heads of School meetings. Outcome Measures Increased Head of School/manager awareness of (and support with) practical approaches to maintain teaching and a positive student experience during unplanned absence of teaching staff during semester Increased staff confidence in taking unplanned leave. Enhanced clarity and consistency in managing short-term academic absences across faculties. Impact Measures <i>Feedback via focus groups, surveys, feedback forms indicating:</i> • Improved wellbeing for staff who teach during semester, particularly among those with caring responsibilities or health challenges. • Cultural shift toward normalising unplanned leave as part of a supportive academic environment. • Contribution to broader institutional goals around workforce sustainability and resilience. • Supporting the University's <i>Sydney in 2032</i> strategic goals under the <i>Thriving Through Diversity</i> pillar.

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						Embedding the University values of <i>Excellence, Trust & Accountability</i>.
		P&C 2.2.2 Parental Leave is centrally funded, which should remove financial obstacles to backfilling roles for planned Parental Leave. Explore remaining operational, cultural, or structural barriers that prevent effective backfill when staff take Parental Leave, such as potentially: - Lack of planning or staffing flexibility - Managerial reluctance or lack of awareness - Gaps in communication between HR and academic units	2026-2028	Education and Learning Office, Research Office, Heads of School, SAGE Team, SDVCP Office, Organisational Development	Deans, Heads of Schools	<i>Subject to final collaborative implementation and resourcing, example outputs and outcomes could include:</i> Output Measures Completion of a review of current backfill practices for Parental Leave across academic units. Development of a barrier analysis report identifying operational, cultural, and structural challenges. Engagement sessions with HR, academic managers, and staff to gather insights and raise awareness. Creation of guidance materials or toolkits for managers on planning and executing backfill. Establishment of feedback mechanisms for staff returning from Parental Leave to report backfill effectiveness. Outcome Measures Increased managerial awareness and confidence in initiating backfill processes. Impact Measures <i>Feedback via focus groups, surveys, feedback forms indicating:</i> - Enhanced equity and inclusivity in parental leave experiences across the University. - Strengthened institutional culture of support for caregiving responsibilities. - Increased operational resilience in academic delivery during staff absences. - Supporting the University's <i>Sydney in 2032</i> strategic goals under the <i>Thriving Through Diversity</i> pillar. - Embedding the University values of <i>Excellence, Trust & Accountability</i>.

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3. Manager Capability and Support Managers play a vital role in fostering inclusive and supportive workplaces, especially when guiding staff through complex or less frequently used processes like parental or carers' leave. By providing timely, practical resources and inclusive training, we can empower managers to navigate these situations with clarity and confidence. This investment in leadership capability strengthens trust, promotes consistency, and ensures that all staff feel valued and supported in their caregiving responsibilities. With the right tools and knowledge, managers can model compassionate leadership and contribute to a culture where flexibility and care are embedded in everyday practice.						
P&C 3.1	Managers play a critical role in shaping the experience of staff with caregiving responsibilities, yet our qualitative data suggest that some lack the tools, training, or confidence to navigate rarely used processes such as parental or carers leave.	P&C 3.1.1 Explore mechanisms to assist managers where to find help and guidance, especially when navigating rarely used processes. Subject to resourcing, consider: - Just in time automated delivery of targeted resources to managers at key moments, such as when staff are planning, taking, or returning from parental/carers leave. - An easy-to-navigate Parents and Carers Leave portal for managers, including recognising and supporting staff with intensive and diverse caring responsibilities. - Include mechanism to gather continuous improvement feedback from Managers. <i>(Note: Cross-reference with NIC:M 2.1.2. This action updates and replaces Caring & Flexibility Cygnet Action 9)</i>	2026-2028	HR D&I Team, SAGE Team, Information Communication & Technology	SAGE Program Manager, Senior Manager, HR D&I	<i>Subject to final collaborative implementation and resourcing, example outputs and outcomes could include:</i> Output Measures Feasibility assessment of an automated resource delivery system that provides targeted guidance to managers at key moments (e.g., when staff plan, take, or return from parental/carers' leave). Launch of a user-friendly Parents and Carers Leave portal tailored for managers, with searchable FAQs, process maps, and contact points. Integration of a feedback mechanism within the portal to collect continuous improvement suggestions from managers. Creation of scenario-based guidance materials for rarely used processes (e.g., long-term leave, phased return). Outcome Measures Increased managerial confidence and competence in navigating leave-related processes. Enhanced feedback loop from managers leading to iterative improvements in resources. Greater consistency in leave management practices across units. Impact Measures <i>Feedback via focus groups, surveys, feedback forms indicating:</i>

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						- Improved staff experience and satisfaction with leave processes due to smoother navigation by managers. - Supporting the University's <i>Sydney in 2032</i> strategic goals under the <i>Thriving Through Diversity</i> pillar. - Embedding the University values of <i>Excellence, Trust & Accountability</i>.
4. Resources, Toolkits, and Visibility The University has an opportunity to broaden how caregiving is understood and supported, ensuring all staff - regardless of gender - feel seen, valued, and empowered. By recognising and affirming the diverse ways in which care is provided, we can move beyond traditional, gendered definitions and foster a more inclusive culture. Ensuring that carers' leave and support resources reflect a wide range of caregiving experiences, and are easy to access and navigate, will help all staff engage with confidence. Equipping managers with inclusive tools and training strengthens their ability to lead with empathy and clarity, building a workplace where trust, flexibility, and belonging are shared by all.						
P&C 4.1	Cultural norms and workplace expectations continue to discourage men from fully engaging in caregiving roles, limiting uptake of leave and perpetuating gendered assumptions about care.	P&C 4.1.1 Following finalisation of the new EA, subject to resourcing, refresh and promote the parental leave toolkit, ensuring it is inclusive of men and gender diverse staff, as well as diverse cohorts. <i>(Note: This aligns with proposed University WGEA targets for 2026)</i>	2026-2028	HR D&I Team, SAGE Team, MarComms	SAGE Program Manager, Senior Manager, HR D&I	<i>Subject to final collaborative implementation and resourcing, example outputs and outcomes could include:</i> Output Measures Updated Parental Leave Toolkit with inclusive language, examples, and scenarios that reflect the experiences of men and gender diverse staff. Inclusion of case studies or testimonials from a diverse range of staff who have accessed parental leave. Development of communication materials (e.g., guides, FAQs, videos) that explicitly address the needs of all genders. Implementation of a feedback mechanism to gather user input on the toolkit's relevance and inclusivity. Outcome Measures Increased awareness and usage of the toolkit by men and gender diverse staff and their managers. Impact Measures <i>Feedback via focus groups, surveys, feedback forms indicating:</i>

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						• Positive feedback from staff on the inclusivity and usefulness of the updated toolkit. • Improved staff experience and satisfaction with leave processes. • Supporting the University's <i>Sydney in 2032</i> strategic goals under the <i>Thriving Through Diversity</i> pillar. • Embedding the University values of <i>Excellence, Trust & Accountability</i>.
		P&C 4.1.2 Launch a "All Genders as Carers" (or similar) initiative to normalise all gender caregiving through storytelling, peer support, and leadership role-modelling. Consider timing with potential changes to Enterprise Agreement if applicable. <i>(Note: This action can be combined with P&C 5.1.1. It updates and replaces Caring & Flexibility Action 4)</i>	2026-2028	HR D&I Team, SAGE Team, MarComms	Head of Internal Communications	<i>Subject to final collaborative implementation and resourcing, example outputs and outcomes could include:</i> Output Measures Subject to implementation plan and resourcing, for example: Launch of the "All Genders as Carers" campaign, including messaging, and communication strategy. Development and dissemination of storytelling content (e.g., videos, written stories, podcasts) featuring diverse staff across genders sharing their caregiving experiences. Promotion of the Parents and Carers Network as inclusive of men and gender-diverse staff, or consider forming an additional support network for men or gender-diverse staff who are parents or carers. Delivery of leadership engagement sessions to encourage senior leaders to model and speak about their own caregiving roles. Normalise flexibility for parents and carers through leadership messaging and role modelling. Outcome Measures Increased visibility and representation of men and gender diverse carers in internal communications and events. Growth in participation in peer support networks by staff of

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						all genders. Increased managerial and leadership engagement in promoting inclusive caregiving cultures. Impact Measures <i>Feedback via focus groups, surveys, feedback forms indicating:</i> • Positive feedback from staff on the relevance and impact of the campaign. • Normalisation of caregiving as a shared responsibility across all genders. • Reduction in gendered assumptions about caregiving roles in the workplace. • Supporting the University's <i>Sydney in 2032</i> strategic goals under the <i>Thriving Through Diversity</i> pillar. • Embedding the University values of <i>Excellence, Trust & Accountability</i>.
P&C 4.2	Staff can struggle to locate clear, inclusive, and relevant resources to support caregiving needs, especially those outside traditional parenting roles. Toolkits may lack visibility or fail to reflect diverse scenarios such as multigenerational care, elder support, or gender-diverse experiences. In particular, staff who care for both children and adults, such as elderly parents or family members with disabilities, face	P&C 4.2.1 Create content targeted for different caring scenarios, such as carers, elder care, and staff with dual/multiple caring responsibilities. Include, for example: • Clearer definitions and guidance on using leave entitlements (e.g. for elder care, dual care, school refusal or behavioural support, non-medical caregiving scenarios, support for children with learning disabilities). • Case studies of diverse caregiving arrangements.	2026-2028	HR D&I Team, SAGE Team, MarComms	SAGE Program Manager, Senior Manager, HR D&I	<i>Subject to final collaborative implementation and resourcing, example outputs and outcomes could include:</i> Output Measures Creation of tailored content for a wide range of caregiving scenarios, including guidance on relevant leave entitlements (e.g. carer's leave, personal leave, flexible work), case studies showcasing diverse caregiving arrangements across genders and roles, step-by-step guides for accessing HR processes and support, links to internal and external resources, including wellbeing, EAP, and community services. Integration of feedback mechanisms for continuous improvement. Outcome Measures Uptake of resources by staff and in communication

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	compounded challenges in balancing work and life. These dual roles are often invisible in policy, underrepresented in resources, and inconsistently supported by managers. The lack of nuanced provisions, psychological safety for disclosure, and flexible arrangements tailored to complex care needs Without intuitive access to guidance and external resources like Carers Gateway, staff may miss entitlements or feel unsupported.	- Resources for navigating flexible work and wellbeing support. - Promote Carers Gateway resources.				campaigns. Impact Measures <i>Feedback via focus groups, surveys, feedback forms indicating:</i> - Increased awareness and understanding of available support among staff with caregiving responsibilities. - Improved confidence and clarity in navigating complex or less common caregiving scenarios. - Positive feedback from staff and managers on the relevance, inclusivity, and usability of the toolkits. - Enhanced staff wellbeing and work-life balance, particularly for those with complex or multiple caring responsibilities. - Supporting the University's <i>Sydney in 2032</i> strategic goals under the <i>Thriving Through Diversity</i> pillar. - Embedding the University values of <i>Excellence, Trust & Accountability</i>.
		P&C 4.2.2 Subject to resourcing, seek opportunities to improve the discoverability of information for staff with caring responsibilities, and their managers.	2026-2028	HR D&I Team, SAGE Team, MarComms	SAGE Program Manager, Senior Manager, HR D&I, Head Internal Communications	<i>Subject to final collaborative implementation and resourcing, example outputs and outcomes could include:</i> Output Measures Completion of a comprehensive review of intranet pages to assess the discoverability of carer-related content. Implementation of standardised tagging and metadata for carer-related resources (e.g., "parental leave," "elder care," "flexible work," "carers," "school refusal"). Redesign or reorganisation of navigation pathways to ensure intuitive access to carer-related content from multiple entry points (e.g., HR, wellbeing, diversity & inclusion pages, SAGE pages). Development of a centralised carers' hub or landing page linking to all relevant resources, policies, and toolkits.

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						Integration of inclusive language and imagery across all carer-related content. Outcome Measures Increased visibility and accessibility of carer-related content across the intranet. Improved search functionality and accuracy for caregiving-related queries. Higher engagement with carer resources, measured by page views, downloads, and time on page. Greater awareness among staff and managers of available support for carers. Impact Measures <i>Feedback via focus groups, surveys, feedback forms indicating:</i> • Positive user feedback on ease of navigation and relevance of content. • Enhanced staff experience and satisfaction with internal support systems. • Strengthened inclusive digital infrastructure that reflects diverse staff needs. • Supporting the University's <i>Sydney in 2032</i> strategic goals under the <i>Thriving Through Diversity</i> pillar. • Embedding the University values of <i>Excellence, Trust & Accountability</i>.
		P&C 4.2.3 Scope the feasibility of pursuing accreditation through Carers NSW to formally recognise and enhance the University's commitment to supporting carers.	2026-2028	HR D&I Team, SAGE Team	Senior Manager, HR D&I	<i>Subject to final collaborative implementation and resourcing, example outputs and outcomes could include:</i> Output Measures Completion of a preliminary cost-benefit analysis of pursuing accreditation. Contingent on the above:

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						Completion of a feasibility assessment including: (i) Review of accreditation levels and criteria (ii) Gap analysis against Level 1 requirements (iii) Stakeholder consultation (HR, EDI, leadership, staff carers). Development of a business case or proposal for accreditation Identification of resource requirements (e.g., staffing, budget, timeframes). Engagement with Carers NSW for initial consultation and guidance. Drafting of an accreditation roadmap with milestones and responsibilities. Outcome Measures Increased organisational awareness of the accreditation process and its benefits. Identification of policy and practice gaps to address in preparation for accreditation. Formal recognition as a Carer-Friendly Workplace, enhancing the University's reputation and employer brand. Greater awareness among staff and managers of available support for carers. Impact Measures <i>Feedback via focus groups, surveys, feedback forms indicating:</i> • Positive user feedback on ease of navigation and relevance of content. • Supporting the University's <i>Sydney in 2032</i> strategic goals under the <i>Thriving Through Diversity</i> pillar. • Embedding the University values of <i>Excellence, Trust & Accountability</i>.

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		P&C 4.2.4 Seek opportunities to promote resources and events for staff with intensive caring responsibilities, including from the Parents and Carers Network.	2026-2028	HR D&I Team, SAGE Team	Senior Manager, HR D&I	<i>Subject to final collaborative implementation and resourcing, example outputs and outcomes could include:</i> Output Measures Number of targeted resources and events (e.g., webinars, discussion groups, expert panels) focused on intensive caregiving topics. Assessment of value and uptake of peer mentoring or support circles within the Network for intensive carers. Outcome Measures Increased membership and engagement of staff with intensive caring responsibilities in the Network. Enhanced peer connection, support, and knowledge-sharing among intensive carers. Improved awareness of available supports and entitlements among staff and managers. Impact Measures <i>Feedback via focus groups, surveys, feedback forms indicating:</i> • Positive feedback from participants on the relevance and impact of Network activities. • Strengthened sense of belonging and inclusion for staff with intensive caring responsibilities. • Improved staff wellbeing and resilience, particularly among those balancing complex caregiving and work. • Supporting the University's <i>Sydney in 2032</i> strategic goals under the <i>Thriving Through Diversity</i> pillar. • Embedding the University values of <i>Excellence, Trust & Accountability</i>.

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ID	Rationale/Evidence	Actions	Timeframe (start & end)	Person / Group Responsible for Implementing Action	Senior Leader Accountable for Action Delivery	Example Outputs, Outcomes, and Impacts
5. Inclusion of Diverse Carers Clear, culturally responsive resources and communications, paired with meaningful storytelling, inclusive imagery, and targeted outreach, can help ensure that all carers, including international, culturally diverse, and fixed-term staff, feel seen, supported, and connected. By making entitlements easier to understand and access, and by celebrating the full spectrum of caregiving experiences, we can foster a stronger sense of belonging and equity across the institution.						
P&C 5.1	Internal communications and workplace policies often overlook the diversity of caregiving experiences, reinforcing narrow views of who carers are. Staff with non-traditional or culturally diverse care roles, such as multigenerational, extended family, or overseas caregiving, are rarely reflected in imagery, storytelling, or support systems. Without inclusive content and targeted awareness, these carers remain invisible, and opportunities to promote flexibility and entitlements are missed.	P&C 5.1.1 Celebrate staff with diverse caring responsibilities on the Staff Spotlight, including different cultural approaches to caregiving such as multigenerational households, overseas care, and non-nuclear family structures, and use as a platform to promote further information around entitlements and toolkits. Engage with MarComms to develop a stock of easy to access images for use in communications to staff. <i>(Note: This action can be combined with P&C 4.1.2 "All Genders As Carers". It updates and replaces Caring & Flexibility Action 4)</i>	2026-2028	HR D&I Team, SAGE Team, MarComms	Head of Internal Communications	<i>Subject to final collaborative implementation and resourcing, example outputs and outcomes could include:</i> Output Measures Launch of a content series featuring stories of staff with diverse caregiving roles, including, multigenerational households, overseas caregiving, non-nuclear family structures, fathers, LGBTQ+ carers, and culturally diverse carers. Integration of links to relevant entitlements, policies, and toolkits within each feature. Collaboration with MarComms to develop a stock of inclusive, culturally diverse, and caregiving-themed images for internal communications. Promotion of the series via intranet, newsletters, and digital signage. Outcome Measures Increased visibility and representation of diverse caregiving experiences in internal communications. Improved awareness of leave entitlements and support resources among staff and managers. Impact Measures <i>Feedback via focus groups, surveys, feedback forms indicating:</i> • Positive staff feedback on the relevance and inclusivity of the Staff Spotlight series. • Enhanced staff morale, belonging, and psychological safety, particularly for underrepresented carers.

KEY BARRIER 2: PARENTS AND CARERS						
ID	Rationale/Evidence	Actions	Timeframe (start & end)	Person / Group Responsible for Implementing Action	Senior Leader Accountable for Action Delivery	Example Outputs, Outcomes, and Impacts
						- Supporting the University's <i>Sydney in 2032</i> strategic goals under the <i>Thriving Through Diversity</i> pillar. - Embedding the University values of <i>Excellence, Trust & Accountability</i>.
		P&C 5.1.2 Strengthen partnership between the Mosaic Staff Network and the Parents and Carers Staff Network to promote visibility and peer-based support for culturally diverse and international staff. Ensure these networks are visible, inclusive, and equipped to address the unique challenges faced by staff from diverse backgrounds.	2026-2028	HR D&I Team, SAGE Team, Mosaic Network Steering Committee, Parents & Carers Network Steering Committee, MarComms	Senior Manager, HR D&I, SAGE Program Manager	<i>Subject to final collaborative implementation and resourcing, example outputs and outcomes could include:</i> Output Measures Establishment of a collaboration framework between Mosaic and the Parents & Carers Network (e.g., joint working group or liaison roles). Co-designed events, workshops, or discussion forums focused on culturally diverse caregiving experiences (e.g., caring across borders, multigenerational households, cultural expectations). Creation of joint communications and campaigns to raise awareness of both networks and their offerings, and impact on staff. Engagement with MarComms to ensure inclusive imagery and language in all related communications. Outcome Measures Increased cross-network participation and collaboration on shared goals. Enhanced visibility and accessibility of both networks to culturally diverse and international staff. Improved staff awareness of culturally responsive support options and entitlements. Impact Measures <i>Feedback via focus groups, surveys, feedback forms indicating:</i> Positive feedback from staff on the relevance and inclusivity of joint initiatives.

KEY BARRIER 2: PARENTS AND CARERS						
ID	Rationale/Evidence	Actions	Timeframe (start & end)	Person / Group Responsible for Implementing Action	Senior Leader Accountable for Action Delivery	Example Outputs, Outcomes, and Impacts
						- Strengthened sense of belonging and community for culturally diverse and international staff with caring responsibilities. - Supporting the University's <i>Sydney in 2032</i> strategic goals under the <i>Thriving Through Diversity</i> pillar. - Embedding the University values of <i>Excellence, Trust & Accountability</i>.
		P&C 5.1.3 Raise visibility of remote international work limitations and explore alternative mechanisms to support staff caring for family overseas.	2026-2028	HR D&I Team, SAGE Team, Mosaic Network Steering Committee, Parents & Carers Network Steering Committee, OGC, HR Partnering	SAGE Program Manager, Senior Manager, HR D&I	<i>Subject to final collaborative implementation and resourcing, example outputs and outcomes could include:</i> Output Measures Development of a communications campaign to clarify current policies and limitations on remote international work (e.g., FAQs, intranet updates, manager briefings). Facilitation of consultations or listening sessions with affected staff to understand lived experiences and unmet needs. Benchmarking of sector-wide practices and innovations in supporting international caregiving. Development of a discussion paper or options brief outlining feasible support mechanisms. Outcome Measures Increased staff and manager awareness of remote international work policies and their rationale. Improved transparency and consistency in how remote work requests involving international caregiving are assessed. Identification of gaps in current support structures for international carers. Uptake of alternative support mechanisms (e.g., flexible leave, wellbeing support, temporary arrangements). Impact Measures

KEY BARRIER 2: PARENTS AND CARERS						
ID	Rationale/Evidence	Actions	Timeframe (start & end)	Person / Group Responsible for Implementing Action	Senior Leader Accountable for Action Delivery	Example Outputs, Outcomes, and Impacts
						<i>Feedback via focus groups, surveys, feedback forms indicating:</i> • Improved staff wellbeing, particularly among international and culturally diverse employees. • Enhanced organisational responsiveness to global caregiving realities. • Supporting the University's <i>Sydney in 2032</i> strategic goals under the <i>Thriving Through Diversity</i> pillar. • Embedding the University values of <i>Excellence, Trust & Accountability</i>.
6. Operational Enhancements The University has a valuable opportunity to align its infrastructure and systems with its strong commitment to supporting staff with caregiving responsibilities. By addressing practical and logistical barriers, such as access to facilities, digital tools, and streamlined processes, we can reduce stress, enhance engagement, and enable parents and carers to thrive. Investing in responsive, user-friendly systems not only improves productivity but also reinforces a culture of care, inclusion, and wellbeing across the institution.						
P&C 6.1	Limited access to parking for school or daycare drop-offs, inconsistent definitions of "carer" across platforms, and unclear or inaccessible forms create friction in day-to-day operations. Additionally, travel support for carers is unevenly distributed across Faculties and Schools, leaving gaps in equity and access.	P&C 6.1.1 Explore the feasibility to reserve a proportion of parking for staff with caregiving drop-off and/or pick up responsibilities, particularly those with early or late teaching responsibilities. <i>(Note: Cross-reference with FoE 4.2.2)</i>	2026-2028	SAGE Team, Central Operations Services (COS)	VP Operations	<i>Subject to final collaborative implementation and resourcing, example outputs and outcomes could include:</i> Output Measures Completion of a feasibility study in collaboration with CoS. Pending outcomes of feasibility study identification of potential parking zones near key teaching buildings for reserved use. Development of eligibility criteria and application process (e.g., proof of caregiving responsibilities and teaching schedules). Stakeholder consultation with academic staff, unions, and equity committees. Drafting of a pilot proposal for a time-limited trial of reserved parking spaces. Consider Engineering as a pilot partner. Outcome Measures Strengthened support for staff with complex caregiving

KEY BARRIER 2: PARENTS AND CARERS						
ID	Rationale/Evidence	Actions	Timeframe (start & end)	Person / Group Responsible for Implementing Action	Senior Leader Accountable for Action Delivery	Example Outputs, Outcomes, and Impacts
						responsibilities, particularly those balancing early or late teaching and family duties. Increased awareness of the challenges faced by staff with caregiving responsibilities in accessing campus early. Improved access to parking for eligible staff, reducing stress and lateness. Impact Measures <i>Feedback via focus groups, surveys, feedback forms indicating:</i> • Positive feedback from pilot participants on the impact of reserved parking on their wellbeing. • Supporting the University's <i>Sydney in 2032</i> strategic goals under the <i>Thriving Through Diversity</i> pillar. • Embedding the University values of <i>Excellence, Trust & Accountability</i>.
		CP&P 1.3.2 Meet with the Digital Sydney team to discuss intersectionality and Universal Design, and whether and how these principles are currently included in assessments to improvements to systems and frameworks currently underway. Reference processes dealing with leave and flexible hours as an example. <i>(Note: This action is replicated as CP&P 1.3.2, P&C 6.1.2, and RIV&V 2.3.2, and aligns with Respect@Work Action 3.6)</i>	2026-2028	SAGE Team, RISE Working Group, HR D&I Team, Information, Communication & Technology (ICT), Respect@Work Team	SAGE Program Manager, Senior Manager, HR D&I	<i>Subject to final collaborative implementation and resourcing, example outputs and outcomes could include:</i> Output Measures Meeting held with Digital Sydney team to discuss current practices and opportunities. Summary of current inclusion of intersectionality and Universal Design in digital assessments. Recommendations developed for embedding these principles more explicitly in system design and improvement processes. Follow-up actions agreed (e.g., inclusion criteria, design standards, consultation processes). Briefing note or report prepared for leadership and relevant stakeholders. Outcome Measures Increased awareness within the Digital Sydney team of

KEY BARRIER 2: PARENTS AND CARERS						
ID	Rationale/Evidence	Actions	Timeframe (start & end)	Person / Group Responsible for Implementing Action	Senior Leader Accountable for Action Delivery	Example Outputs, Outcomes, and Impacts
						intersectional and Universal Design principles. Greater consideration of diverse user needs in digital system planning and implementation. Reduction in digital barriers. Impact Measures <i>Feedback via focus groups, surveys, feedback forms indicating:</i> • More inclusive and accessible digital systems that reflect the diversity of staff and student experiences. • Enhanced trust and engagement with digital platforms across the University community. • Supporting the University's <i>Sydney in 2032</i> strategic goals under the <i>Thriving Through Diversity</i> pillar. • Embedding the University values of <i>Excellence, Trust & Accountability</i>.
		P&C 6.1.3 Raise visibility of available travel support for carers as well as the return-to-work allowance, including integration into relevant toolkits. <i>(Note: This updates and replaces Caring & Flexibility Cygnet Action 3)</i>	2026-2028	HR D&I Team, SAGE Team, Workplace Relations	SAGE Program Manager, Senior Manager, HR D&I	<i>Subject to final collaborative implementation and resourcing, example outputs and outcomes could include:</i> Output Measures Review recently completed stocktake of existing travel support mechanisms for carers (e.g., travel grants, allowances, flexible arrangements). Review of return-to-work allowance policies and usage data. Development of clear, accessible guidance materials on available travel supports and eligibility criteria. Integration of updated information into carer-related toolkits, intranet pages, and manager resources. Creation of a communications plan to promote awareness of the return-to-work allowance and other supports (e.g., newsletters, webinars, FAQs). Outcome Measures

KEY BARRIER 2: PARENTS AND CARERS						
ID	Rationale/Evidence	Actions	Timeframe (start & end)	Person / Group Responsible for Implementing Action	Senior Leader Accountable for Action Delivery	Example Outputs, Outcomes, and Impacts
						Increased staff awareness and understanding of travel-related supports and entitlements. Improved uptake of the return-to-work allowance by eligible staff. Impact Measures <i>Feedback via focus groups, surveys, feedback forms indicating:</i> • Positive feedback from staff on the clarity and usefulness of updated resources. • Supporting the University's <i>Sydney in 2032</i> strategic goals under the <i>Thriving Through Diversity</i> pillar. • Embedding the University values of <i>Excellence, Trust & Accountability</i>.

KEY BARRIER 3: Racial Inclusion, Voice & Visibility

3.1 Executive Summary

TABLE 82 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY OF RACIAL INCLUSION, VOICE & VISIBILITY

Background
This section explores the experience and representation of Culturally and Racially Marginalised (CARM) staff at the University. Despite strong public commitments to anti-racism, CARM staff continue to face systemic barriers in recruitment, promotion, retention, and leadership. Intersectionality is under-recognised, and cultural contributions are undervalued.
Data Sources
The analysis drew on: HR Diversity Dashboard 2025 Sydney Listens Staff Engagement Survey (quantitative and qualitative) SAGE Silver Focus Groups and Surveys: Lived experience of ethno-racially diverse staff Intersectional Gender Pay Gap Analysis: Pay disparities by gender and country of origin Assess to RISE Tool & Focus Groups: Evaluation of systemic barriers for CARM women Hodgkinson External Review: Leadership response to campus conflict and antisemitism
Enablers Identified
Grassroots networks (e.g. Mosaic, Yura) provide emotional support, advocacy, and belonging. Some faculties (e.g. FMH) have implemented cultural safety initiatives and peer support programs. Growing awareness of the need for inclusive recruitment and promotion practices. Positive mentorship experiences when culturally sensitive. Cultural celebrations and multilingual team traditions foster inclusion. Public commitments to diversity and anti-racism are acknowledged as a starting point. Some staff report feeling safe and supported within their immediate teams.
Barriers Identified
Recruitment and promotion processes are perceived as biased, opaque, and exclusionary. Accent, name, and appearance-based bias persist. Cultural leadership and advocacy are felt to be undervalued in promotion criteria. CARM women face a double bind in leadership expectations and lack role models. First Nations staff experience high turnover and unrecognised cultural load. Reporting systems are distrusted, with fear of retaliation and lack of follow-through. Leadership is perceived as performative, disconnected, and lacking racial literacy. Intersectional challenges are overlooked. Cultural safety is lacking, especially in political discourse and grievance handling. Anti-racism efforts are seen as symbolic and deprioritised.
Key Recommendations
<u>Recruitment, Progression & Retention</u> Recruitment: Embed racial literacy, diversify recruitment committees, and review outcomes annually. Progression: Improve promotion pathways through training, data tracking, and visibility of racially diverse staff. Retention: Monitor resignation trends and engagement among overseas-born staff. <u>Strategic Readiness for Intersectionality</u> Harmonise data systems and apply change management frameworks (e.g., ADKAR) to build intersectional awareness. Ensure inclusion of marginalised staff in strategic initiatives and policy development. <u>Leadership Pathways for CARM Staff</u> Set measurable diversity targets in leadership.

Broaden leadership definitions and tailor development programs for intersectionally marginalised groups.

Racial Literacy & Anti-Racism Capability

Build racial literacy and anti-racism capability for leaders and staff.

Promote inclusive celebrations and campaigns (e.g., Say My Name).

Build capacity for allyship and cultural responsiveness.

Workplace Wellbeing

Monitor engagement data disaggregated by race and culture.

Invest in peer networks and annual focus groups to support emotional wellbeing.

Leadership & Accountability

Develop a university-wide anti-racism strategy grounded in national frameworks.

Embed leadership performance expectations, ensure co-design with diverse communities, and report transparently.

Culturally Safe Reporting Pathways

Strengthen culturally-responsive, trauma-informed reporting systems.

Build racial literacy and cultural responsiveness in HR and leadership.

Gender-Intersectional Pay Equity

Investigate and address pay disparities across intersecting identity factors.

3.2 Background

The University of Sydney is committed to anti-racism and inclusion. Key initiatives include the Anti-Racism Statement, Mosaic Staff Network's Anti-Racism Pledge, racial discrimination reporting, and leadership programs for culturally and racially marginalised (CARM) staff. Indigenous Strategies and Services support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander participation, engagement, education, and research.

In 2024-25, reforms included improved complaints procedures, the Respect@Work Action Plan, and a Diversity Council Australia partnership to pilot the RISE program, supporting CARM women in the talent pipeline, building on our long-running VC Sponsorship Program for culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) women and the Dr John Yu Fellowship which focuses on culturally diverse leaders. In 2025 the University also participated in the AHRC Racism@Uni project.

Despite progress, CARM staff still face systemic barriers, underrepresentation, and identity compromise. Many feel unable to be authentic at work, with intersectional challenges limiting careers. Experiences range from overt and everyday racism and invisibility to lack of support, while leadership norms often clash with diverse lived realities.

In our interviews with senior leaders and key stakeholders, some spoke to racial inclusion and equity at the University (Table 83).

TABLE 83 SENIOR LEADER AND KEY STAKEHOLDER THOUGHTS ON RACIAL INCLUSION AND EQUITY AT THE UNIVERSITY

Note: Arising from thematic analysis of structured interviews with Senior Leaders and staff in DEI leadership roles across the University, and an HR Partners Focus Group. Quotes are used with permission.

What is working well	Working less well
Institutional Projects Supporting Racial Equity Projects that support racially marginalised staff and encourage their recruitment and promotion. <i>"I think the RISE program has really called out those [CARM] women who don't feel they're getting ahead in the way that they expected." — L15</i> <i>"Within FMH, they've established an Indigenous project team to work really closely with our recruitment colleagues to ensure there's an appropriate panel convened for the interview, that appropriate questions are asked. I feel FMH are leading by example with their approach." — L27</i>	Uneven Focus Across Equity Dimensions Racial inclusion and equity has not received as much focus as gender, leading to gaps in addressing intersectional disadvantage. <i>"When we look at gender diversity, we're just looking at whether or not someone identifies as a woman, not whether that woman identifies as being a woman of colour or an Indigenous woman or a woman who has a disability, or a woman who has a disability and is Indigenous, those sorts of intersections. I don't think we have done enough work in looking at intersecting identities and that type of diversity." — L04</i> Inclusion Gaps Despite Diverse Representation Having a diverse university population does not guarantee that people feel included. <i>"We're trying to increase the number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders on staff and I don't know that they're feeling included. I have had Aboriginal colleagues who have said, well, I wouldn't tell my friends to join the University because I don't think they would feel accepted here." — L05</i> Discomfort and Avoidance of Race Conversations There can be reluctance to address difficult conversations around race and racism at university, executive, and individual levels. <i>"I think sometimes there's taboos around race and racism and that aspect of DEI." — L21</i> <i>"People are still uncomfortable talking about race, although I think the conversations are getting a bit more visible. What I would like is normalising the fact that there is a deficiency, across Australia in all industries, not just higher education, so we can be bit more relaxed talking about it." — L07</i>

Addressing inequities, Racial Inclusion, Voice and Visibility is central to our Silver submission. We have referred to *SAGE Championing Ethno-Racial Diversity and Anti-Racism in the Australian Higher Education and Research Sector* to guide our self-assessment.

3.2.1 Related activities & programs of work

TABLE 84 RELATED ACTIVITIES AND PROGRAMS OF WORK

Related Portfolios & Initiatives	Description	Linkages
DVC-Community & Leadership	Developing an over-arching DEI Framework and Strategy for the University.	Need for a coherent strategy, leadership, advocacy, and meaningful engagement.
DVC Indigenous Strategy & Services (ISS)	Developing the next iteration of the University's Indigenous Strategy, building on the foundation laid by <i>One Sydney, Many People 2021-24</i> .	Impact and recognition of colonial load.
National Centre for Cultural Competence (NCCC)	The NCCC supports the University's journey toward cultural competence by providing guidance, resources, and inspiration. It offers face-to-face	Anti-racism tools and training.

	workshops and online modules to help staff across the University develop their cultural competence.	
Mosaic and Yura Staff Networks	The Mosaic Network fosters an inclusive environment that empowers staff, drives cultural change, and advances racial justice, positioning the University as a diversity leader. Key initiatives include the anti-racism pledge, Buddy@Sydney Mosaic mentoring, the Say My Name campaign, and community events. The Yura Network empowers First Nations staff to express identity proudly, build peer support, pursue career goals, and engage with University policy and cross-cultural issues. Its initiatives include community sponsorship, events, the Indigenous Academic Showcase, and the Aboriginal Sign Language Forum.	Resourcing, visibility, and recognition of grass-roots initiatives, cultural advocacy, social network.
Staff Complaints Process Review	Following extensive 2022–2023 consultations, key improvements implemented in 2024–25 include updated web resources, streamlined online complaints forms (with anonymous reporting), and enhanced complaint-handling protocols, making the process more accessible, consistent, and supportive for all staff and affiliates.	Awareness, trust, and culturally safe complaints process.
Respect@Work	The University has a positive duty obligation to proactively prevent and respond to sexual misconduct. The University has extended this positive duty obligation to eliminate all forms of unlawful workplace behaviour, including harassment, discrimination and bullying. The Respect@Work Program, led by Senior University Leaders and developed in consultation with staff has a comprehensive Action Plan aligning with the seven standards outlined by the Australian Human Rights Commission of leadership, culture, knowledge, risk management, support, reporting and response, and monitoring, evaluation and transparency.	Awareness, trust, and culturally safe complaints process. Anti-racism tools and training.
Safer Communities Office	The Safer Communities Office provides specialist support for those who have experienced sexual misconduct, offering immediate response, guidance on reporting options, safety planning, and referrals to services, with Mandarin-speaking staff and interpreters available on request.	Awareness, trust, and culturally safe complaints process.
Hodgkinson Review	The University of Sydney Senate has accepted in principle the 15 recommendations of the Hodgkinson External Review, which examined policies and procedures after the July campus encampment. The Review, based on 51 submissions and national consultations, highlights the challenge of balancing free speech with safety while noting actions already taken such as new access rules, policy reviews, and stronger security.	Antisemitism, Islamophobia, moderation on internal discussion platforms.
Campus Collaboration	The Campus Collaboration (also known as Civic Campus), an initiative of the Sydney Policy Lab, engages staff and students to address in respectful dialogue in times of heightened disagreement and conflict. Launched in 2024, it explores how to make the University a place where difference is generative, care and compassion are central, and experimental, democratic approaches flourish, together enriching campus life and fostering thoughtful disagreement.	Antisemitism, Islamophobia, moderation on internal discussion platforms.
Academic Excellence Program and Framework	The program seeks to create a supportive academic culture by clarifying excellence, streamlining processes, equipping supervisors, and fostering a collegial community across the University.	Recognition of cultural differences as well as cultural and colonial load and advocacy in career progression.
RISE Project	A targeted sponsorship program for CARM women in the talent pipeline in collaboration with the DCA, building on our long-running internal VC Sponsorship Program for Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Women.	Career progression and leadership pathways for CARM women.
Leadership Academy	The Leadership Academy, a key commitment of the <i>Sydney in 2032 Strategy</i> , develops diverse leaders at all levels who lead with trust, accountability, and a commitment to high performance. Supported by	Anti-racism tools and training for Managers.

	leading scholarship and expert input, it provides evidence-based programs, resources, and events to equip leaders to build empowered, high-performing, and inclusive teams.	
AHRC's Racism@Uni project	The Australian Human Rights Commission is conducting a landmark study on the prevalence, nature, and impact of racism in Australian universities, with findings and recommendations aimed at creating safer, more inclusive campuses nationwide.	Pending recommendations from AHRC and response from the University.
Wellbeing	The University strives to be a psychologically healthy workplace where all staff and students can thrive. Its Psychological Health and Wellbeing Framework, supported by the 2023–2026 Health and Wellbeing Program, outlines actions at individual, leadership, and University levels to achieve this goal.	Culturally-relevant wellbeing tools and resources.
Development Programs	The Vice-Chancellor's Sponsorship Program is a University-wide initiative that supports culturally diverse women with potential to progress into senior leadership roles. It targets Professional staff at Levels HEO 9–SPSB and Academic staff at Levels C–D. The Dr John Yu Fellowship is designed to develop high-potential leaders from multicultural backgrounds by harnessing lived experiences to shape authentic leadership styles and influence.	Existing targeted development opportunities.
Data Harmonisation	A project is underway to link and harmonise workforce data repositories.	Intersectional data limitations.

3.2.2 Data sources used in this section

TABLE 85 DATA SOURCES USED IN THIS SECTION

Source	Type of Data	Details	Limitations
University of Sydney HR Diversity Dashboard	Workforce representation	Linked to central data warehouse, Snowflake. Includes demographic questions around gender, country of origin, disability status, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander, and age. Allows for intersectional representation across career cycle.	Does not include questions relating to ethno-racial background or sexuality.
	Recruitment applications, short-listed and hired.	Linked to standalone recruitment platform. Includes categories available in Snowflake, and additional demographic questions relating to ethno-racial background and sexuality.	Some data fields are less populated than others by candidates, and data fields are not always an exact match for our internal fields for staff. This can lead to discrepancies in our categorisations, which will sometimes include ethno-racial categories and country of origin.
	Promotion applications and success rates.	Manual import of Academic Promotion Unit data with Diversity Dashboard. Some high-level intersectional analyses available.	Due to low numbers, intersectional analyses are not disaggregated by racial background. Ethno-racial background filter currently limited to Anglo-Celtic/non-Anglo-Celtic, or not disclosed, and the country of origin filter is currently limited to born in Australia/born outside Australia only, or not disclosed.
	Separation/Turnover	Linked to central platform, Snowflake which includes demographic questions around gender, country of origin, disability status, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander. Allows for intersectional representation by type and reason for leaving.	Country of origin currently limited to born in Australia/born outside Australia, or not disclosed. Racial background is not included
Intersectional gender pay gap analysis	Pay gap between men and women from the same cultural background. Pay gap between men and women identifying as Anglo-Celtic cultural background compared to those identifying as having other cultural backgrounds.	Calculations built on the WGEA gender pay gap formula of $[(\text{average remuneration of men} - \text{average remuneration of women}) / \text{average remuneration of men}] \times 100$ to create an intersectional analysis, by incorporating Cultural Background into the groupings. Differed from WGEA calculation and categorisation by applying to the University's classification structure, as well as timing, which uses data as at 31 January 2025 as opposed to the 23/24 WGEA reporting timeframe.	Classification and timeframe differences make the calculations reported here non-comparable with public WGEA reports.

	Pay gap for staff identifying as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander compared to staff who do not.																																																							
2025 Sydney Listens All Staff Engagement Survey Quantitative data	% Favourable responses by Cultural background and/or Ethno-Racial background across engagement factors and question set.	Open to staff May 2025.	Both cultural background and ethno-racial demographics are available, but much lower disclosure of the latter, leading to more limited availability of gender-intersectional data due to Culture Amp privacy parameters. For this reason, and to better align with workforce data, which does not capture ethno-racial data, cultural background is used more frequently here. TGD headcounts are too low to be shown across cultural and ethno-racial groupings and so have been excluded from analyses.																																																					
	Experiences of bullying, discrimination, harassment, and sexual misconduct by Cultural background.	<i>Note: HC=Headcount; PR=Participation Rate; TGD = Trans & Gender Diverse; CNTD=Choose Not To Disclose</i>																																																						
		First Nations gender demographics																																																						
		<table><tr><th></th><th>Men</th><th>Women</th><th>TGD</th><th>CNTD</th></tr><tr><td>Not Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander</td><td>HC:2649; PR:98%</td><td>HC:4045; PR: 97%</td><td>na</td><td>na</td></tr><tr><td>CNTD</td><td>HC:130; PR:96%</td><td>HC:99; PR:96%</td><td>na</td><td>na</td></tr><tr><td>Aboriginal</td><td>HC:26; PR:96%</td><td>HC:56; PR:95%</td><td>na</td><td>na</td></tr><tr><td>Not Specified</td><td>na</td><td>na</td><td>na</td><td>na</td></tr><tr><td>Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander</td><td>na</td><td>na</td><td>na</td><td>na</td></tr><tr><td>Torres Strait Islander</td><td>na</td><td>na</td><td>na</td><td>na</td></tr></table>			Men	Women	TGD	CNTD	Not Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander	HC:2649; PR:98%	HC:4045; PR: 97%	na	na	CNTD	HC:130; PR:96%	HC:99; PR:96%	na	na	Aboriginal	HC:26; PR:96%	HC:56; PR:95%	na	na	Not Specified	na	na	na	na	Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander	na	na	na	na	Torres Strait Islander	na	na	na	na																		
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	Aboriginal	HC:26; PR:96%		HC:56; PR:95%	na	na																																																		
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2025 Sydney Listens All Staff Engagement Survey Qualitative data	Thematic analysis of 2025 Sydney Listens anonymous free text feedback from staff.	Thematic analysis of the total of 25 856 free text comments - 68% of participants contributed at least one comment, with a median of three comments/commentor. We used Microsoft CoPilot to interrogate the datasets, asking whether positive or negative themes were raised in free text comments relating to each of the identified sub-barriers, and if any suggestions were raised by staff to address the issues. Themes were verified by humans.	We do not have permission to use direct quotes from staff.																																																																						
SAGE Silver Focus Groups & Surveys	Thematic analysis of lived experience of ethno-racially marginalised staff. Focus groups and Surveys Offered: First Nations women First Nations men Ethno-racially diverse women who have migrated to Australia Ethno-racially diverse women who were born in Australia Ethno-racially diverse men who have migrated to Australia Ethno-racially diverse men who were born in Australia First Nations and ethno-racially diverse LGBTQIA+ staff	Demographics A total of 24 people provided insights into their lived experience of racial inclusion, voice and visibility at the University. Most were from an Asian ethno-racial background. The vast majority were women. <table><tr><td></td><td>HC</td></tr><tr><td>Asian</td><td>14</td></tr><tr><td>Not specified</td><td>≤6</td></tr><tr><td>Middle Eastern/North African</td><td>≤6</td></tr><tr><td>African</td><td>≤6</td></tr><tr><td>Latin American</td><td>≤6</td></tr><tr><td>Anglo-Celtic</td><td>≤6</td></tr><tr><td>European</td><td>≤6</td></tr><tr><td>First Nations</td><td>≤6</td></tr></table>		HC	Asian	14	Not specified	≤6	Middle Eastern/North African	≤6	African	≤6	Latin American	≤6	Anglo-Celtic	≤6	European	≤6	First Nations	≤6	Attendance at focus groups was relatively low, with most participants electing to respond via surveys and interviews. Both focus groups earmarked exclusively for First Nations staff were cancelled as no one registered, and only one person identifying as First Nations submitted a survey, making free text comments from the 2025 Sydney Listens All Staff survey our primary source of feedback from First Nations staff. Note, however, that the University is currently developing its new <i>One Sydney, Many People Strategy</i> , incorporating extensive staff consultation, and so the already low numbers of First Nations staff																																																				
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	Staff who do NOT identify as ethno-racially diverse	<table><tr><td></td><td>HC</td></tr><tr><td>Migrated</td><td>18</td></tr><tr><td>Born here</td><td>≤6</td></tr></table> <table><tr><td></td><td>Professional</td><td>Academic</td><td>Leadership role</td></tr><tr><td>Woman</td><td>9</td><td>9</td><td>8</td></tr><tr><td>Man</td><td>≤6</td><td>≤6</td><td>≤6</td></tr><tr><td>Not specified</td><td>≤6</td><td>0</td><td>≤6</td></tr></table> <table><tr><td>Disability</td><td></td></tr><tr><td>Yes</td><td>≤6</td></tr><tr><td>No</td><td>14</td></tr><tr><td>Not specified</td><td>≤6</td></tr><tr><td>LGBTQIA+</td><td></td></tr><tr><td>Yes</td><td>≤6</td></tr><tr><td>No</td><td>14</td></tr><tr><td>Not specified</td><td>≤6</td></tr><tr><td>Caring responsibilities</td><td></td></tr><tr><td>Yes</td><td>16</td></tr><tr><td>No</td><td>≤6</td></tr><tr><td>Not specified</td><td>≤6</td></tr></table> Quotes are used with permission. Individuals are represented by participant numbers (Rxx) to preserve anonymity.		HC	Migrated	18	Born here	≤6		Professional	Academic	Leadership role	Woman	9	9	8	Man	≤6	≤6	≤6	Not specified	≤6	0	≤6	Disability		Yes	≤6	No	14	Not specified	≤6	LGBTQIA+		Yes	≤6	No	14	Not specified	≤6	Caring responsibilities		Yes	16	No	≤6	Not specified	≤6	may be experiencing over-consultation. Additionally, First Nations data included in this section with respect to First Nations staff is primarily intended to be shared with the ISS team to support strategy rather than standalone SAGE actions.
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Assess to RISE Self-Assessment Tool	Participant ratings of the University's progress against systemic barriers and sub-barriers holding back CARM women from rising into leadership roles: (a) Understanding Gendered Racism (racial literacy, gender literacy, knowledge of CARM women lived experience, conversational competence) (b) Organisational Culture (centred voice, organisational maturity, racial safety, effective allyship) (c) Intersectional Policies and Processes (leadership model, equitable talent	Open to CARM women May-August 2024. Assess to RISE is an evidence-based self-assessment tool developed specifically for organisations participating in DCA's R.I.S.E. pilot. Its purpose is to help organisations: (a) identify the systemic barriers that prevent CARM women from advancing into leadership roles (particularly targeted CARM women located in the talent pipeline and in mid-career), and (b) by listening to and centring the voice of CARM women, take informed, practical steps to dismantle these barriers and create pathways to rise into leadership within the workplace. The tool comprised a confidential online survey asking participants to rate the University against a series of questions relating to the systemic barriers and sub-barriers.																																															

	management, access to social capital, raising & resolving concerns) (d) Impact (data & metrics, reporting, accountability)	Completed by 51 staff members: 7 staff were members of the RISE internal Project Team and 44 were staff who are CARM women. Note the internal Project Team comprises 6 CARM women and 3 allies (2 white women and 1 white non-binary person).	
Assess to RISE focus groups	Thematic analysis of lived experience of CARM women.	Held September 2024 To explore the outcomes of the Assess to RISE Self-Assessment Tool, we held two focus groups (7 CARM women + 9 internal Project Team members) and nine 1:1 interviews, further exploring lived experience and perspectives of CARM women and internal Project Team members.	We do not have permission to use direct quotes from staff.
University of Sydney External Review Report (Hodgkinson Report)	External Review led by Bruce Hodgkinson AM SC.	Open to staff July-September 2024 51 written submissions from individuals and organisations received. Fifteen recommendations made, all of which were in principle accepted by the University.	

3.3 Evidence of the Barrier and Contributing Factors

3.3.1 Barriers to attraction, progression & retention of ethno-racially diverse staff

Participants in the Assess to RISE tool rated the University as only "starting out" (18%) on equitable talent management for CARM women. This low confidence was echoed through our three sources of qualitative data (RISE and SAGE Silver Focus Groups and 2025 Sydney Listens Staff Survey free text comments) where CARM staff (all genders) reported systemic bias in recruitment and promotion, accent and name discrimination, unclear decisions, and lack of feedback.

3.3.1.1 Workforce data

To set a high-level benchmark, we reviewed overseas-born staff representation as a percentage overall workforce (Table 86). Overseas-born women were most concentrated in mid-level professional roles but were under-represented in academic, senior and leadership roles relative to their 25.1% share of the workforce. In contrast, overseas-born men had lower overall representation (18.5%) but were more visible in academic roles, particularly senior.

TABLE 86 REPRESENTATION OVERSEAS-BORN STAFF AS A PERCENTAGE TOTAL WORKFORCE (EXCLUDING CASUAL)

Note: Snapshot taken as at 31 March 2025. HC = Headcount; TGD = Trans & Gender Diverse; ND = Not Disclosed; HEO = Higher Education Officer; SPS = Senior Professional Staff; Data verified by HR Workforce Information & Reporting 9 September 2025 and correct at the time of verification.

	Men born outside Australia		Women born outside Australia		TGD born outside Australia		ND born outside Australia	
	HC	%	HC	%	HC	%	HC	%
All (excluding Casual)	1902	18.5%	2576	25.1%	11	0.1%	7	0.1%
Full-time	1730	21%	2115	25.7%	9	0.1%	≤ 6	0.04%
Part-time	172	8.5%	461	22.7%	≤ 6	0.1%	≤ 6	0.2%
Casual	2586	19.6%	3063	23.2%	35	0.3%	32	0.2%
Fixed-Term	811	18.1%	1117	24.9%	≤ 6	0.1%	≤ 6	0.1%
Continuing	1103	18.8%	1477	25.2%	≤ 6	0.1%	≤ 6	0.1%
Academic	1079	25.7%	895	21.3%	≤ 6	0.1%	≤ 6	0.1%
Academic Level A	189	25.9%	174	23.9%	≤ 6	0.1%	≤ 6	0.1%
Academic Level B	236	21%	272	24.2%	≤ 6	0.1%	≤ 6	0.2%
Academic Level C	207	23.5%	186	21.1%	≤ 6	0.1%	0	0
Academic Level D	167	26.8%	132	21.2%	≤ 6	0.5%	0	0
Academic Level E	274	33.5%	126	15.4%	≤ 6	0.1%	0	0
Professional	825	13.6%	1684	27.7%	≤ 6	0.1%	≤ 6	0.05%
Professional HEO 1-4	50	11.5%	106	24.5%	0	0	0	0
Professional HEO 5-7	405	12%	1010	29.8%	≤ 6	0.1%	≤ 6	0.1%
Professional HEO 8-10	277	16.6%	436	26.1%	0	0	≤ 6	0.1%
Professional SPS A-B	57	16.4%	90	25.9%	0	0	0	0
Professional SPS C-D	26	16.4%	30	18.9%	0	0	0	0
Senior Staff	529	26.6%	380	19.1%	≤ 6	0.2%	≤ 6	0.1%
Management Roles	543	19.9%	616	22.6%	≤ 6	0.04%	≤ 6	0.1%

3.3.1.2 Recruitment

In Key Barrier 1, we noted recruitment de-enrichment for academic candidates born outside Australia. Further breakdown of 2021–24 applications and outcomes by region of birth (Table 87, Figure 21) and applied-to-shortlisted (Table 88) and shortlisted-to-hired (Table 89) conversion rates, indicated that candidates from Oceania and to a lesser extent North-West Europe were enriched during recruitment whereas applicants from elsewhere were generally not. Candidates from Southern & Central Asia and Southern Africa had low shortlisting but higher hire conversion, suggesting early screening of applications that did not fulfil role requirements.

Similar patterns appeared for professional staff, with women from North-West Europe, Oceania, and Southern & Eastern Asia outperforming men in shortlisting-to-hiring (Tables 90–92, Figure 22).

TABLE 87 2021-24 ACADEMIC PROGRESSION THROUGH RECRUITMENT STAGES BY REGION OF BIRTH

Note: HC = Headcount; TGD = Trans & Gender Diverse; ND = Not Disclosed; Data verified by HR Workforce Information & Reporting 9 September 2025 and correct at the time of verification.

	TGD	Men	ND	Women
Applied				
Americas	0.1% (HC: 45)	3.7% (HC: 1620)	0.1% (HC: 62)	2.3% (HC: 987)
North Africa & Middle East	0.03% (HC 12)	8.5% (HC: 3706)	0.1% (HC: 50)	4.5% (HC: 1975)
North-East Asia	0.1% (HC: 28)	7.7% (HC: 3386)	0.1% (HC: 62)	5.2% (HC: 2293)
North-West Europe	0.1% (HC: 33)	3.1% (HC: 1375)	0.1% (HC: 59)	2% (HC: 885)
Oceania & Antarctica	0.1% (HC: 57)	7.3% (HC: 3208)	0.2% (HC: 103)	8.4% (HC:3650)
South-East Asia	0.3% (HC: 13)	2.6% (HC: 1145)	0.03% (HC:11)	2.1% (HC: 917)
Southern & Central Asia	0.1% (HC: 25)	17.8% (HC: 7792)	0.2% (HC: 68)	8.7% (HC: 3800)
Southern & Eastern Europe	0.4% (HC: 19)	3.1% (HC: 1341)	0.3% (HC: 117)	2.3% (HC: 985)
Southern & Central Africa	0	4.7% (HC: 2042)	0.03% (HC: 11)	1.2% (HC: 517)
East Asia	0	0.3% (HC: 143)	0.01% (HC: ≤6)	0.2% (HC: 76)
Not Disclosed	0.001% (HC: ≤6)	0.5% (HC: 207)	1.4% (HC: 603)	0.6% (HC: 277)
Short-Listed				
Americas	0.1% (HC: 11)	3.6% (HC: 305)	0.1% (HC: 9)	3.3% (HC: 280)
North Africa & Middle East	0.01% (HC: ≤6)	3.1% (HC:260)	0.05% (HC: ≤6)	2.1% (HC: 182)
North-East Asia	0.04% (HC: ≤6)	7.8% (HC: 662)	0.1% (HC: 11)	5.6% (HC: 477)
North-West Europe	0.1% (HC: 10)	4.6% (HC: 391)	0.1% (HC: 9)	3.7% (HC: 314)
Oceania & Antarctica	0.2% (HC: 15)	13.6% (HC: 1153)	0.1% (HC: 12)	20.8% (HC: 1761)
South-East Asia	0.04% (HC: ≤6)	2.2% (HC: 185)	0.04% (HC: ≤6)	2% (HC: 166)
Southern & Central Asia	0.1% (HC: ≤6)	5.9% (HC: 504)	0.1% (HC: ≤6)	4% (HC: 335)
Southern & Eastern Europe	0.01% (HC: ≤6)	2.1% (HC: 175)	0.01% (HC: ≤6)	2.4% (HC: 205)
Southern & Central Africa	0	1.5% (HC: 125)	0	0.7% (HC: 62)
East Asia	0	0.4% (HC: 31)	0	0.3% (HC: 27)
Not Disclosed	0.1% (HC: ≤6)	1.9% (HC: 163)	5% (HC: 424)	2.2% (HC: 185)
Hired				
Americas	0.1% (HC: ≤6)	3.7% (HC: 99)	0.04% (HC: ≤6)	2.6% (HC: 70)
North Africa & Middle East	0	2.2% (HC: 59)	0.04% (HC: ≤6)	1.5% (HC: 39)
North-East Asia	0.04% (HC: ≤6)	5.9% (HC: 157)	0	4.5% (HC: 121)
North-West Europe	0	4.4% (HC: 117)	0.04% (HC: ≤6)	4% (HC: 108)
Oceania & Antarctica	0.1% (HC: ≤6)	17.6% (HC: 470)	0.1% (HC: ≤6)	27.7% (HC: 742)
South-East Asia	0	2.2% (HC: 59)	0	1.8% (HC: 47)
Southern & Central Asia	0	3.7% (HC: 100)	0	2.9% (HC: 79)
Southern & Eastern Europe	0	1.3% (HC: 36)	0	2% (HC: 54)
Southern & Central Africa	0	0.8% (HC: 22)	0	0.9% (HC: 23)
East Asia	0	0.4% (HC: 10)	0	0.4% (HC: 12)
Not Disclosed	0.1% (HC: ≤6)	4.1% (HC: 111)	0.04% (HC: ≤6)	4.7% (HC: 126)

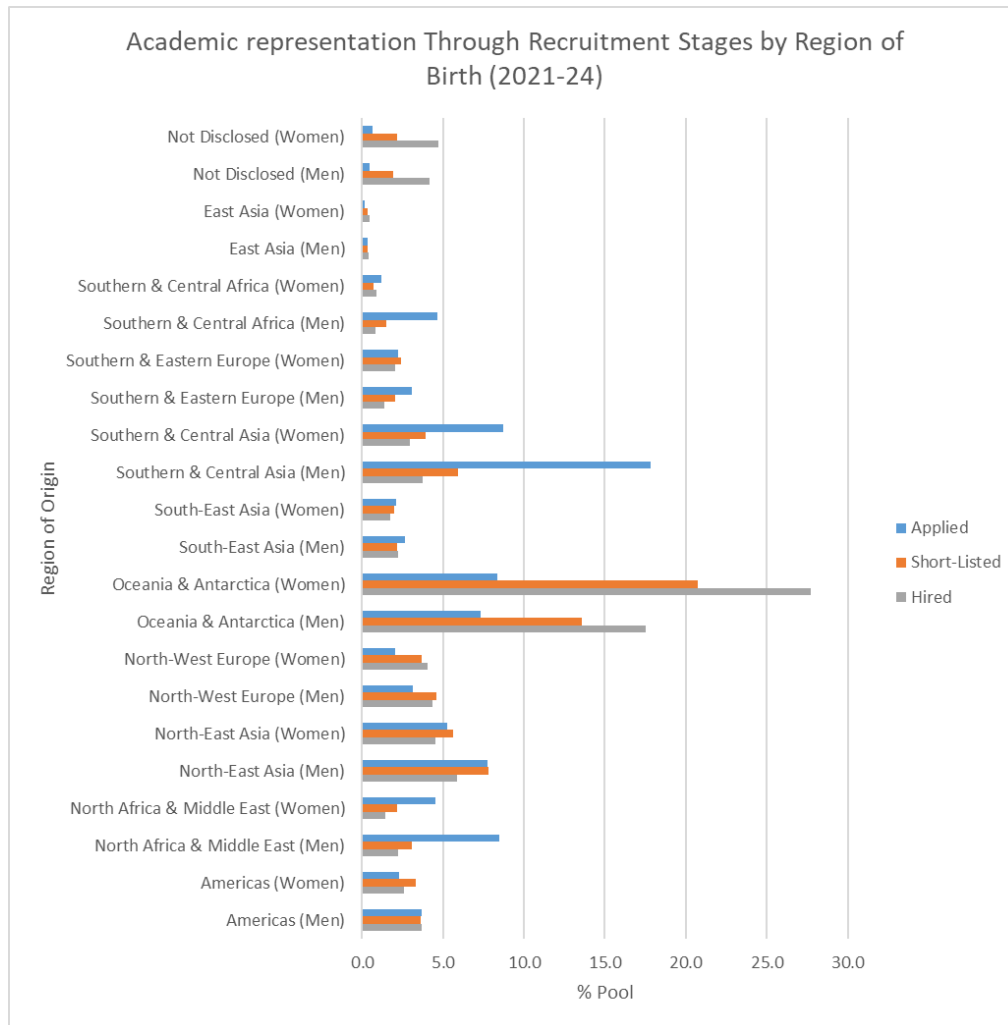


FIGURE 21 2021-24 ACADEMIC REPRESENTATION THROUGH THE RECRUITMENT STAGES BY REGION OF BIRTH

Note: Data verified by HR Workforce Information & Reporting 9 September 2025 and correct at the time of verification.

TABLE 88 2021-24 ACADEMIC CONVERSION RATE FROM APPLIED TO SHORT-LISTED BY REGION OF BIRTH

Note: TGD = Trans & Gender Diverse; ND = Not Disclosed

	Total	TGD	Men	ND	Women
Americas	22.3%	24.4%	18.8%	14.5%	28.4%
North Africa & Middle East	7.8%	8.3%	7%	8%	9.2%
North-East Asia	20%	10.7%	19.6%	17.7%	20.8%
North-West Europe	30.8%	30.3%	28.4%	15.3%	35.5%
Oceania & Antarctica	41.9%	26.3%	35.9%	11.7%	48.2%
South-East Asia	17.1%	23.1%	16.2%	27.3%	18.1%
Southern & Central Asia	7.3%	34%	6.5%	8.8%	8.8%
Southern & Eastern Europe	15.5%	5.3%	13%	0.9%	20.8%
Southern & Central Africa	7.3%	N/A	6.1%	0%	12%
East Asia	25.9%	N/A	21.7%	0%	35.5%
Not Disclosed	71.1%	100%	78.7%	70.3%	66.8%

TABLE 89 2021-24 ACADEMIC CONVERSION RATE FROM SHORT-LISTED TO HIRED BY REGION OF BIRTH

Note: HC = Headcount; TGD = Trans & Gender Diverse; ND = Not Disclosed; Data verified by HR Workforce Information & Reporting 9 September 2025 and correct at the time of verification.

	Total	TGD	Men	ND	Women
Americas	28.4%	18.2%	32.5%	11.1%	25%
North Africa & Middle East	22.1%	0%	22.7%	25%	21.4%
North-East Asia	24.2%	33.3%	23.7%	0%	25.4%
North-West Europe	31.2%	0%	29.9%	11.1%	34.4%
Oceania & Antarctica	41.5%	26.7%	40.8%	33.3%	42.1%
South-East Asia	29.7%	0%	31.9%	0%	28.3%
Southern & Central Asia	21%	0%	19.8%	0%	23.6%
Southern & Eastern Europe	23.6%	0%	20.6%	0%	26.3%
Southern & Central Africa	24.1%	N/A	17.6%	N/A	37.1%
East Asia	37.9%	N/A	32.3%	N/A	44.4%
Not Disclosed	31%	100%	68.1%	0.2%	68.1%

TABLE 90 2021-24 PROFESSIONAL PROGRESSION THROUGH RECRUITMENT STAGES BY REGION OF BIRTH

Note: HC = Headcount; TGD = Trans & Gender Diverse; ND = Not Disclosed; Data verified by HR Workforce Information & Reporting 9 September 2025 and correct at the time of verification.

	TGD	Men	ND	Women
Applied				
Americas	0.05% (HC: 62)	1.9% (HC: 2379)	0.04% (HC: 49)	2.6% (HC: 3196)
North Africa & Middle East	0.01% (HC: 13)	1.5% (HC: 2312)	0.01% (HC: 17)	1.9% (HC: 2407)
North-East Asia	0.1% (HC: 66)	4.7% (HC: 5895)	0.1% (HC: 87)	10.2% (HC: 12761)
North-West Europe	0.03% (HC: 33)	2.0% (HC: 2529)	0.04% (HC: 52)	3.5% (HC: 4320)
Oceania & Antarctica	0.5% (HC: 633)	14.1% (HC: 17596)	0.3% (HC: 414)	23.3% (HC: 29115)
South-East Asia	0.1% (HC: 76)	3% (HC: 3706)	0.03% (HC: 35)	4.6% (HC: 5730)
Southern & Central Asia	0.1% (HC: 107)	8.4% (HC: 10504)	0.05% (HC: 62)	8.7% (HC: 10846)
Southern & Eastern Europe	0.02% (HC: 28)	1% (HC: 1262)	0.04% (HC: 52)	2.1% (HC: 2586)
Southern & Central Africa	0.01% (HC: 18)	1.2% (HC: 1530)	0.01% (HC: 16)	1.1% (HC: 1428)
East Asia	0	0.3% (HC: 355)	0.004% (HC: 5)	0.4% (HC: 468)
Not Disclosed	0.001% (HC: ≤6)	0.2% (HC: 304)	1% (HC: 1292)	0.6% (HC: 712)
Short-Listed				
Americas	0.03% (HC: 7)	1.5% (HC: 368)	0.02% (HC: ≤6)	2.5% (HC: 603)
North Africa & Middle East	0	0.8% (HC: 196)	0.01% (HC: ≤6)	1.3% (HC: 312)
North-East Asia	0.01% (HC: ≤6)	3% (HC: 725)	0.02% (HC: ≤6)	8.8% (HC: 2115)
North-West Europe	0.03% (HC: 8)	1.9% (HC: 467)	0.03% (HC: 8)	4.6% (HC: 1111)
Oceania & Antarctica	0.5% (HC: 118)	16.1% (HC: 3879)	0.2% (HC: 58)	32.8% (HC: 7913)
South-East Asia	0.02% (HC: ≤6)	1.8% (HC: 446)	0.03% (HC: 8)	4.1% (HC: 987)
Southern & Central Asia	0.1% (HC: 17)	4% (HC: 977)	0.03% (HC: 8)	6% (HC: 1456)
Southern & Eastern Europe	0.02% (HC: ≤6)	0.7% (HC: 169)	0.02% (HC: ≤6)	2% (HC: 474)
Southern & Central Africa	0.004% (HC: ≤6)	0.6% (HC: 140)	0	1% (HC: 239)
East Asia	0	0.1% (HC: 27)	0	0.3% (HC: 65)
Not Disclosed	0.004% (HC: ≤6)	0.7% (HC: 170)	2.7% (HC: 652)	1.6% (HC: 384)
Hired				
Americas	0.03% (HC: ≤6)	1.3% (HC: 88)	0	2.4% (HC: 158)
North Africa & Middle East	0	0.5% (HC: 33)	0	0.9% (HC: 61)
North-East Asia	0	2% (HC: 131)	0.03% (HC: ≤6)	7.3% (HC: 489)
North-West Europe	0.01% (HC: ≤6)	2.1% (HC: 139)	0.03% (HC: ≤6)	5.6% (HC: 375)
Oceania & Antarctica	0.5% (HC: 34)	17.4% (HC: 1158)	0.1% (HC: 8)	38% (HC: 2534)
South-East Asia	0	1.6% (HC: 110)	0	3.8% (HC: 252)
Southern & Central Asia	0.01% (HC: ≤6)	3% (HC: 201)	0	4.8% (HC: 319)
Southern & Eastern Europe	0.01% (HC: ≤6)	0.6% (HC: 41)	0.01% (HC: ≤6)	1.9% (HC: 127)
Southern & Central Africa	0	0.6% (HC: 38)	0	0.9% (HC: 61)
East Asia	0	0.1% (HC: ≤6)	0	0.2% (HC: 15)
Not Disclosed	0.01% (HC: ≤6)	1.3% (HC: 90)	0	2.9% (HC: 192)

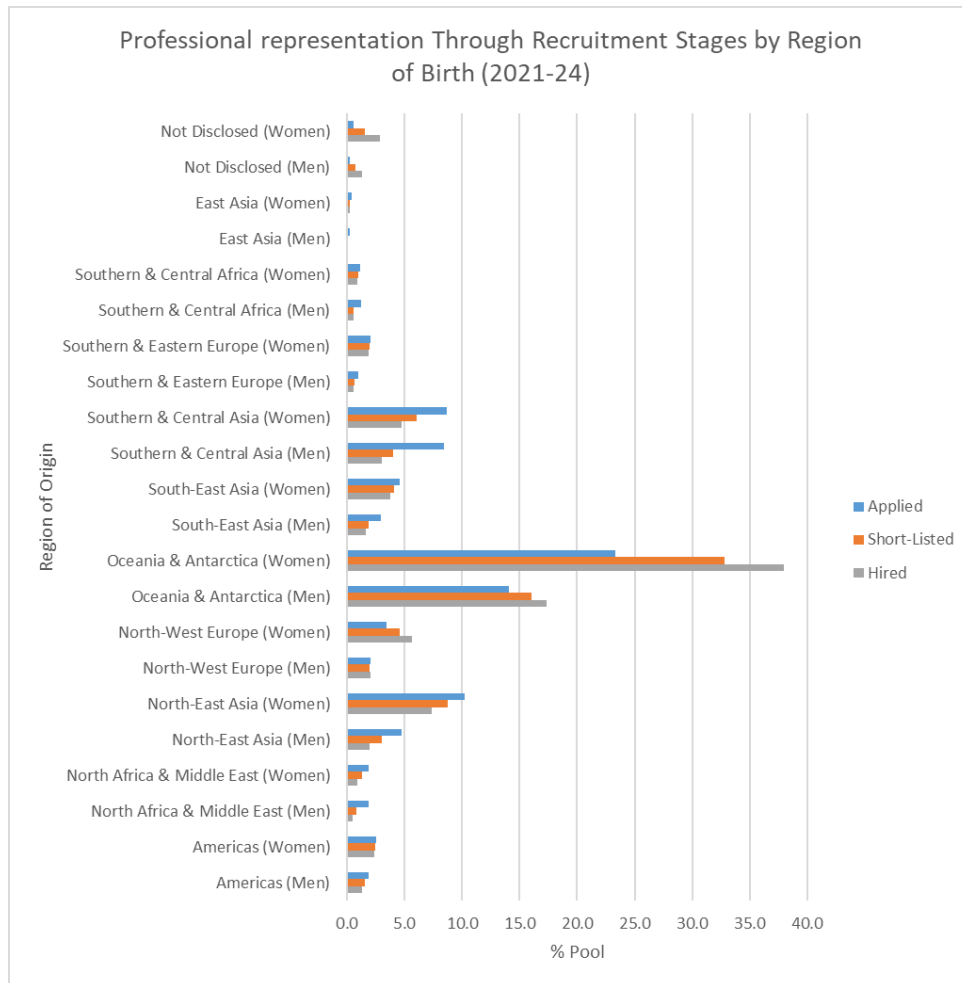


FIGURE 22 2021-24 PROFESSIONAL REPRESENTATION THROUGH THE RECRUITMENT STAGES BY REGION OF BIRTH

Note: Data verified by HR Workforce Information & Reporting 9 September 2025 and correct at the time of verification.

TABLE 91 2021-24 PROFESSIONAL CONVERSION RATE FROM APPLIED TO SHORT-LISTED BY REGION OF BIRTH

Note: HC = Headcount; TGD = Trans & Gender Diverse; ND = Not Disclosed; Data verified by HR Workforce Information & Reporting 9 September 2025 and correct at the time of verification.

	Total	TGD	Men	ND	Women
Americas	17.3%	11.3%	15.5%	8.2%	18.9%
North Africa & Middle East	10.8%	0%	8.5%	17.6%	13%
North-East Asia	15.1%	4.5%	12.3%	5.7%	16.6%
North-West Europe	23%	24.2%	18.5%	15.4%	25.7%
Oceania & Antarctica	25.1%	18.6%	22%	14%	27.2%
South-East Asia	15.1%	5.3%	12%	22.9%	17.2%
Southern & Central Asia	11.4%	15.9%	9.3%	12.9%	13.4%
Southern & Eastern Europe	16.6%	21.4%	13.4%	9.6%	18.3%
Southern & Central Africa	12.7%	5.6%	9.2%	0%	16.7%
East Asia	11.1%	N/A	7.6%	0%	13.9%
Not Disclosed	52.3%	100%	55.9%	50.5%	53.9%

TABLE 92 2021-24 PROFESSIONAL CONVERSION RATE FROM SHORT-LISTED TO HIRED BY REGION OF BIRTH

Note: HC = Headcount; TGD = Trans & Gender Diverse; ND = Not Disclosed; Data verified by HR Workforce Information & Reporting 9 September 2025 and correct at the time of verification.

	Total	TGD	Men	ND	Women
Americas	25.3%	28.6%	23.9%	0%	26.2%
North Africa & Middle East	18.4%	0%	16.8%	0%	19.6%
North-East Asia	21.8%	0%	18.1%	40%	23.1%
North-West Europe	32.4%	12.5%	29.8%	25%	33.8%
Oceania & Antarctica	31.2%	28.8%	29.9%	13.8%	32%
South-East Asia	25.1%	0%	24.7%	0%	25.5%
Southern & Central Asia	21.2%	5.9%	20.6%	0%	21.9%
Southern & Eastern Europe	26%	16.7%	24.3%	20%	26.8%
Southern & Central Africa	26.1%	0%	27.1%	N/A	25.5%
East Asia	21.7%	N/A	18.5%	N/A	23.1%
Not Disclosed	23.4%	100%	52.9%	0%	50%

In RISE and SAGE Silver Focus Groups and the 2025 Sydney Listens, staff described experiences of bias, exclusion via informal networks, and poorly applied equity principles during recruitment (Table 93).

TABLE 93 THEMES ARISING FROM RISE FOCUS GROUPS, 2025 SYDNEY LISTENS AND SAGE SILVER FOCUS GROUPS RELATING TO RACE AND RECRUITMENT

Note: RFG = RISE Focus Groups; 2025SL = 2025 Sydney Listens Staff Engagement Survey; SSFG = SAGE Silver Focus Groups. Quotes are from SAGE Silver Focus Groups only and are used with permission.

What is Working Well	Working Less Well	Recommendations
Inclusive Recruitment Awareness and Reform Participants felt there was a growing awareness within the university, among both staff and some leaders, of the need to reform recruitment practices to be more inclusive. (RFG, 2025SL) There was recognition that bias-awareness is improving, particularly in areas where training or panel diversification has been introduced. (2025SL) Cultural Considerations in Recruitment Some warned that inclusive recruitment must be partnered with addressing organisational culture to ensure lasting impact. (RFG, 2025SL) Commitment to First Nations Employment Acknowledgement that the university is taking action to employ more First Nations staff. (SSFG) Perceptions of Merit-Based Recruitment Some staff said they could not recall any race-based discrimination at recruitment. Their experience was that opportunities were given on merit. (SSFG) <i>"I've always had positive experiences with the recruitment process. Everything's been sort of merit-based. It's been people's skills and contributions that are recognised. However, the background check that was required - which I believe is very important - took much longer than usual as my country of birth caused risk of 'external influence' and that felt very racist. It became not about me but about where I came from."</i> — R20	Cultural and Structural Bias in Recruitment Recruitment processes were perceived by some as culturally biased, with panels lacking diversity and decisions influenced by factors such as name, accent, and appearance. (RFG, 2025SL, SSFG) <i>"With recruitment, you know, certain cultures value different things. The Australian way is very like sales pitchy, you kind of have to make a bit of a marketing pitch. They expect you to speak, to behave in a certain manner. If you are not born in Australia, you're at a disadvantage. And, for me, I have a traditional Vietnamese name. I sometimes feel that I didn't get a look in, because of my name. I think there is still a huge amount of discrimination around that."</i> — R21 Background checks arising from compliance with the Foreign Interference Act can result in a poor experience for foreign-born candidates. (RFG, SSFG) Influence of Informal Networks Perceptions that informal networks often determine hiring outcomes, sidelining merit and qualifications. (RFG, SSFG) <i>"Coming from a diverse ethno-racial background can sometimes influence the extent to which individuals are included in informal networks or considered for opportunities such as collaboration, mentorship, and support. These dynamics can shape access to connection, visibility and progression within academic settings."</i> — R11 Misunderstandings Around Equity Practices Some staff expressed concern that a focus on diversity could unfairly benefit certain racial groups, highlighting a need for us to better educate staff on equity principles. (2025SL)	Embed Racial Literacy and Equity Principles Build racial literacy into the recruitment process, including information around the difference between equity and equality, to reduce resistance and misunderstanding in hiring managers and teams. Diversify Recruitment Panels Encourage ethno-racial diversity and gender diversity on recruitment panels. Include cultural competence and bias mitigation strategies in recruitment panel inclusion training. Improve Candidate Experience and Transparency Review candidate-facing approach to background checks to make the process as "human" as possible. Annually review recruitment outcomes for racial equity and publish findings transparently.

3.3.1.3 Promotion

As of 31 March 2025, academics from Oceania dominated all academic levels, especially mid-career (Levels B–C), with women slightly outnumbering men (Figure 23). North-West Europeans were also well represented, particularly senior men at Level E.

Although academics across cultural backgrounds were largely concentrated mostly mid-level, there was a Level D to E gender divergence, with men from multiple regions showing an uptick whereas women did not or did so to a lesser extent (Figure 24). However, this pattern was not seen for academics from Southern and Central Asia, who became increasingly less represented at senior levels, irrespective of gender.

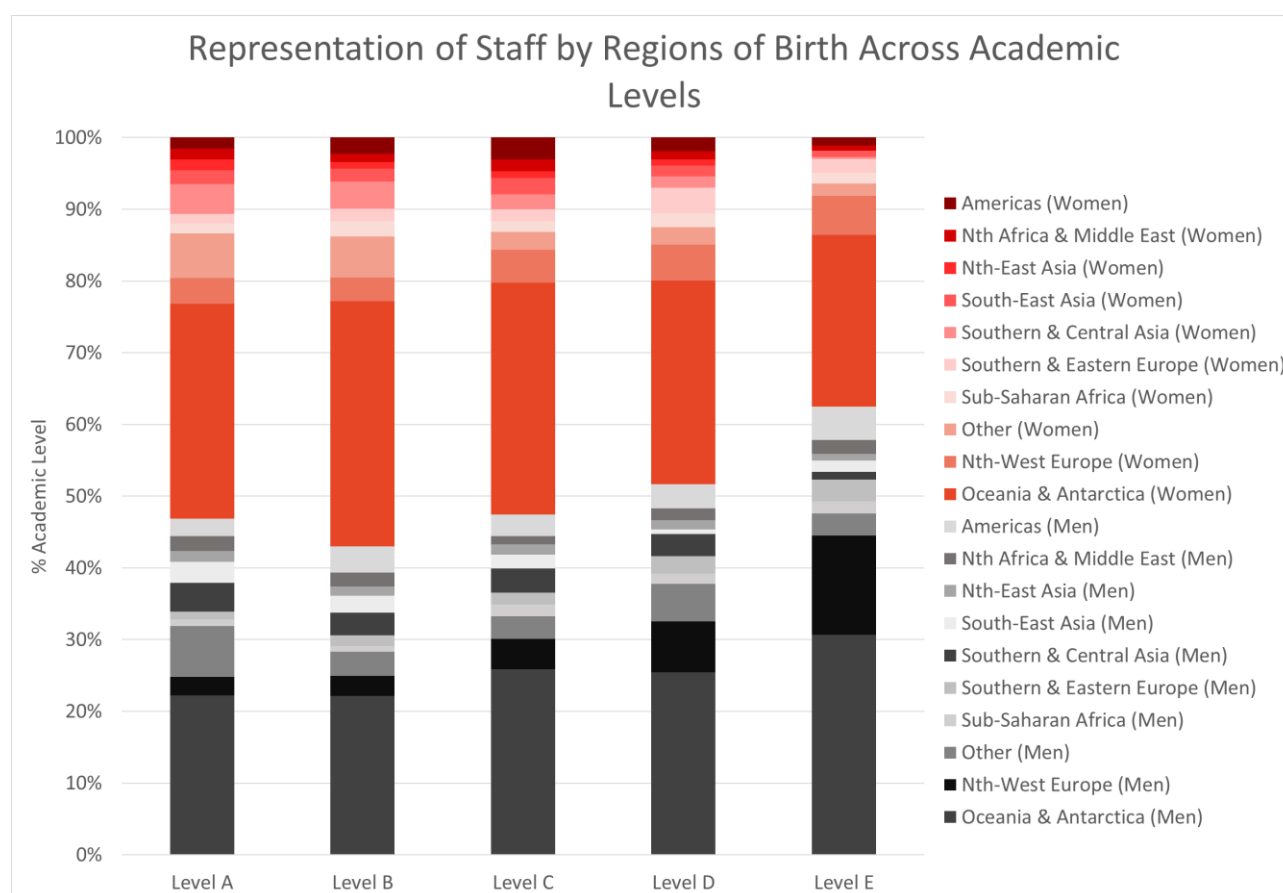


FIGURE 23 REPRESENTATION OF STAFF BY REGIONS OF BIRTH ACROSS ACADEMIC LEVELS

Note: Snapshot taken as at 31 March 2025; Data verified by HR Workforce Information & Reporting 24 September 2025 and correct at the time of verification.



FIGURE 24 31 DISTRIBUTION OF MEN AND WOMEN ACROSS ACADEMIC LEVELS BY REGION OF BIRTH

Note: Snapshot taken as at 31 March 2025. Data verified by HR Workforce Information & Reporting 24 September 2025 and correct at the time of verification.

Between 2021–24, promotion success rates were lower for staff born outside Australia than for Australian-born staff (Table 94). First Nations women had strong outcomes, while First Nations men were below average.

Staff disclosure of ethno-racial identity in Workday is lower than Country of Birth, limiting analysis, but available data suggested higher success for Anglo-Celtic staff than for non-Anglo-Celtic or undisclosed groups (Table 95).

Findings highlight the need for targeted support for ethno-racially diverse and overseas-born staff, along with building greater trust in Workday disclosures of racial identity to build more robust ethno-racial data in our Diversity Dashboard alongside Country of Birth.

TABLE 94 2021-24 PROMOTION OUTCOMES FOR WOMEN AND MEN BORN IN/OUTSIDE AUSTRALIA AND FIRST NATIONS

Note: HC = Headcount; Data verified by HR Workforce Information & Reporting 24 September 2025 and correct at the time of verification.

	2021-24 Applicants (HC)	2021-24 Successful (HC)	Average 2021-24 Success Rate	Average % 2021-24 Academic Staff A-D	Average 2021-24 % Total Applicants	Average 2021-24 % Total Promotions
Women						
Born in Australia	342	323	94%	32%	30%	32%
Born Outside Australia	239	215	90%	21%	21%	21%
First Nations	≤6	≤6	100%	1%	0.3%	0.3%
Men						
Born in Australia	248	221	89%	26%	22%	22%
Born Outside Australia	294	240	82%	25%	26%	24%
First Nations	≤6	≤6	83%	0.5%	0.5%	0.5%

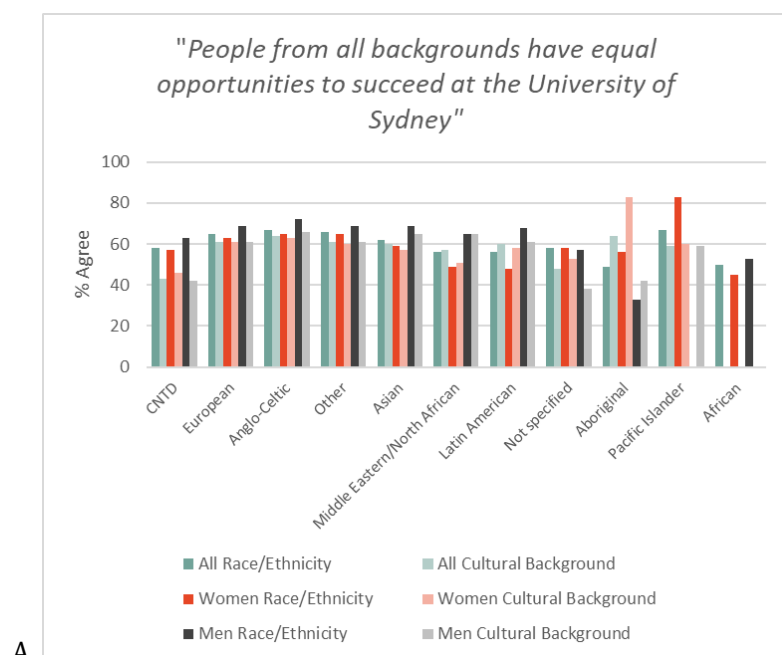
TABLE 95 2021-24 PROMOTION OUTCOMES FOR WOMEN AND MEN OF ANGLO-CELTIC/NON -ANGLO-CELTIC ORIGIN

Note: HC = Headcount; Data verified by HR Workforce Information & Reporting 24 September 2025 and correct at the time of verification.

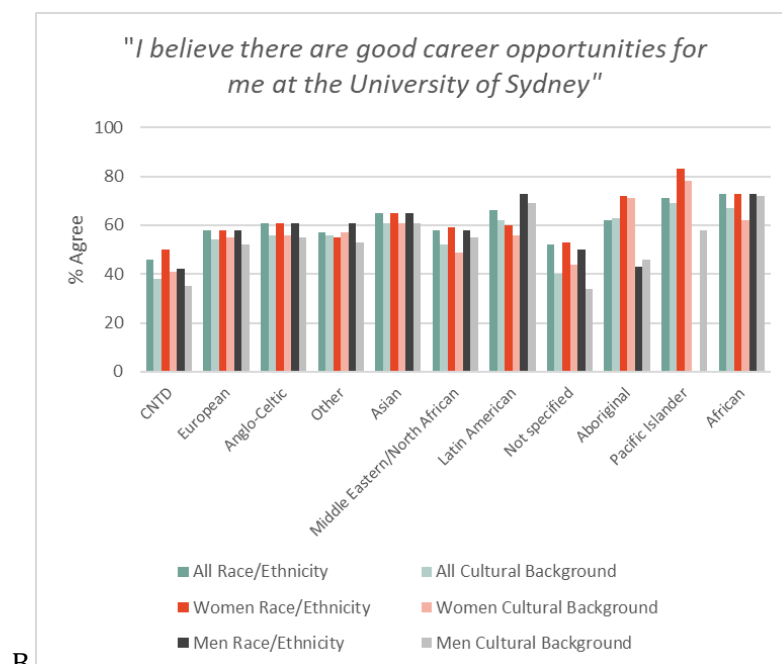
	2021-24 Applicants (HC)	2021-24 Successful (HC)	Average 2021-24 Success Rate	Average 2021-24 % Total Applicants	Average 2021-24 % Total Promotions
Women					
Anglo-Celtic Origin	23	23	100%	2%	2.3%
Non Anglo-Celtic Origin	40	38	95%	3.5%	3.8%
Not Disclosed	519	477	92%	45.9%	47.5%
Men					
Anglo-Celtic Origin	≤6	≤6	100%	0.4%	0.5%
Non Anglo-Celtic Origin	37	34	92%	3.3%	3.4%
Not Disclosed	500	422	94%	44.2%	42.0%

The 2025 Sydney Listens survey found women were more confident in career opportunities across cultural and ethno-racial groups, while men rated equal opportunity slightly higher (Figure 25).

Pacific Islander and First Nations women were most optimistic, contrasting with men. Aboriginal men showed markedly lower confidence, and Middle Eastern/North African women reported less optimism than other groups.



A



B

FIGURE 25 RESPONSES ACROSS ETHNO-RACIAL AND CULTURAL BACKGROUNDS TO TWO 2025 SYDNEY LISTENS QUESTIONS RELATING TO (A) EQUITY AND (B) CAREER OPPORTUNITIES

Thematic analysis of qualitative data highlighted perceptions that racially diverse staff face career stagnation due to cultural bias, undervaluation of non-traditional contributions in promotions, and few role models (Table 96).

TABLE 96 THEMES ARISING FROM RISE FOCUS GROUPS, 2025 SYDNEY LISTENS, AND SAGE SILVER FOCUS GROUPS RELATING TO RACE AND CAREER PROGRESSION

Note: RFG = RISE Focus Groups; 2025SL = 2025 Sydney Listens Staff Engagement Survey; SSFG = SAGE Silver Focus Groups. Quotes are from SAGE Silver Focus Groups only and are used with permission.

Working Well	Working Less Well	Recommendations
Perceptions of Promotion Equity Some staff have never witnessed race-based discrimination when it comes to promotion. (SSFG) <i>"I haven't experienced or heard of any sort of barriers stopping someone because of their background. From what I've seen, USyd workplace is very encouraging regardless of the background, as long as you're a good candidate." — R24</i> Some noted improvements in promotion transparency and equity. (RFG, 2025SL) Support Structures for CARM Women Grassroots networks and peer-driven initiatives were seen as valuable sources of support for CARM women navigating promotion. These spaces help amplify voices, share strategies, and build confidence, even in the absence of formal institutional support. (RFG) Recognition of Cultural Contributions Some staff expressed optimism about the AEF pillars of Service and Collegiality having the potential to better reflect the cultural and community contributions of racially diverse staff. (2025SL)	Misalignment with Dominant Norms Racially diverse staff, particularly CARM women, reported limited access to promotion pathways when not aligned with dominant cultural norms or leadership styles. (RFG, SSFG) Lack of Targeted Support Two-thirds of participants in the SAGE Silver Focus Groups believed race significantly contributed to career stagnation, particularly for women, and noted a lack of targeted support or structured career pathways to address inequities. (RFG, 2025SL, SSFG) <i>"As an ethnic woman, I experience 'double jeopardy' so I know I have to work a lot harder than my Caucasian women peers." — R06</i> <i>"An ethno-racial woman is still invisible when it comes to career progression." — R02</i> Undervaluing of Diverse Contributions Staff from racially diverse backgrounds reported being overlooked despite strong performance, with advocacy, cultural leadership, teaching, service, and community engagement undervalued in promotion criteria. (RFG, 2025SL, SSFG) <i>"I felt at that moment, as a female and from a different ethnic group, that I did not get recognised; they gave an Anglo male the opportunity instead. And he just couldn't do the job and requested to be pulled from the secondment. When I got a new leader in that space, I put in my request for the secondment, and I got it." — R19</i>	Embed Racial Literacy and Equity Principles Build racial literacy into the promotion process and AP&D Adviser training, including information around the difference between equity and equality. Diversify Promotion Panels Encourage ethno-racial diversity and gender diversity on promotion panels. Include cultural competence and bias mitigation strategies in promotion panel inclusion training. Monitoring and Accountability Monitor perceptions and use of AEF across academic streams through a gender-intersectional lens (to identify and address any remaining equity gaps in training and supported use of the AEF). Annually track promotion outcomes by gender and race, and report trends to leadership. Visibility and Representation Seek opportunities to build the internal visibility of ethno-racially diverse staff in senior and leadership roles. Promotion Support Provide targeted promotion support and advice to CARM staff.

3.3.1.4 Resignations

In Section 1.3.1.5 (Table 41) we noted that First Nations staff, particularly women, had higher resignation rates than the overall staff average. In contrast, staff born outside Australia showed lower resignation rates than those born in Australia, indicating stronger voluntary retention, although we don't know the reasons behind this (i.e. job satisfaction versus need to stay for income, potential visa implications).

The University's *Indigenous Workforce Plan 2025–2032* includes a focus on retention strategies for First Nations staff. Despite low resignation rates for overseas-born staff, burnout, exclusion from leadership, undervalued cultural contributions, weak support systems, and emotional strain can all contribute to disengagement, isolation, and thoughts of leaving the institution, and therefore we will continue to monitor resignation data through a more detailed gender-intersectional lens.

3.3.2 Our capability to take an intersectional approach is emerging but still low

Over the past decade the University has built intersectional capacity through workforce and survey data, diversity events, inclusive communications, and equity initiatives aiming for universal design. Further, investments in the Diversity Dashboard have enabled intersectional analysis of workforce, promotion, pay equity, and engagement data.

Fragmented data systems remain a barrier; some track only birth region, disability, First Nations, and gender, while others include ethno-racial background and sexuality. More broadly, we have not yet undertaken an intersectional review across *all* policies, procedures, systems, and frameworks, and thus do not have a clear idea of where and how consideration of intersectionality may or may not be present. Consistent with this, the Assess to RISE tool rated the University's intersectional metrics as just “starting out” (18%), and ethno-racially diverse staff described compounded marginalisation across race, gender, caring responsibilities, religion, disability, class, and role (Table 97).

To move beyond gender-only performance expectations, we need to build the infrastructure, organisational awareness, and intersectional competence to implement such a change in a meaningful and safe manner.

TABLE 97 THEMES ARISING FROM RISE FOCUS GROUPS, 2025 SYDNEY LISTENS AND SAGE SILVER FOCUS GROUPS RELATING TO INTERSECTIONALITY

Note: RFG = RISE Focus Groups; 2025SL = 2025 Sydney Listens Staff Engagement Survey; SSFG = SAGE Silver Focus Groups. Quotes are from SAGE Silver Focus Groups only and are used with permission.

Working Well	Working Less Well	Recommendations
Growing Awareness of Intersectional Challenges Participants noted increasing recognition among staff and some leadership of the unique challenges faced by CARM women due to the intersection of race and gender. This awareness is a foundational step toward more inclusive policies and practices. (RFG) Positive Experiences of Identity Disclosure Some SAGE Silver Focus Group participants were pleasantly surprised by the support they received when revealing other aspects of their identity. (SSFG) <i>"I'm diagnosed with ADHD and when I came out with that to my manager, they were very supportive of me. And adjustments were made in terms of understanding the condition and, you know, giving leeway in terms of the way that communication is handled, things like that." — R24</i> <i>"My supervisor is super nice, but when I first said to them, 'Oh, I actually have a partner, but she's also a girl' ... I was kind of afraid. My colleagues, they encouraged me to talk to my supervisor [and] my supervisor was like, 'Oh, I'm so proud of you ... I know that would be hard for you to say'. He was like, 'If you</i>	Invisibility in Equity Initiatives CARM women experienced discrimination on the basis of both race and gender, distinct from challenges faced by white women or CARM men. Gender equity initiatives frequently failed to consider racial dynamics, leaving CARM women excluded from both gender- and race-focused initiatives. (RFG, 2025SL) There is a risk that racially diverse men will slip through the cracks, with so much focus on CARM women. (SSFG) <i>"One of the things I've noticed is that culturally diverse men became this silent voice, because one, they're men and two, they're diverse. They don't seem to be engaging. We have done a lot of work on gender, and rightly so, and we should continue to do that. The men are not the priority, but within that 'men' category, culturally diverse academic men probably get more sidelined." — C38</i> Lack of Intersectional Understanding Mentors and supervisors often failed to understand the cultural challenges faced by CARM women, treating them as universal women's issues. This lack of intersectional awareness left CARM women misunderstood and unsupported. (RFG) Emotional and Cultural Labour CARM women reported carrying extra responsibilities in diversity work, advocacy, and emotional labour without recognition. They also navigated racialised stereotypes (e.g., avoiding being seen as the "angry Black woman"), code-switching, and high psychological stress leading to burnout. (RFG) CARM women with caring responsibilities felt disadvantaged, as managers often did not recognise the cultural significance of caring for extended family, instead viewing caring roles through a white Australian lens. (2025SL, SSFG) <i>"I am an immigrant, my parents know English as a second language, and my in-laws are non-English speakers. I have nieces and nephews with additional care needs. There is an expectation of care responsibilities to my immediate and extended family that are not often understood at work." — R18</i> Overlooked Intersections Beyond Gender and Race Racially diverse staff with disabilities or neurodivergence described compounding marginalisation, citing inadequate accommodations and lack of inclusive practices that address both race and disability. (2025SL)	Strategic Readiness and Change Management To prepare for potential future gender-intersectional performance expectations, apply ADKAR approach to understand and build on enabling infrastructures and build understanding and support for "the why". Leadership Engagement and Workforce Insight Support Leadership Teams across Faculties, University Schools, and Professional Service Units to understand their workforce and staff experience through a gender-intersectional lens ('Knowing your Workforce') Inclusive Decision-Making Ensure racialised staff with multiple diversity characteristics are included in strategic initiatives, decision-making, and policy development. Racial Literacy Deliver racial literacy training, including awareness of bias,

<i>find anyone who disrespects you or if anyone is racist, just tell me and I will yell at them'." — R22</i>	First-generation university graduates and those from lower socio-economic backgrounds faced additional barriers, which intersected with race to affect confidence, access to networks, and perceived legitimacy. (2025SL) Staff from Muslim and Jewish backgrounds reported feeling culturally unsafe in the context of political discourse (e.g., Israel/Palestine), shaped by intersections of race, religion, and political identity, with tensions around freedom of speech versus personal safety. (2025SL, SSFG) Professional staff from racially diverse backgrounds felt excluded from academic decision-making and leadership pipelines, reflecting the intersection of race and role-based hierarchy where professional staff were undervalued or invisible. (2025SL)	microaggressions, and inclusive communication.
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3.2.3 Under-representation in senior and leadership roles and governing bodies

Analysis by region of birth (Figure 26, Table 98) showed many senior and leadership roles are held by staff born in the Oceanic region and North-West Europe, with men from these regions over-represented particularly in senior roles relative to their workforce share. Women born outside Oceania and North-West Europe were more likely to be under-represented in management relative to their workforce share.

Notably, staff from Asia were under-represented in senior and management roles relative to workforce share. Collectively, these patterns indicate potential ethno-racial barriers into senior and leadership roles, particularly for Asian-background staff.

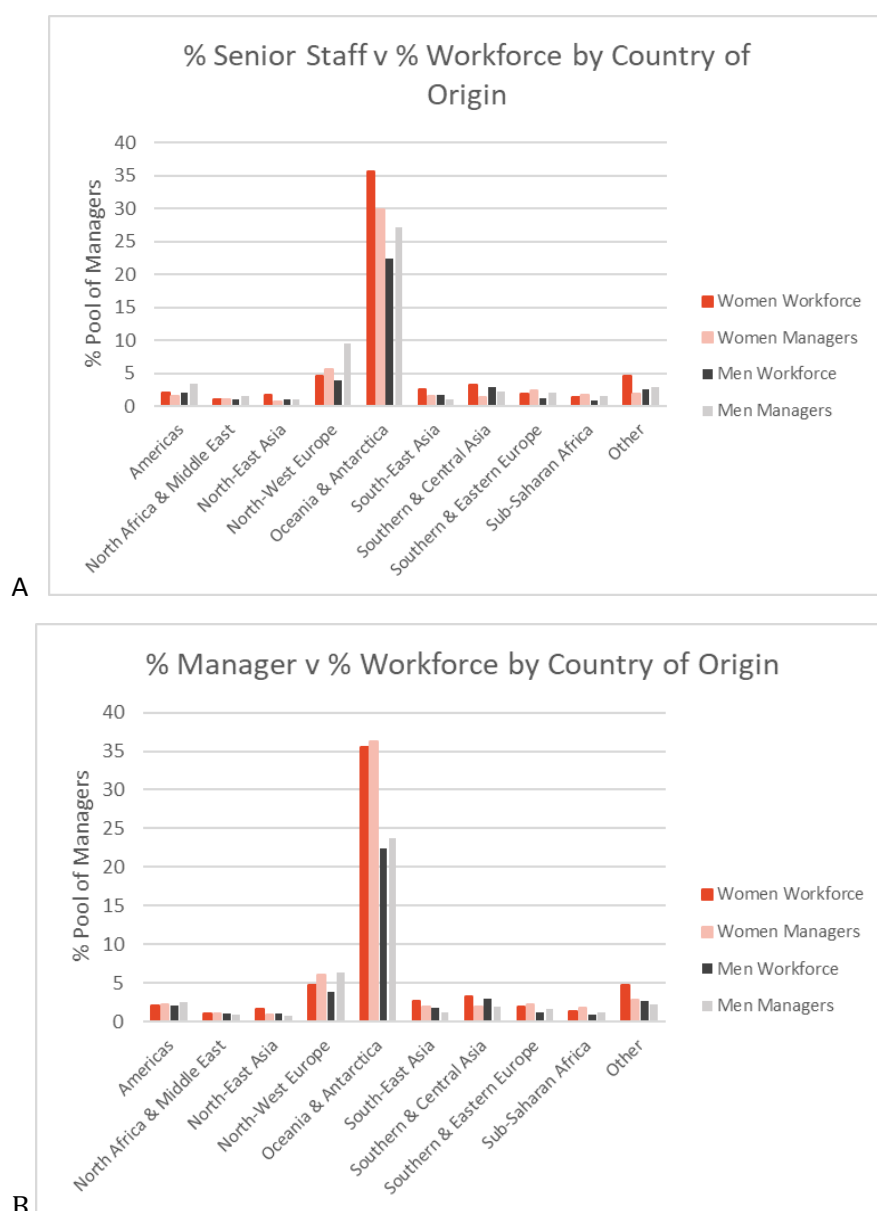


FIGURE 26 REPRESENTATION IN (A) SENIOR AND (B) MANAGEMENT ROLES RELATIVE TO WORKFORCE REPRESENTATION BY GENDER AND REGION OF BIRTH

Note: Snapshot taken as at 31 March 2025; Data verified by HR Workforce Information & Reporting 24 September 2025 and correct at the time of verification.

TABLE 98 PERCENTAGE MEN AND WOMEN BY COUNTRY OF BIRTH ACROSS WORKFORCE, SENIOR ROLES, AND MANAGEMENT ROLES

Note: Snapshot taken as at 31 March 2025. Green shading = representation higher than workforce; Orange shading = representation lower than workforce; Data verified by HR Workforce Information & Reporting 24 September 2025 and correct at the time of verification.

	All	All Senior Staff	All Managers	All Women	Women Senior Staff	Women Managers	All Men	Men Senior Staff	Men Managers
Americas	4.6% (HC: 470)	4.9% (HC: 98)	4.8% (HC: 131)	2% (HC: 210)	1.5% (HC: 29)	2.2% (HC: 60)	2.1% (HC: 217)	3.4% (HC: 68)	2.6% (HC: 70)
North Africa & Middle East	2.1% (HC: 217)	2.5% (HC: 49)	2.0% (HC: 53)	1.1% (HC: 114)	1% (HC: 20)	1.1% (HC: 29)	1% (HC: 103)	1.5% (HC: 29)	0.9% (HC: 24)
North-East Asia	2.6% (HC: 269)	1.8% (HC: 35)	1.7% (HC: 47)	1.6% (HC: 168)	0.8% (HC: 15)	0.9% (HC: 25)	1% (HC: 101)	1% (HC: 20)	0.8% (HC: 22)
North-West Europe	8.6% (HC: 883)	15.3% (HC: 304)	12.6% (HC: 342)	4.7% (HC: 482)	5.6% (HC: 112)	6.1% (HC: 166)	3.8% (HC: 396)	9.5% (HC: 190)	6.4% (HC: 174)
Oceania & Antarctica	58.6% (HC: 6040)	57% (HC: 1134)	59.9% (HC: 1638)	35.6% (HC: 3667)	29.8% (HC: 593)	36.2 (HC: 983)	22.4% (HC: 2312)	27.1% (HC: 539)	23.7% (HC: 643)
South-East Asia	4.6% (HC: 476)	2.5% (HC: 50)	3.2% (HC: 87)	2.6% (HC: 269)	1.5% (HC: 29)	2% (HC: 54)	1.7% (HC: 180)	1.1% (HC: 21)	1.2% (HC: 33)
Southern & Central Asia	6.3% (HC: 647)	3.6% (HC: 71)	3.8% (HC: 102)	3.3% (HC: 342)	1.4% (HC: 27)	1.9% (HC: 51)	2.9% (HC: 303)	2.2% (HC: 43)	1.9% (HC: 51)
Southern & Eastern Europe	3% (HC: 312)	4.4% (HC: 88)	4.1% (HC: 111)	1.9% (HC: 193)	2.3% (HC: 46)	2.3% (HC: 62)	1.1% (HC: 117)	2.1% (HC: 42)	1.6% (HC: 43)
Sub-Saharan Africa	2.4% (HC: 243)	3.2% (HC: 64)	2.9% (HC: 80)	1.4% (HC: 145)	1.8% (HC: 35)	1.8% (HC: 48)	0.9% (HC: 97)	1.5% (HC: 29)	1.2% (HC: 32)
Other	7.3% (HC: 753)	4.9% (HC: 97)	5% (HC: 137)	4.7% (HC: 481)	1.9% (HC: 38)	2.9% (HC: 78)	2.6% (HC: 268)	3% (HC: 59)	2.2% (HC: 59)

The University does not currently report on ethno-racial diversity in executive or governing bodies, however across our qualitative data sources there were general perceptions that limited ethno-racial diversity in leadership reinforced cultural norms (Table 99).

TABLE 99 THEMES ARISING FROM RISE FOCUS GROUPS, 2025 SYDNEY LISTENS AND SAGE SILVER FOCUS GROUPS RELATING TO BARRIERS ON THE LEADERSHIP PATHWAY

Note: RFG = RISE Focus Groups; 2025SL = 2025 Sydney Listens Staff Engagement Survey; SSFG = SAGE Silver Focus Groups. Quotes are from SAGE Silver Focus Groups only and are used with permission.

Working Well	Working Less Well	Recommendations
Shifting Organisational Awareness There was a growing recognition within the university community of the need to diversify leadership. Participants noted that conversations around racial equity in leadership are becoming more common, which is a foundational step toward change. However, implementation can be patchy. (RFG, SSFG) <i>"I feel they've been trying, their policies are appropriate ... The senior leadership is reasonable. But it's not trickling down enough; middle management and individual staff in some units is the problem."</i> – R12 Culturally Aware Sponsorship and Mentorship Some participants had positive experiences with mentors or sponsors who advocated for their advancement. These relationships, when culturally aware and intentional, can help bridge the gap to leadership roles. (RFG) Institutional Trust and Cultural Safety	Lack of Representation and Cultural Safety Leadership remains predominantly white and male, especially at executive levels, reinforcing narrow norms of who is seen as a "leader". This lack of representation created feelings of invisibility, limited aspirational pathways, and reinforced perceptions that diversity in leadership is not a priority despite public commitments. (RFG, 2025SL, SSFG) <i>"The university is indeed a diverse place but still does not reflect the community. The leadership is still predominantly white and policies and procedures are still made with a white lens and ... learned biases."</i> – R02 <i>"How is it, from Sydney's diverse population, all my managers have been from Anglo-Australian backgrounds? That defies the statistics."</i> – R04 CARM women in leadership were often the only person of colour in the room and faced tokenism, expected to represent all racialised voices. Their presence was sometimes used to signal diversity without systemic change. Many reported feeling psychologically unsafe in leadership spaces due to microaggressions, tokenism, and dismissive attitudes. (RFG, 2025SL) Cultural Bias in Leadership Norms Leadership traits such as assertiveness and confidence were valued, but when displayed by CARM women were misinterpreted as aggression. Conversely, collaborative or culturally nuanced leadership styles were undervalued, creating a double bind that disadvantaged CARM women. (RFG, 2025SL, SSFG) <i>"As a south-east Asian woman, I believe I am on the receiving end of a bias, where my social and emotional labour with students and colleagues is expected rather than it being valued as a skillset. These types of 'soft skills' need to be better recognised and rewarded in more meaningful metrics than teaching awards and USS scores."</i> — R09 Some racially diverse staff felt pressure to conform to white-Anglo cultural norms and leadership styles to be considered for leadership roles. (2025SL)	Strategic Targets and Accountability Set measurable targets for increasing racial and cultural diversity in leadership through targeted recruitment, sponsorship, leadership programs, and succession planning. Visibility and Representation Highlight and celebrate diverse leaders across the university to build aspiration, visibility, and belonging. <i>"I'd like to see examples of people from all different walks of life. And say, look, this is their career trajectory and life experience. So there's more role models for us to say, I can be like that, or I can even do better than that. Like, maybe little profiles, drawing on their cultural background, in the staff newsletter."</i> —R13 Inclusive Leadership Models Broaden the definition of leadership to value diverse communication styles, empathy, cultural knowledge, and community engagement. Tailored Development Pathways Tailor leadership development opportunities for intersectionally marginalised staff, including CARM women and First Nations staff,

There was optimism that leadership diversity can improve trust, cultural safety, and institutional credibility. (2025SL)	Ethno-racially diverse women, First Nations staff, and those from lower socio-economic backgrounds faced compounded barriers to leadership, with their contributions often invisible or undervalued when not aligned with traditional leadership metrics. (RFG, 2025SL) Limited Access and Biased Systems Racially diverse staff reported limited access to leadership development opportunities, with nomination and referee systems perceived as biased or exclusionary. A lack of role models from racially diverse backgrounds in senior positions further limited pathways. (2025SL)	through sponsorship, coaching, mentoring, and visibility initiatives.
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3.3.4 Low racial literacy and knowledge of anti-racism practices

The Assess to RISE tool rated the University as only “emerging” in racial literacy (36%), racial safety (26%), and allyship (26%).

Low racial literacy and anti-racism capability were linked to experiences of everyday racism, microaggressions, leadership disconnect, performative diversity, undervalued cultural knowledge, and poor psychological safety for racially marginalised staff at the University (Table 100). Outcomes from the 2025 Australian Human Rights Commission Racism@Uni survey (forthcoming) will provide additional insight.

TABLE 100 THEMES ARISING FROM RISE FOCUS GROUPS, 2025 SYDNEY LISTENS AND SAGE SILVER FOCUS GROUPS RELATING TO RACIAL LITERACY AND CULTURAL SAFETY

Note: RFG = RISE Focus Groups; 2025SL = 2025 Sydney Listens Staff Engagement Survey; SSFG = SAGE Silver Focus Groups. Quotes are from SAGE Silver Focus Groups only and are used with permission.

Working Well	Working Less Well	Recommendations
Practical Training Support Support for existing or proposed training on cultural competence, especially when it was team-wide and practically focused. (2025SL) Celebrating Diversity and Belonging Staff acknowledged the racial diversity of the University's population and very much appreciated seeing that diversity celebrated and valued. (SSFG) <i>"I am thankful the university is very culturally diverse and it encourages multiculturalism, rather than people keeping in their own clique based on race or culture."</i> – R14 Cultural celebrations act to affirm identity and bring people together. (SSFG) <i>"Regular, visible celebrations of cultural diversity, through food, festivals, language and storytelling [can be] a meaningful and joyful way to affirm identity and bring people together across differences."</i> – R11 Inclusive Team Dynamics Staff valued how cultural perspectives shaped team discussions and contributed to delivering an excellent student experience. (SSFG) <i>"My cultural perspectives and understanding play a significant role in team discussions and planning. I really value how input from our</i>	Everyday Racism and Microaggressions Discrimination and racism are expressed in everyday interactions, such as mispronouncing names, commenting on hair, or asking someone to repeat themselves unnecessarily. These behaviours undermine cultural safety and contribute to exclusion. (RFG, 2025SL, SSFG) <i>"My previous manager still can't pronounce my name properly and so when they introduced me to other people across the university, they started to mispronounce my name as well. Four years in, I still have people mispronouncing my name. To go back and correct them, it's an awkward thing."</i> – R24 <i>"I've witnessed things in a meeting, you know. If somebody of colour makes a suggestion or says something, sometimes a leader might ask them to repeat – fair enough if they can't understand the accent – but sometimes it's like, well, actually it was pretty clear what the message was, right."</i> – R21 Staff emphasised the need for cultural safety and racial literacy, calling for training on unconscious bias, microaggressions, inclusive communication, and cultural awareness, especially for mentors, supervisors, and senior leaders. (RFG, 2025SL, SSFG) Limited Representation in Cultural Expression Some staff suggested there were opportunities to broaden inclusivity in tools and public displays of ethno-racial inclusion and visibility. (SSFG) <i>"I've noticed many First Nations artworks displayed on the walls in the workplace, but not artwork (or similar cultural expressions) from other CALD communities."</i> – R08 <i>"I really value that we get a calendar at the start of the year with all the cultural days of importance across various cultures. But it would be great to know more about the traditions and culture of First Nations people. We</i>	Run an Awareness Campaign around Everyday Racism and Microaggressions Develop and deliver a comprehensive, multi-platform initiative that raises awareness of everyday racism and microaggressions, while embedding robust, ongoing training in cultural competence, racial literacy, and anti-racism. This includes expert-led workshops, real-life scenarios, anonymous testimonials, and capacity-building for allyship and inclusive leadership. Leverage existing resources (e.g. NCCC training) and enhance accessibility through new technologies and toolkits, with a strong focus on intersectionality and sustained behavioural change. Inclusion Training for Leaders Built into inclusion training - implement mandatory racial literacy and anti-racism training for senior leaders, led by experts with lived experience. Ensure training is embedded in leadership development. Inclusive Representation and Celebration Broaden meaningful inclusivity in public displays of ethno-racial celebrations and achievements to reflect the full diversity of the university community. Extend and promote the University Say My Name Campaign. Direct Engagement with Marginalised Staff Create structured opportunities for leaders to engage directly with marginalised staff through forums, roundtables, and peer-led networks.

<i>diverse team members shapes and delivers an excellent student experience.” – R01</i>	<i>live and work in a space that is not ceded. It would be great to go back and find out how the year is structured for First Nations people and then add to this the waves of migrants.” – R23</i> Risk of Tokenism in Cultural Celebrations Cultural celebrations, while welcome, risk being seen as tokenistic when not embedded in broader institutional support or shared responsibility. (SSFG) <i>“Culture diversity is not about Harmony Day. It is critical not to use such ‘days’ as signals because it is very tokenistic. Instead, please focus on how leaders support cultural diversity.” – R06</i> <i>“When we have a multicultural lunch, it’s very tokenistic; it’s usually the women who have to go out or make something to bring in. Like, wouldn’t it be great if we had a multicultural lunch and Anglo people researched our heritage, and organised to bring the food in.” – R21</i>	Monitor Wellbeing and Experience of Organisational Culture Use focus groups, targeted surveys, structured interviews, and future Sydney Listens to monitor the wellbeing and experience of organisational culture.
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3.3.5 Wellbeing and experience of ethno-racially diverse staff

In the 2025 Sydney Listens Staff Survey, Asian and African staff tended to express the most favourable sentiments across engagement factors, whereas First Nations staff responded least favourably (Table 101). Middle Eastern/North African, African, and Asian people showed within-group gender gaps tending to favour men, whereas the converse was true for other groups.

Qualitative data indicated risks to the wellbeing of ethno-racially diverse staff (Table 102).

TABLE 101 2025 SYDNEY LISTENS PERCENT FAVOURABILITY TOWARDS ENGAGEMENT FACTORS ACROSS DIFFERENT CULTURAL BACKGROUNDS

Note: n= Number; PR = Participation Rate

	All Men (n=2813; PR=64%)	All Women (n=4212; PR=66%)	Δ All Women v Men	Asian Men (n=708; PR=98%)	Asian Women (n=1066; PR=96%)	Δ Asian Women v Men	African Men (n=30; PR=100%)	African Women (n=35; PR=97%)	Δ African Women v Men	Pacific Islander Men (n=19; PR=95%)	Pacific Islander Women (n=23; PR=100%)	Δ Pacific Islander Women v Men	Latin American Men (n=75; PR=99%)	Latin American Women (n=86; PR=100%)	Δ Latin American Women v Men	Middle- Eastern/ North African Men (n=88; PR=99%)	Middle- Eastern/ North African Women (n=100; PR=96%)	Δ Middle Eastern/ North African Women v Men	Anglo-Celtic (English, Irish, Scottish, Welsh) Men (n=837; PR=98%)	Anglo-Celtic (English, Irish, Scottish, Welsh) Women (n=1582; PR=97%)	Δ Anglo-- Celtic Women v Men	European Men (n=466; 97%)	European Women (n=644; PR=97%)	Δ European Women v Men	Aboriginal Men (n=26; PR=96%)	Aboriginal Women (n=56; PR=95%)	Δ Aboriginal Women v Men
Engagement	67%	70%	3%	77%	76%	-1%	71%	82%	11%	76%	85%	9%	67%	76%	9%	70%	69%	-1%	67%	69%	2%	63%	69%	6%	52%	66%	14%
Company Confidence	49%	51%	2%	59%	56%	-3%	54%	60%	6%	47%	63%	16%	51%	54%	3%	56%	53%	-3%	47%	49%	2%	48%	52%	4%	36%	49%	13%
Alignment & Involvement	72%	73%	1%	77%	76%	-1%	76%	79%	3%	71%	87%	16%	71%	74%	3%	76%	70%	-6%	73%	74%	1%	70%	73%	3%	69%	72%	3%
Collaboration & Communication	57%	57%	0%	69%	65%	-4%	72%	70%	-2%	50%	62%	12%	61%	64%	3%	56%	58%	2%	55%	56%	1%	55%	56%	1%	49%	54%	5%
Enablement	59%	62%	3%	69%	70%	1%	70%	66%	-4%	53%	89%	36%	61%	68%	7%	63%	64%	1%	59%	59%	0%	56%	60%	4%	62%	63%	1%
Feedback & Recognition	56%	56%	0%	65%	60%	-5%	63%	60%	-3%	58%	59%	1%	57%	57%	0%	56%	53%	-3%	55%	56%	1%	54%	56%	2%	50%	59%	9%
Innovation	50%	54%	4%	65%	63%	-2%	46%	65%	19%	58%	70%	12%	53%	59%	6%	56%	48%	-8%	46%	50%	4%	46%	54%	8%	19%	51%	32%
Leadership	42%	46%	4%	53%	52%	-1%	58%	50%	-8%	38%	63%	25%	46%	44%	-2%	48%	47%	-1%	41%	46%	5%	40%	44%	4%	34%	43%	9%
Learning & Development	63%	66%	3%	68%	69%	1%	73%	68%	-5%	66%	78%	12%	70%	67%	-3%	65%	62%	-3%	63%	67%	4%	62%	64%	2%	61%	75%	14%
Management	76%	75%	-1%	81%	77%	-4%	81%	81%	0%	79%	85%	6%	72%	79%	7%	74%	78%	4%	76%	77%	1%	76%	73%	-3%	83%	78%	-5%
Service & Quality Focus	49%	51%	2%	64%	61%	-3%	72%	63%	-9%	53%	57%	4%	49%	50%	1%	52%	56%	4%	46%	47%	1%	44%	49%	5%	27%	56%	29%
Social Connection	56%	58%	2%	68%	65%	-3%	64%	60%	-4%	58%	74%	16%	60%	62%	2%	64%	49%	-15%	55%	58%	3%	53%	57%	4%	27%	49%	22%
Teamwork & Ownership	65%	67%	2%	71%	72%	1%	71%	74%	3%	56%	70%	14%	64%	72%	8%	67%	62%	-5%	65%	67%	2%	63%	65%	2%	73%	54%	-19%
Work & Life Blend	66%	66%	0%	73%	70%	-3%	80%	64%	-16%	74%	83%	9%	70%	74%	4%	68%	63%	-5%	65%	67%	2%	64%	66%	2%	56%	58%	2%
Action	47%	53%	6%	55%	56%	1%	64%	53%	-11%	58%	55%	-3%	47%	47%	0%	38%	42%	4%	48%	57%	9%	42%	50%	8%	42%	43%	1%
Diversity & Inclusion	61%	61%	0%	65%	60%	-5%	61%	61%	0%	53%	80%	27%	66%	67%	1%	62%	51%	-11%	65%	65%	0%	60%	62%	2%	49%	56%	7%
Safety	83%	82%	-1%	86%	85%	-1%	93%	87%	-6%	76%	85%	9%	81%	85%	4%	85%	80%	-5%	85%	83%	-2%	81%	83%	2%	70%	70%	0%

TABLE 102 THEMES ARISING FROM RISE FOCUS GROUPS, 2025 SYDNEY LISTENS AND SAGE SILVER FOCUS GROUPS RELATING TO WELLBEING AND EXPERIENCE OF ORGANISATIONAL CULTURE BY RACIALLY MARGINALISED GROUPS

Note: RFG = RISE Focus Groups; 2025SL = 2025 Sydney Listens Staff Engagement Survey; SSFG = SAGE Silver Focus Groups. Quotes are from SAGE Silver Focus Groups only and are used with permission.

Working Well	Working Less Well	Recommendations
Peer Networks and Community Building Networks such as the Mosaic Network provided emotional support, advocacy, awareness raising and belonging, helping to counter isolation, particularly for CARM women. (RFG) Culturally Sensitive Mentorship Culturally sensitive and invested mentors (cross-cultural), were reported as valuable for guidance, encouragement, and retention. (RFG) Recognition of Emotional Labour and Cultural Safety Participants noted an increasing recognition within the university of the importance of retaining racialised staff, including the need to address the emotional toll of exclusion and to build culturally safe environments. (RFG, 2025SL, SSFG) <i>"I have team members who advocate for me. We have a 'ways of working' document now that really structures out the things that you should respect about each person." – R24</i>	Burnout and Systemic Exclusion Racially diverse staff experienced burnout due to overwork, lack of recognition, and systemic exclusion. Some staff considered leaving due to persistent racial inequities. (2025SL, RFG) Undervaluing Cultural Knowledge Cultural knowledge and lived experience were undervalued, leading to a lack of recognition and belonging. (RFG) Exhaustion from Subtle Racism Racism and discrimination, even if not overt, can be exhausting and contribute to psychological stress. (SSFG) <i>"I find there is an expectation to assimilate into the culture of the majority." – R06</i> <i>"We talk the talk when it comes to inclusivity, voice and justice but fall short of real action when it matters." – R17</i>	Monitoring and Engagement Monitor Sydney Listens engagement across different cultural and ethno-racial backgrounds and report annually to identify gaps and opportunities for improvement. Re-run the Assess to RISE tool or similar. Invite ethno-racially diverse staff to participate in ongoing focus groups. Investment in Peer Networks Invest more deeply in peer networks and grassroots initiatives such as the Mosaic and Yura Networks that foster belonging, advocacy, and emotional support. Recognition of Cultural and Colonial Load Recognise and support cultural and colonial load, especially for First Nations staff, as part of wellbeing, workload, and retention strategies.

3.3.6 Disconnect between anti-racism rhetoric and action

The Assess to RISE tool rated the University as only "starting out" in reporting (16%), accountability (23%) of racism. Thematic analysis of qualitative data highlighted frustration with perceived disconnect between anti-racism rhetoric and action (Table 103), particularly apparent in light of the conflict in Gaza. The Hodgkinson Review (see Table 84), commissioned by the University following the 2024 campus encampments, made several recommendations around increasing racial safety on campus, all of which were accepted by the University.

TABLE 103 THEMES ARISING FROM RISE FOCUS GROUPS, 2025 SYDNEY LISTENS AND SAGE SILVER FOCUS GROUPS RELATING TO ANTI-RACISM

Note: RFG = RISE Focus Groups; 2025SL = 2025 Sydney Listens Staff Engagement Survey; SSFG = SAGE Silver Focus Groups. Quotes are from SAGE Silver Focus Groups only and are used with permission.

Working Well	Working Less Well	Recommendations
Early Steps Toward Racial Equity Some staff noted the University has begun to formalise its stance on racism through definitions (e.g., antisemitism) and policy reviews. While still seen as incomplete, these were recognised as steps in the right direction. (2025SL) There was strong advocacy from participants for better systems of accountability, including transparent grievance processes and consequences for racist behaviour. (RFG) Growing Recognition of Racial Equity at Leadership Level There was acknowledgement that some leaders are beginning to take racial equity more seriously. While not widespread or deeply embedded, this awareness provides a starting point for deeper engagement. (RFG) Consultation and Dialogue Leadership has engaged in consultation processes on racial equity and inclusion. Even though outcomes were critiqued, the willingness to have these conversations was seen as a potential foundation for stronger follow-through. (RFG) Localised Leadership in Cultural Safety	Performative Inclusion and Lack of Follow-Through Diversity and inclusion initiatives were often seen as performative, symbolic, or tokenistic. Public commitments to racial equity were not matched by structural change, accountability, or follow-through, fostering cynicism and disengagement. (RFG, 2025SL, SSFG) <i>"I believe the university promotes diversity and has the mechanisms to take discrimination seriously. However, like much of Australian society, everyday casual racism and bias is normalised. The message ... is that assimilation to white and western ways of knowing, being and doing is the key to success."</i> – R09 Leadership Gaps in Racial Literacy and Responsiveness Leaders were described as distant, risk-averse, and lacking the tools and racial literacy to respond effectively to racialised issues. Staff perceived a lack of lived experience with race-related issues and called for leaders to be braver in addressing racism and ensuring staff safety. (SSFG, RFG, 2025SL) <i>"There was a stabbing a while back at the Parramatta Rd entrance ... they were targeting people of colour. You know, I feel like nothing was necessarily done to reassure staff of safety. I know nothing has happened since, thankfully, but I use that entrance all the time and I didn't feel safe doing that for a while."</i> — R24 Equity Fatigue and Strategic Marginalisation There was frustration that anti-racism work is sidelined or treated as secondary to other strategic goals, leading to disengagement and equity fatigue. Not enough is being done to ensure the institution's commitment to anti-racism and anti-discrimination is followed through at a practical and personal level. Too much depends on the attitudes and actions of individual team leaders. (2025SL, SSFG) <i>"My team has been flexible, supportive, and have made me feel incredibly safe in the workplace. I do not feel the same way about the broader university."</i> – R10 Cultural Safety in Politically Charged Contexts	Establish a Positive Duty Approach to Anti-Racism Voluntarily establish a positive duty approach to racism through the development of a university-wide anti-racism strategy, including the following: Leadership Accountability Embed leadership accountabilities within the strategy to ensure responsibility for implementation and outcomes. Grounding in National Frameworks Refer to the Australian Human Rights Commission's National Anti-Racism Framework and Diversity Council Australia's Racism at Work reports for evidence-based recommendations and guiding principles. Inclusive Development Ensure co-design with diverse communities to embed anti-racism and inclusion goals into strategic planning, leadership performance expectations, and institutional structures. Measurable Outcomes and Transparency Ensure measurable outcomes and transparent reporting on progress to build trust and demonstrate commitment. Addressing colonial and cultural load Ensure that the co-development of the Strategy and the Strategy itself recognises and

The Faculty of Medicine and Health was highlighted positively for visible leadership engagement with First Nations cultural safety initiatives. These efforts were described as genuine and consultative, showing how localised action can make a meaningful difference. (2025SL) Handling of Sensitive Political Issues The Vice-Chancellor's response to the encampment issue was acknowledged by some as balanced and sensitive, particularly in navigating tensions around antisemitism and Islamophobia. (2025SL)	Some staff reported feeling culturally unsafe in leadership spaces, particularly during politically charged discussions. Leadership was perceived as inconsistent in balancing freedom of speech with psychological safety. (2025SL, SSFG) Challenges in Facilitating Respectful Dialogue There has been discussion around having respectful debate, and the new rules designed to reduce opportunities for hate speech; there is disagreement about whether the rules are achieving desired outcomes. (SSFG) <i>"Freedom of speech and racism is not a balancing act. Hateful speech that involves death messages, stereotypes or threats, is not free speech. Education is crucial." — R12</i> <i>"People are being banned on Viva Engage for speaking up against genocide. People are getting in trouble for speaking about children starving. That's where I feel it ... if I'm going to speak up, I'm also going to get in trouble. What they're doing is actually racist to a group that already has no voice." – R20</i>	addresses colonial and cultural load in development, implementation, and actions.
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3.3.7 Gaps in awareness and trust in culturally safe reporting pathways and accountabilities

The Assess to RISE tool rated the University as only "starting out" raising and resolving concerns (19%). The Hodgkinson Review described perceptions of the complaints procedures as "complex, slow, receive generic communications and lack transparency". The Review's recommendation for overhaul and simplification was immediately actioned by the University. The Uni has also implemented a reporting system for our Viva Engage platform, and removes posts that breach our Code of Conduct, although moderation issues remain.

In the 2025 Sydney Listens, members of staff from all cultural groups reported witnessing and/or experiencing racism at the University within the past year, particularly First Nations, Pacific Islander, and Middle Eastern/North African staff (Table 104a), but reporting varied across cultural groups (Table 104b).

Managers were the main reporting avenue, but men, except Europeans, were less likely than women to report to their managers. This pattern was reversed for the next most likely reporting pathway, HR; women were less likely than men to report to HR. Reasons cited by staff for not reporting incidents were most often distrust of HR/managers, fear of repercussions, and perceived inaction. Of note, First Nations and Asian staff showed lower awareness of reporting pathways, and Asian and Latin American staff were more uncertain about what was considered unlawful conduct (data not shown), highlighting the need for cultural safety, better awareness and trust-building.

TABLE 104 2025 SYDNEY LISTENS STAFF EXPERIENCES OF RACISM

NOTE: These percentages do not indicate % experience of all staff in each cohort, only the % experience of staff who elected to complete this question on the Staff Survey. "Did you report this" includes all incidents of misconduct, not just racism (witnessing/experiencing bullying, discrimination, threats or physical harm, sexual harassment, any type of misconduct); HC = Headcount

	Witnessed Racism			Experienced Racism		
	All	Men	Women	All	Men	Women
Aboriginal	21% (HC:16)	24% (HC: <10)	20% (HC: <10)	17% (HC: 13)	20% (HC: <10)	16% (HC: <10)
Middle Eastern/North African	11% (HC: 18)	n/a	13% (HC: 12)	8% (HC: 14)	n/a	11% (HC: 10)
Pacific Islander	0%	0%	0%	7% (HC: <10)	11% (HC: <10)	5% (HC: <10)
CNTD	5% (HC: 32)	5% (HC: 13)	5% (HC: 16)	4% (HC: 25)	2% (HC: <10)	5% (HC: 18)
African	2% (HC: <10)	0%	3% (HC: <10)	3% (HC: <10)	7% (HC: <10)	0%
Asian	3% (HC: 53)	2% (HC: 16)	3% (HC: 35)	3% (HC: 51)	3% (HC: 18)	3% (HC: 32)
Latin-American	3% (HC: <10)	1% (HC: <10)	4% (HC: <10)	3% (HC: <10)	1% (HC: <10)	4% (HC: <10)
European	4% (HC: 41)	6% (HC: 25)	3% (HC: 16)	1% (HC: 15)	2% (HC: <10)	1% (HC: <10)
Anglo-Celtic	4% (HC: 91)	3% (HC: 25)	4% (HC: 62)	0.4% (HC: <10)	0.4% (HC: <10)	0.3% (HC: <10)

A

<i>"Did you report this = Yes"</i>			
	All	Men	Women
Aboriginal	42% (HC: 19)	38% (HC: <10)	45% (HC: 13)
Anglo-Celtic	39% (HC: 247)	38% (HC: 83)	39% (HC: 159)
African	n/a	n/a	n/a
Asian	30% (HC: 87)	28% (HC: 29)	31% (HC: 57)
CNTD	30% (HC: 60)	32% (HC: 29)	27% (HC: 29)
European	41% (HC: 109)	38% (HC: 39)	43% (HC: 69)
Latin-American	38% (HC: 12)	33% (HC: <10)	41% (HC: <10)
Middle-Eastern/North African	26% (HC: 11)	n/a	21% (HC: <10)
Pacific Islander	40% (HC: <10)	n/a	n/a

B

In our SAGE Silver and RISE Focus Groups and the 2025 Sydney Listens, staff expressed low confidence in reporting pathways and called for culturally safe improvements (Table 105).

TABLE 105 THEMES ARISING FROM RISE FOCUS GROUPS, 2025 SYDNEY LISTENS, AND SAGE SILVER FOCUS GROUPS RELATING TO REPORTING AND ACCOUNTABILITY FOR RACIST BEHAVIOURS

Note: RFG = RISE Focus Groups; 2025SL = 2025 Sydney Listens Staff Engagement Survey; SSFG = SAGE Silver Focus Groups. Quotes are from SAGE Silver Focus Groups only and are used with permission.

Working Less Well	Recommendations
Dismissive Institutional Response Leadership and HR were seen as dismissive or defensive when racism is reported, and lacking follow-through. (RFG, 2025SL, SSFG) Fear and Psychological Unsafety Many staff felt unsafe or discouraged from reporting racism due to fears of retaliation or being dismissed. There was a strong call for transparent, trauma-informed, and culturally safe reporting mechanisms (2025SL).	Trauma-Informed and Culturally Safe Reporting Develop and raise awareness of trauma-informed, culturally safe reporting systems, building trust by ensuring transparency and protection for complainants. Capacity Building in HR and Leadership Build racial literacy and anti-racism competence in HR staff, managers, and leadership teams to ensure appropriate and empathetic responses to racism. Independent Oversight and Transparency Establish independent oversight for HR processes and provide regular reporting on outcomes to ensure transparency and institutional accountability. Empowering Bystanders Develop bystander training with examples of intersectional racism to equip staff with the tools to intervene safely and effectively.

3.3.8 Ethno-racial pay inequity

While the University's overall gender pay gap is low, disparities remain for marginalised groups (Tables 106-107). First Nations women earn more than First Nations men, but men from most other cultural groups earn more than women.

These trends highlight the need for deeper analysis to ensure equitable remuneration across all cohorts.

TABLE 106 AVERAGE REMUNERATION FOR WOMEN AND MEN IN RACIALLY MARGINALISED COHORTS COMPARED TO WOMEN AND MEN NOT IN THOSE COHORTS

Note: Orange shading/negative percentage = gap favours non-marginalised cohort; Green shading/positive percentage = gap favours marginalised cohort. For Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander, Negative Percentage (-x%) indicates those that identify as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander are paid less than those that don't (this excludes those who prefer not to say or haven't provided information); Positive percentage (x%) indicates those that identify as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander are paid more than those that don't (this excludes those who prefer not to say or haven't provided information). For other groups, Negative Percentage (-x%) indicates group is paid less than Anglo-Celtic (This excludes those who chose not to say and Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander); Positive percentage (x%) indicates group is paid more than Anglo-Celtic (This excludes those who chose not to say and Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander). Data provided by HR Performance, Workforce Planning and Insights.

Table redacted for privacy reasons

TABLE 107 GENDER PAY GAP WITHIN RACIALLY MARGINALISED COHORTS

Note: Orange shading/negative percentage = gap favours men within cohort; Green shading/positive percentage = gap favours women within cohort. Data provided by HR Performance, Workforce Planning and Insights.

Table redacted for privacy reasons

3.4 Action Plan

Note: Some of these actions overlap with those outlined in other sections but are reiterated here in response to issues raised in this section. We have been deliberately non-prescriptive with the framing of our outputs, outcomes, and impacts in developing these actions. By framing actions in a non-prescriptive way, it gives us flexibility to develop a three-year implementation plan with responsible leads that aligns and sequences with current and planned work at the point of implementation. These leads are actively structuring delivery of the actions into planned work where appropriate, or factoring into workflow where actions are stand alone.

KEY BARRIER 3: RACIAL INCLUSION, VOICE & VISIBILITY						
ID	Rationale/Evidence	Actions	Timeframe (start & end)	Person / Group Responsible for Implementing Action	Senior Leader Accountable for Action Delivery	Example Outputs, Outcomes, and Impact
1. Addressing barriers to attraction, progression & retention of ethno-racially diverse staff By building on existing efforts to support career progression and equity, we have a powerful opportunity to embed a consistent gender-ethno-racial lens across recruitment, promotion, and retention practices. Doing so enhances the visibility of ethno-racially and culturally diverse talent, strengthens representation in senior roles, and fosters inclusive processes that empower all staff. Inclusive panels, human-centred approaches, and targeted monitoring are key enablers in creating a truly diverse and equitable workforce where every individual can thrive and contribute meaningfully.						
RIV&V 1.1.	Recruitment outcomes suggested some de-enrichment of ethno-racially diverse candidates. In RISE and SAGE Silver Focus Groups and the 2025 Sydney Listens, staff described experiences of bias, exclusion via informal networks, and limited application of equity principles during recruitment.	RIV&V 1.1.1 Explore opportunities to build racial literacy into the recruitment process including: (i) Anti-bias and racial literacy guidance specific to recruitment practices: Historical and systemic racism in the workplace; How racism can be embedded in "neutral" hiring criteria; Case studies on racial inequity in recruitment; (ii) Check for biased language in recruitment ads, collateral and candidate communications, and clearly state the University's commitment to racial equity; (iii) Create guidelines and	2026-2028	Recruitment Team, HR D&I Team, RISE Working Group, SAGE Team, National Centre for Cultural Competence (NCCC), Indigenous Strategies and Services (ISS)	Director, Recruitment	<i>Subject to final collaborative implementation and resourcing, example outputs and outcomes could include:</i> Output Measures <i>Hiring for Excellence</i> updated to include cultural responsiveness and bias mitigation strategies. Anti-bias and racial literacy guidance materials identified/developed and delivered to hiring managers and recruitment panel members. Recruitment ad templates reviewed and updated for inclusive, bias-free language. Standardised racial equity commitment statement included in all job advertisements. Guidelines and tracking mechanisms established for ethno-racial and gender diversity on recruitment panels. Outcome Measures More inclusive and equitable considerations and language used in recruitment materials.

KEY BARRIER 3: RACIAL INCLUSION, VOICE & VISIBILITY						
ID	Rationale/Evidence	Actions	Timeframe (start & end)	Person / Group Responsible for Implementing Action	Senior Leader Accountable for Action Delivery	Example Outputs, Outcomes, and Impact
		communications promoting ethno-racial diversity alongside existing gender diversity requirements on recruitment panels, with workload acknowledgement for ethno-racially diverse staff who are asked to undertake substantial service load, or recognise in promotion cases through the Collegiality and Service pillars of the AEF. (iv) Include cultural responsiveness and bias mitigation strategies in recruitment panel inclusion training. <i>(Note: This action aligns with RISE Action 3.9, the Indigenous Employment Plan, One Sydney, Many People, and the NCCC Strategic Plan)</i>				Greater diversity in recruitment panel composition. Impact Measures <i>Feedback via focus groups, surveys, feedback forms indicating:</i> - Increased awareness among hiring managers of how systemic racism can manifest in recruitment. - Improved confidence and capability among panel members to identify and mitigate bias. - Strengthened trust in recruitment processes among ethno-racially diverse candidates. - Supporting the University's <i>Sydney in 2032</i> strategic goals under the <i>Thriving Through Diversity</i> pillar. - Embedding the University values of <i>Excellence, Trust & Accountability</i>.
		RIV&V 1.1.2 Monitor recruitment applications, short-listing and hired, and experience, disaggregated by race and gender. <i>(Note: This action aligns with RISE Action 3.9)</i>				<i>Subject to final collaborative implementation and resourcing, example outputs and outcomes could include:</i> Output Measures Annual reports generated showing disaggregated data trends. Candidate experience surveys updated to include demographic analysis. Outcome Measures

KEY BARRIER 3: RACIAL INCLUSION, VOICE & VISIBILITY						
ID	Rationale/Evidence	Actions	Timeframe (start & end)	Person / Group Responsible for Implementing Action	Senior Leader Accountable for Action Delivery	Example Outputs, Outcomes, and Impact
						Increased visibility of equity gaps or patterns in recruitment outcomes. Targeted interventions developed to address emergent issues. Improved transparency and accountability in recruitment practices. Impact Measures <i>Feedback via focus groups, surveys, feedback forms indicating:</i> • More equitable and inclusive hiring outcomes across the University. • Strengthened trust in recruitment processes among ethno-racially diverse candidates. • Supporting the University's <i>Sydney in 2032</i> strategic goals under the <i>Thriving Through Diversity</i> pillar. • Embedding the University values of <i>Excellence, Trust & Accountability</i>.
		RIV&V 1.1.3 Review candidate-facing and staff-facing approach to initial or additional background checks to make the process as "human" as possible. <i>(Note: This action aligns with RISE Action 3.9, and is underway)</i>	2026-2028	Recruitment Team, Organisational Development, HR Partnering, Hiring Managers, Immigration & Global Mobility, Heads of Schools, Office of the General Council (OGC), Research Portfolio, Risk, SAGE Team	Director, Recruitment	Output Measures Review and refinement of communications related to background checks for job applicants or University staff members (e.g., email templates, FAQs, verbal scripts). Inclusion of trauma-informed and inclusive language in all related materials. Training or briefing sessions for recruitment, hiring managers and HR Partners on delivering the process with empathy and clarity. Outcome Measures Improved understanding of the background check process and its relevance. Reduced candidate or staff anxiety or confusion during the recruitment process. Increased confidence among recruitment staff, hiring managers and HR Partners in handling sensitive conversations. Impact Measures

KEY BARRIER 3: RACIAL INCLUSION, VOICE & VISIBILITY						
ID	Rationale/Evidence	Actions	Timeframe (start & end)	Person / Group Responsible for Implementing Action	Senior Leader Accountable for Action Delivery	Example Outputs, Outcomes, and Impact
						<i>Feedback via focus groups, surveys, feedback forms indicating:</i> - Enhanced candidate and staff perception of the University as a fair and respectful employer. - Contribution to a more inclusive and human-centred recruitment culture. - Supporting the University's <i>Sydney in 2032</i> strategic goals under the <i>Thriving Through Diversity</i> pillar. - Embedding the University values of <i>Excellence, Trust & Accountability</i>.
1.2	The University has made strong strides in enhancing onboarding through refreshed processes and initiatives like the Mosaic Network's Buddy Program, which offers a culturally sensitive welcome to new staff by pairing them with volunteer employees for 12 weeks of support and connection, helping newcomers settle into life at the University/Australia, and encouraging engagement with the university community. To fully realise the potential of these efforts, further integration into orientation materials and consistent promotion across university	CP&P 9.3.1 Monitor outcomes of recently improved onboarding processes for hiring managers to ensure a clear and time-structured onboarding process for new staff, including information about key user systems, and support and staff network options. Assess new staff and their manager experiences of onboarding through a gender-intersectional lens, including ethno-racial. <i>(Note: This action is replicated as CP&P 9.3.1 and RIV&V 1.2.1. It aligns with RISE Action 2.5, and updates and replaces Recruitment Cygnet Action 13)</i>	2026-2028	Learning & Development Team, RISE Working Group SAGE Team	Director, Organisational Development	<i>Subject to final collaborative implementation and resourcing, example outputs and outcomes could include:</i> Output Measures Annual assessment of outcomes from onboarding survey provided to new starters and their managers through a gender intersectional lens. Outcome Measures Reduction in onboarding delays or gaps in information delivery. Increase in early engagement with staff networks and support services. Impact <i>Feedback via focus groups, surveys, feedback forms indicating:</i> - Increase in hiring managers reporting confidence in delivering structured onboarding. - Increase in new staff reporting clarity on systems, support options, and staff networks. - Improved onboarding experience for diverse staff. - Supporting the University's <i>Sydney in 2032</i> strategic goals under the <i>Thriving Through Diversity</i> pillar.

KEY BARRIER 3: RACIAL INCLUSION, VOICE & VISIBILITY						
ID	Rationale/Evidence	Actions	Timeframe (start & end)	Person / Group Responsible for Implementing Action	Senior Leader Accountable for Action Delivery	Example Outputs, Outcomes, and Impact
	channels will help ensure all new staff can access and benefit from these supports equitably.	RIV&V 1.2.2 Provide additional visibility and support for the Mosaic Network's Buddy program by including in new starter orientation materials, and promoting through Central, Faculty and University School channels. Encourage volunteer buddies to include this activity in their AP&Ds (academic, under the Collegiality and Service pillars) and PP&Ds (professional). <i>(Note: This action aligns with RISE Action 1.4)</i>	2026-2028	Mosaic Network, SAGE Team, RISE Program, MarComms, HR D&I Team	Mosaic Network Co-Chairs	- Embedding the University values of <i>Excellence, Trust & Accountability</i>. <i>Subject to final collaborative implementation and resourcing, example outputs and outcomes could include:</i> Output Measures Number of new employees and volunteer buddies participating in the program. Inclusion of program details in orientation materials and internal communications. Number of promotional activities across Central, Faculty, and University School channels. Outcome Measures Improved engagement with university cultural groups and networks. Higher participation in university activities by new employees. Broader visibility and recognition of the Mosaic Network's role in supporting staff wellbeing. Impact Measures <i>Feedback via focus groups, surveys, feedback forms indicating:</i> - Increased sense of belonging and connection among new staff. - Positive feedback and satisfaction ratings from program evaluations. - Increased collegiality and enhanced collaboration among members involved in the buddy program, particularly in teaching, research and professional development.

KEY BARRIER 3: RACIAL INCLUSION, VOICE & VISIBILITY						
ID	Rationale/Evidence	Actions	Timeframe (start & end)	Person / Group Responsible for Implementing Action	Senior Leader Accountable for Action Delivery	Example Outputs, Outcomes, and Impact
						- Strengthened university culture of diversity, inclusion, and multiculturalism. - Supporting the University's <i>Sydney in 2032</i> strategic goals under the <i>Thriving Through Diversity</i> pillar. - Embedding the University values of <i>Excellence, Trust & Accountability</i>.
RIV&V 1.3	Workday disclosures of ethno-racial identify are relatively low, but promotion data suggests that successful outcomes are lower for ethno-racially diverse and overseas-born staff. In 2025 Sydney Listens, RISE Focus Groups and SAGE Silver Focus Groups, ethno-racially diverse staff described facing cultural bias and undervaluation of non-traditional contributions in promotions.	RIV&V 1.3.1 Explore opportunities to build gender-intersectional and racial literacy into AP&D Adviser core competencies, including: (i) Review for racialised and non-inclusive norms; confirm that equity-focused labor is explicitly acknowledged in the Service pillar evidence menu; (ii) Provide AP&D Adviser guidance and case studies around how systemic racism can affect staff experience and opportunity, recognising racialised gatekeeping in how success is defined, understanding intersectionality (e.g., how race and gender, disability and gender, sexuality and gender can compound disadvantage); (iii) Equip AP&D Adviser with scripts and questions to surface equity issues in 1:1 sessions (e.g. "Do you feel any structural or	2026-2028	Academic Excellence Program, Academic Promotions Unit, SAGE Team, RISE Working Group, HR D&I Team, Indigenous Strategy & Services (ISS), National Centre for Cultural Competence (NCCC), Respect@Work Team	Vice-Provost	<i>Subject to final collaborative implementation and resourcing, example outputs and outcomes could include:</i> Output Measures Review AEF to identify potential unintentional racialised and non-inclusive norms, and confirm that equity-focused labour is explicitly acknowledged in the Service pillar evidence menu. Updated AP&D Adviser competency framework to include racial literacy, intersectionality, and systemic bias awareness. Guidance materials developed for AP&D Advisers on gender-intersectionality, race, and racialised gatekeeping in academic progression. Scripts, reflective questions, and validation tools created for AP&D Advisers to use in 1:1 sessions. Referral and escalation pathways established for systemic issues raised during AP&D conversations. Gender-intersectional data collection system implemented to monitor staff outcomes in academic lifecycle stages that use AP&D. Outcome Measures Identification of patterns of inequity in AEF outcomes through disaggregated data. More consistent and equitable application of AEF principles across faculties and disciplines.

KEY BARRIER 3: RACIAL INCLUSION, VOICE & VISIBILITY						
ID	Rationale/Evidence	Actions	Timeframe (start & end)	Person / Group Responsible for Implementing Action	Senior Leader Accountable for Action Delivery	Example Outputs, Outcomes, and Impact
		cultural barriers to advancing within the AEF?), guidance on how to validate experiences (without minimising, deflecting, or silencing), tools for referring or escalating when deeper systemic issues are raised. <i>(Note: This action is replicated as CP&P 3.1.2 and RIV&V 1.3.1. It aligns with Respect@Work Action 1.2 and RISE Action 1.3, the Indigenous Employment Plan, One Sydney, Many People, and the NCCC Strategic Plan. It updates and replaces Career Development & Progression Cygnet Actions 2, 8 & 10).</i>	2026-2028	Academic Promotions Unit, Academic Excellence Program, SAGE Team, RISE Working Group, HR D&I Team, Indigenous Strategy & Services (ISS), National Centre for Cultural	Manager, Academic Promotions Unit	Reduction in racial and gender-intersectional disparities in academic development and promotion. Impact Measures <i>Feedback via focus groups, surveys, feedback forms indicating:</i> • More inclusive and supportive AP&D conversations, particularly for typically marginalised staff. • Greater recognition of equity-focused labour in academic progression discussions. • Increased gender-intersectional and racial literacy confidence among AP&D Advisers in addressing equity issues. • Strengthened trust in the AEF process among staff from marginalised groups. • Supporting the University's <i>Sydney in 2032</i> strategic goals under the <i>Thriving Through Diversity</i> pillar. • Embedding the University values of <i>Excellence, Trust & Accountability</i>.
		RIV&V 1.3.2 Explore opportunities to build gender-intersectional and racial literacy into promotion panel competencies, including for example: (i) Provide promotion panel guidance and case studies around how systemic racism can affect staff experience and opportunity, recognising racialised gatekeeping in how success is defined, understanding				<i>Subject to final collaborative implementation and resourcing, example outputs and outcomes could include:</i> Output Measures Guidance materials developed for Promotion Panel members on gender-intersectionality, race, and racialised gatekeeping in academic progression. Exploratory framework or examples created to illustrate what valuing non-traditional contributions could look like in practice. Guidelines established to support ethno-racial and gender diversity in panel composition. Gender-intersectional data collection system implemented to monitor promotion experience and outcomes. Outcome Measures

KEY BARRIER 3: RACIAL INCLUSION, VOICE & VISIBILITY						
ID	Rationale/Evidence	Actions	Timeframe (start & end)	Person / Group Responsible for Implementing Action	Senior Leader Accountable for Action Delivery	Example Outputs, Outcomes, and Impact
		intersectionality (e.g., how race and gender, disability and gender, sexuality and gender can compound disadvantage); understanding the racialised nature of feedback, collegiality, and communication norms; (ii) Explore what valuing non-traditional contributions in promotions could look like in practice; (iii) Encourage ethno-racial diversity as well as gender diversity on promotion panels (iv) Annually track promotion outcomes and experience by through a gender-intersectional lens, and report trends to leadership. <i>(Note: This action is replicated as CP&P 2.3.1 and RIV&V 1.3.2, and aligns with Respect@Work Action 1.2 and RISE Action 1.3, the Indigenous Employment Plan, One Sydney, Many People, and the NCCC Strategic Plan.)</i>	2026-2028	Competence (NCCC), Respect@Work Team, Academic Excellence Program, Vice-Provost	Manager, Academic Promotions Unit	Greater diversity in promotion panel membership. Identification of equity gaps in promotion outcomes through disaggregated data. Impact Measures <i>Feedback via focus groups, surveys, feedback forms indicating:</i> - Increased gender-intersectional and racial literacy confidence among Promotion Panel members in addressing equity issues. - More consistent application of inclusive promotion practices across faculties. - Supporting the University's <i>Sydney in 2032</i> strategic goals under the <i>Thriving Through Diversity</i> pillar. - Embedding the University values of <i>Excellence, Trust & Accountability</i>.
		RIV&V 1.3.3 Recognising that systemic inequities continue to shape CARM staff experiences of promotion, explore ways to		Academic Promotions Unit, Academic Excellence		<i>Subject to final collaborative implementation and resourcing, example outputs and outcomes could include:</i>

KEY BARRIER 3: RACIAL INCLUSION, VOICE & VISIBILITY						
ID	Rationale/Evidence	Actions	Timeframe (start & end)	Person / Group Responsible for Implementing Action	Senior Leader Accountable for Action Delivery	Example Outputs, Outcomes, and Impact
		support CARM staff while institutional barriers are being addressed, such as matching CARM staff with racially literate AP&D Advisers, offering promotion planning clinics to support CARM staff to map their experience and impact against AEF criteria, mock panels or review simulations to help CARM staff prepare with practice feedback in a safe, affirming environment. <i>(Note: This action is replicated as CP&P 2.3.2 and RIV&V 1.3.3, and aligns with Respect@Work Action 1.2 and RISE Actions 1.3 and 3.9)</i>		Program, SAGE Team, RISE Working Group, HR D&I Team, Indigenous Strategy & Services (ISS), National Centre for Cultural Competence (NCCC), Respect@Work Team		Output Measures Pending exploration and feasibility assessments: CARM staff matched with racially literate AP&D Advisers. Promotion planning clinics designed and delivered, tailored to CARM staff needs. Mock promotion panels or review simulations conducted, with structured feedback in affirming environments. Resource materials developed to support mapping experience and impact against AEF criteria. Feedback mechanisms established to evaluate the usefulness and accessibility of support offerings. Outcome Measures Increased promotion rates among CARM staff. Greater clarity for CARM staff on how their contributions align with AEF criteria. Improved quality and relevance of feedback received during promotion preparation for CARM staff. More equitable access to promotion preparation resources. Impact Measures <i>Feedback via focus groups, surveys, feedback forms indicating:</i> • Increased confidence among CARM staff in navigating promotion processes. • Strengthened relationships between CARM staff and AP&D Advisers • Supporting the University's <i>Sydney in 2032</i> strategic goals under the <i>Thriving Through Diversity</i> pillar. • Embedding the University values of <i>Excellence, Trust & Accountability</i>.

KEY BARRIER 3: RACIAL INCLUSION, VOICE & VISIBILITY						
ID	Rationale/Evidence	Actions	Timeframe (start & end)	Person / Group Responsible for Implementing Action	Senior Leader Accountable for Action Delivery	Example Outputs, Outcomes, and Impact
		RIV&V 1.3.4 Build greater trust in Workday disclosures of racial identity to build more robust ethno-racial data in our Diversity Dashboard alongside Country of Birth. <i>(Note: This action aligns with RISE Action 3.8)</i>	2026-2028	HR D&I Team, RISE Working Group, SAGE Team, Privacy Team	Senior Manager, HR D&I	<i>Subject to final collaborative implementation and resourcing, example outputs and outcomes could include:</i> Output Measures Re-review and update Workday disclosure interface and messaging to ensure clarity, safety, and purpose of racial identity data collection. Development of a communication campaign explaining how racial identity data is used, protected, and contributes to equity outcomes. FAQs and support materials created to address common concerns and misconceptions. Outcome Measures Higher rates of voluntary racial identity disclosure across staff cohorts. Improved quality and completeness of ethno-racial data in the Diversity Dashboard. Greater visibility of racial equity gaps and opportunities for targeted action. Impact Measures <i>Feedback via focus groups, surveys, feedback forms indicating:</i> • Increased staff confidence in disclosing racial identity in Workday. • Enhanced ability to monitor and address systemic inequities across the employee lifecycle. • Supporting the University's <i>Sydney in 2032</i> strategic goals under the <i>Thriving Through Diversity</i> pillar. • Embedding the University values of <i>Excellence, Trust & Accountability</i>.
RIV&V 1.4	Although resignation rates among overseas-born staff at the University remain low, this metric alone masks	RIV&V 1.4.1 Monitor intention to leave via Sydney Listens, and resignation rates across cultural backgrounds and report annually	Annually	SAGE Team, RISE Working Group,	SAGE Program Manager	<i>Subject to final collaborative implementation and resourcing, example outputs and outcomes could include:</i>

KEY BARRIER 3: RACIAL INCLUSION, VOICE & VISIBILITY						
ID	Rationale/Evidence	Actions	Timeframe (start & end)	Person / Group Responsible for Implementing Action	Senior Leader Accountable for Action Delivery	Example Outputs, Outcomes, and Impact
	deeper issues of burnout, exclusion from leadership, undervaluing of cultural contributions, disengagement and weak support systems. Emotional strain and lack of recognition can lead to disengagement, isolation, and contemplation of leaving the institution, often without formal exit, particularly if there are visa implications. Without proactive monitoring and culturally responsive interventions, these experiences remain invisible and unaddressed, undermining staff wellbeing and retention.	to identify trends and action if required. <i>(Note: This action aligns with RISE Actions 1.3, 1.9 and 3.9)</i>		Organisational Development		Output Measures Intention to leave data collected via Sydney Listens, disaggregated by race and cultural background. Resignation data tracked and analysed annually by race and gender. Annual report developed summarising trends, insights, and areas of concern. Feedback mechanisms established to validate findings and inform action planning. Outcome Measures Identification of equity gaps in staff experience and departure patterns. Impact Measures <i>Feedback via focus groups, surveys, feedback forms indicating:</i> • Strengthened trust in the University's commitment to equity and inclusion. • Supporting the University's <i>Sydney in 2032</i> strategic goals under the <i>Thriving Through Diversity</i> pillar. • Embedding the University values of <i>Excellence, Trust & Accountability</i>.
2. Strategic Readiness for Gender-Intersectional Awareness & Competency The University has made meaningful strides in advancing gender equity and is well-positioned to build on this momentum. There is growing recognition of the importance of integrating data, aligning policies, and engaging leadership to better support intersectional staff experiences. Opportunities exist to enhance recruitment and career progression processes, and with continued investment, current systems can evolve to scale inclusive practices and deliver consistent, actionable insights across Faculties and Units.						
RIV&V 2.1	Fragmented data systems remain a barrier to deep intersectional capability and moving to gender-intersectional performance	RIV&V 2.1.1 Utilising Change Management (ADKAR: Awareness Desire Knowledge Ability Reinforcement) principles, build a roadmap to prepare the	2026-2028	SAGE Team, RISE Working Group, Workforce Information and Reporting Team	SAGE Academic Director	<i>Subject to final collaborative implementation and resourcing, example outputs and outcomes could include:</i> Output Measures Change roadmap developed using ADKAR principles.

KEY BARRIER 3: RACIAL INCLUSION, VOICE & VISIBILITY						
ID	Rationale/Evidence	Actions	Timeframe (start & end)	Person / Group Responsible for Implementing Action	Senior Leader Accountable for Action Delivery	Example Outputs, Outcomes, and Impact
	expectations. Moreover, we have not yet undertaken a review across all policies, procedures, systems, and frameworks, and thus do not have a clear idea of where and how consideration of intersectionality may or may not be present.	organisation to move from gender-only to gender-intersectional performance expectations. <i>(Note: This action is replicated as CP&P 1.1.1 and RIV&V 2.1.1)</i>	2026-2028	SAGE Team, Workforce Information and Reporting Team, Faculty & University School Teams with carriage over DEI	SAGE Academic Director	Communication materials created to build awareness of the limitations of gender-only performance expectations. Management and stakeholder engagement sessions held to foster desire and buy-in. Tools and templates provided to support implementation and reporting. Outcome Measures Gender-intersectional performance expectations established before 2032. Impact Measures <i>Feedback via focus groups, surveys, feedback forms indicating:</i> • Greater willingness among leaders and managers to adopt intersectional performance expectations. • Increased staff understanding of intersectionality and its relevance to equity measurement. • Strengthened institutional accountability for intersectional equity. • Supporting the University's <i>Sydney in 2032</i> strategic goals under the <i>Thriving Through Diversity</i> pillar. • Embedding the University values of <i>Excellence, Trust & Accountability</i>.
		RIV&V 2.1.2 Support Leadership Teams across Faculties and University Schools to understand their workforce and staff experience through a gender-intersectional lens drawing on recruitment and workforce analytics, Sydney Listens, and local engagement via focus				<i>Subject to final collaborative implementation and resourcing, example outputs and outcomes could include:</i> Output Measures Gender-intersectional workforce analytics reports generated for each Faculty and University School. Disaggregated Sydney Listens data analysed annually. Focus groups, structured interviews, and/or surveys conducted locally to capture lived, discipline-specific experience. Summary reports and recommendations provided to Leadership Teams.

KEY BARRIER 3: RACIAL INCLUSION, VOICE & VISIBILITY						
ID	Rationale/Evidence	Actions	Timeframe (start & end)	Person / Group Responsible for Implementing Action	Senior Leader Accountable for Action Delivery	Example Outputs, Outcomes, and Impact
		groups and structured interviews/surveys. <i>(Note: This action is replicated as CP&P 1.1.2 and RIV&V 2.1.2)</i>				Outcome Measures More informed and targeted equity actions at the local level. Enhanced capacity among leadership teams to interpret and act on intersectional data. Impact Measures <i>Feedback via focus groups, surveys, feedback forms indicating:</i> - Increased leadership awareness of intersectional workforce dynamics and staff experience. - Cultural shift toward data-informed, intersectional leadership practices. - Improved trust and engagement among diverse staff groups across Faculties and University Schools. - Supporting the University's <i>Sydney in 2032</i> strategic goals under the <i>Thriving Through Diversity</i> pillar. - Embedding the University values of <i>Excellence, Trust & Accountability</i>.
RIV&V 2.2	The University's new Diversity Dashboard is close to completion but limited by our major data frameworks not being linked to one another.	RIV&V 2.2.1 Continue to work towards harmonising University data systems under the Digital Sydney program. <i>(Note: This action is in progress. It is replicated as CP&P 1.2.1 and RIV&V 2.2.1, aligns with RISE Action 3.8. It updates and replaces Career Progression & Development Cygnet Action 3; LGBTQIA+ Cygnet Action 3.4)</i>	2025-2029	Workforce Information and Reporting Team, Information Communications & Technology (ICT), Workday Team, Advanced Analytics Planning & Enterprise Data Team (AAP), Privacy, HR D&I Team, RISE	Chief Information Officer (CIO)	<i>Subject to final collaborative implementation and resourcing, example outputs and outcomes could include:</i> Output Measures Workday linked to Snowflake and one source of truth embedded across workforce analytic platforms. Outcome Measures Increased data consistency and reliability across University systems. Improved user experience for staff accessing and reporting data. Reduced duplication and manual data reconciliation efforts. Impact Measures <i>Feedback via focus groups, surveys, feedback forms indicating:</i> Stronger institutional capability for data-informed decision-making.

KEY BARRIER 3: RACIAL INCLUSION, VOICE & VISIBILITY						
ID	Rationale/Evidence	Actions	Timeframe (start & end)	Person / Group Responsible for Implementing Action	Senior Leader Accountable for Action Delivery	Example Outputs, Outcomes, and Impact
				Working Group, SAGE Team		- Greater efficiency and agility in responding to strategic priorities. - Supporting the University's <i>Sydney in 2032</i> strategic goals under the <i>Thriving Through Diversity</i> pillar. - Embedding the University values of <i>Excellence, Trust & Accountability</i>.
RIV&V 2.3	The University has not yet mapped where intersectionality is considered (or missing) across policies, procedures, systems and frameworks.	RIV&V 2.3.1 Work with Policy owners and the OGC Policy Team to continue to progressively review University policies and procedures to identify opportunities to better reflect staff and students' intersectional experiences and needs. <i>(Note: This action is replicated as CP&P 1.3.1 and RIV&V 2.3.1. It aligns with RISE Action 2.5 and supports the DIAP and Indigenous Workforce Plan 2025–2032).</i>	2026	SAGE Team, HR D&I Team, RISE Working Group, OGC Policy Team, Workplace Relations	SAGE Program Manager, Senior Manager, HR D&I	<i>Subject to final collaborative implementation and resourcing, example outputs and outcomes could include:</i> Output Measures Number of policies and procedures reviewed. Briefing materials prepared for Policy Teams. Number of recommendations accepted. Outcome Measures Increased visibility of systemic barriers and exclusionary norms in current policies. Impact Measures <i>Feedback via focus groups, surveys, feedback forms indicating:</i> - More inclusive and accessible University policies that reflect diverse staff experiences. - Supporting the University's <i>Sydney in 2032</i> strategic goals under the <i>Thriving Through Diversity</i> pillar. - Embedding the University values of <i>Excellence, Trust & Accountability</i>.
		CP&P 1.3.2 Meet with the Digital Sydney team to discuss intersectionality and Universal Design, and whether and how these principles are currently	2026-2028	SAGE Team, RISE Working Group, HR D&I Team, Information, Communication &	SAGE Program Manager, Senior Manager, HR D&I	<i>Subject to final collaborative implementation and resourcing, example outputs and outcomes could include:</i> Output Measures Meeting held with Digital Sydney team to discuss current practices

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		included in assessments to improvements to systems and frameworks currently underway. Reference processes dealing with leave and flexible hours as an example. <i>(Note: This action is replicated as CP&P 1.3.2, P&C 6.1.2, and RIV&V 2.3.2, and aligns with Respect@Work Action 3.6)</i>		Technology (ICT), Respect@Work Team		and opportunities. Summary of current inclusion of intersectionality and Universal Design in digital assessments. Recommendations developed for embedding these principles more explicitly in system design and improvement processes. Follow-up actions agreed (e.g., inclusion criteria, design standards, consultation processes). Briefing note or report prepared for leadership and relevant stakeholders. Outcome Measures Increased awareness within the Digital Sydney team of intersectional and Universal Design principles. Greater consideration of diverse user needs in digital system planning and implementation. Reduction in digital barriers. Impact Measures <i>Feedback via focus groups, surveys, feedback forms indicating:</i> • More inclusive and accessible digital systems that reflect the diversity of staff and student experiences. • Enhanced trust and engagement with digital platforms across the University community. • Supporting the University's <i>Sydney in 2032</i> strategic goals under the <i>Thriving Through Diversity</i> pillar. • Embedding the University values of <i>Excellence, Trust & Accountability</i>.
3. Leadership Pathways for CARM Staff There is increasing awareness of the rich value that racial, cultural, and intersectional diversity brings to leadership. By expanding definitions of leadership, setting measurable targets, and offering tailored development opportunities we have an opportunity to elevate diverse staff into senior roles. Doing so will enhance visibility, inspire aspiration, and drive meaningful systemic change across the University.						

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RIV&V 3.1	CARM staff, particularly women, are under-represented in senior and leadership roles at the University. This lack of representation restricts access to visible role models, reinforces dominant leadership norms, and perpetuates systemic cultural inequities in career progression. Without targeted strategies to elevate CARM staff into leadership, the institution risks missing out on diverse perspectives and continues to uphold structures that limit inclusion and aspiration.	RIV&V 3.1.1 While preparing to move beyond gender-only SAGE targets, monitor and report on racial and cultural diversity in leadership roles across the University. <i>(Note: This action aligns with RISE Action 3.9)</i>	2026-2028	SAGE Team, RISE Working Group	SAGE Program Manager	<i>Subject to final collaborative implementation and resourcing, example outputs and outcomes could include:</i> Output Measures Leadership diversity data collected and disaggregated by race, ethnicity, and cultural background. Annual diversity report produced, highlighting trends in leadership representation. Communication materials prepared to share findings with leadership and the broader University community. Outcome Measures Increased visibility of racial and cultural diversity gaps in leadership. Increased racial and cultural diversity in leadership roles across the University. Impact Measures <i>Feedback via focus groups, surveys, feedback forms indicating:</i> • Greater awareness among decision-makers of the need for intersectional equity strategies. • Enhanced institutional accountability and transparency in equity reporting. • Supporting the University's <i>Sydney in 2032</i> strategic goals under the <i>Thriving Through Diversity</i> pillar. • Embedding the University values of <i>Excellence, Trust & Accountability</i>.
		RIV&V 3.1.2 Continue to highlight and celebrate diverse leaders across the university to build aspiration, visibility, and belonging.	2026-2028	MarComms, SAGE Team, RISE Working Group, Mosaic Network Steering Committee	Head of Internal Communications	<i>Subject to final collaborative implementation and resourcing, example outputs and outcomes could include:</i> Output Measures Profiles, interviews, or stories of diverse leaders published across internal and external platforms (e.g., newsletters, intranet, social media).

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		<i>(Note: This action aligns with RISE Action 1.2)</i>				Events or campaigns held to showcase diverse leadership (e.g., panels, speaker series, recognition awards). Communication materials developed to support visibility and storytelling (e.g., videos, articles, posters). Outcome Measures Increased visibility of diverse leadership across the University. Enhanced aspiration and motivation for leadership among underrepresented staff. Impact Measures <i>Feedback via focus groups, surveys, feedback forms indicating:</i> • Strengthened sense of belonging and role roles among ethno-racially diverse staff. • Supporting the University's <i>Sydney in 2032</i> strategic goals under the <i>Thriving Through Diversity</i> pillar. • Embedding the University values of <i>Excellence, Trust & Accountability</i>.
		RIV&V 3.1.3 Continue to build awareness that the University's Leadership Attributes include diverse communication styles, empathy, cultural knowledge, and community engagement.				<i>Subject to final collaborative implementation and resourcing, example outputs and outcomes could include:</i> Output Measures Profiles or case studies published showcasing diverse leadership styles. Outcome Measures Enhanced understanding among managers and HR of non-traditional leadership strengths. Improved visibility of diverse leadership styles. Impact Measures <i>Feedback via focus groups, surveys, feedback forms indicating:</i>

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						• More diverse leadership pipeline reflecting a broader range of lived experiences and leadership styles. • Increase in staff perception that the University values diversity in leadership. • Supporting the University's <i>Sydney in 2032</i> strategic goals under the <i>Thriving Through Diversity</i> pillar. • Embedding the University values of <i>Excellence, Trust & Accountability</i>.
		RIV&V 3.1.4 Explore opportunities to broaden academic and professional staff access to mentoring opportunities. For example: (i) Explore working with the alumni network to provide mentoring opportunities. (ii) Pilot a peer-mentorship program within the Pride Network (<i>Note: This updates and replaces LGBTQIA+ Cygnet Action 2.2, and is underway as the AWEI Platinum Project</i>). (iii) Showcase the Women@Sydney Staff Network's small group mentoring program via all staff news and seek opportunities to adapt model to other cohorts; (iv) Build on existing leadership development opportunities for intersectionally marginalised	2026-2028	HR D&I Team, RISE Working Group, SAGE Team, Academic Excellence Program, Organisational Development, Leadership Academy, Research Office, Education & Learning Office	Senior Manager, HR D&I, SAGE Program Manager	<i>Subject to final collaborative implementation and resourcing, example outputs and outcomes could include:</i> Output Measures Communication campaign around the Women@Sydney Staff Network small group mentoring program, and assessment of opportunities to adapt for other cohorts. Pilot and assessment of a reverse mentoring program. Review and refresh existing programs (e.g. VC Sponsorship Program for Culturally Diverse Women) Design and launch of a peer-mentoring pilot within the Pride Network. Exploration of other opportunities to pilot mentoring programs. Outcome Measures Increased access to mentoring for diverse groups, including LGBTQIA+ staff and culturally diverse staff. Establishment of a diverse, multi-stream mentoring ecosystem across the University. Impact Measures <i>Feedback via focus groups, surveys, feedback forms indicating:</i>

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		staff, including CARM women and First Nations staff, through sponsorship, coaching, mentoring, and visibility initiatives. (v) Explore opportunities for reverse mentoring. <i>(Note: This action is replicated as CP&P 7.1.2 and RIV&V 3.1.4. It aligns with RISE Action 1.4 and is already underway).</i>				- Positive feedback from participants on the relevance, inclusivity, and impact of mentoring experiences. - Supporting the University's <i>Sydney in 2032</i> strategic goals under the <i>Thriving Through Diversity</i> pillar. - Embedding the University values of <i>Excellence, Trust & Accountability</i>.
		RIV&V 3.1.5 Liaise with Leadership Academy to encourage applications from and monitor experience of graduates from diverse cohorts beyond gender. <i>(Note: This action is replicated as CP&P 7.1.3 and RIV&V 3.1.5. aligns with RISE Action 1.4, and updates and replaces LGBTQIA+ Cygnet Action 2.1).</i>	2026-2028	SAGE Team, RISE Working Group, Leadership Academy Team	Senior Manager, Organisational Development (Leadership Academy)	<i>Subject to final collaborative implementation and resourcing, example outputs and outcomes could include:</i> Output Measures Development of inclusive promotional materials encouraging applications from diverse cohorts (e.g. ethno-racially diverse, LGBTQIA+, staff with disability, first-in-family). Implementation of a tracking mechanism to monitor participant demographics, progression, and experience. Number of Leadership Academy graduates disaggregated by equity dimensions beyond gender. Inclusion of equity participation data in regular reporting and evaluation cycles. Outcome Measures Increased awareness and participation in Leadership Academy programs by underrepresented staff.

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						Enhanced capacity of the Leadership Academy to support intersectional leadership development. Impact Measures <i>Feedback via focus groups, surveys, feedback forms indicating:</i> • Positive feedback from participants on inclusivity and relevance of the program. • Strengthened pipeline of diverse leaders across the University. • Supporting the University's <i>Sydney in 2032</i> strategic goals under the <i>Thriving Through Diversity</i> pillar. • Embedding the University values of <i>Excellence, Trust & Accountability</i>.
4. Build Racial Literacy and Anti-Racism Capability There is growing momentum to strengthen racial equity across the University. By investing in expert-led capability building, inclusive public recognition, and meaningful consultation, we can build a shared understanding of racial equity and foster a culture where staff feel empowered to challenge racism, practice allyship, and see themselves reflected in institutional language and culture. These efforts will enhance cultural safety, deepen trust, and accelerate systemic progress.						
RIV&V 4.1	Insufficient racial literacy and anti-racism capability across the University have been directly linked to experiences of everyday racism, microaggressions, and performative diversity. Racially marginalised staff report feeling disconnected from leadership, undervalued in their cultural contributions, and unsafe in workplace environments.	RIV&V 4.1.1 Integrate opportunities for senior leaders to build racial literacy, cultural responsiveness, and anti-racism capability through embedded, experiential, and advisory-based approaches, led by people with lived expertise. Emphasise context-specific insights into the varied roots and impacts of racism. For example, consider intentionally considering racial equity during leadership, planning, or strategy meetings;	2026-2028	National Centre for Cultural Competence (NCCC), Indigenous Strategy & Services (ISS), Organisational Development, HR D&I Team, SAGE Team, RISE Working Group, Sydney Policy Lab	Academic Director, National Centre for Cultural Competence (NCCC)	<i>Subject to final collaborative implementation and resourcing, example outputs and outcomes could include:</i> Output Measures Leadership development activities incorporating racial literacy and anti-racism content (e.g., workshops, coaching, storytelling sessions). Development of tailored learning resources (e.g., case studies, bite-sized learning modules, story-based videos). Exploration of senior leader participation in 1:1 coaching with equity-focused advisers. Equity review tools and race-lens frameworks developed for use in strategic planning and decision-making. Outcome Measures Increased racial literacy and cultural responsiveness among senior leaders.

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	These conditions erode psychological safety, trust, and belonging, and perpetuate systemic inequities in career progression, wellbeing, and retention. Without targeted education and structural accountability, efforts toward inclusion remain superficial and ineffective.	offering 1:1 coaching for senior leaders with equity-focused coaches; integrating story-based learning into leadership events by curating short, powerful narratives from staff with lived experience (with consent and support); delivering bite-sized learning moments linked to real decisions; requiring equity reviews (with a race lens) for key projects, policies, or investments. <i>(Note: This action aligns with the RISE Action 1.1 and 1.2, the Indigenous Workforce Plan, One Sydney, Many People, and the NCCC Strategic Plan)</i>				Greater integration of racial equity considerations into leadership decisions, policies, and investments. More inclusive leadership practices informed by lived experience and context-specific insights. Strengthened relationships between senior leaders and ethno-racially diverse staff. Impact Measures <i>Feedback via focus groups, surveys, feedback forms indicating:</i> • Decreased perception that leadership is out of touch with racial literacy. • Enhanced confidence among leaders in addressing racism and systemic inequities. • Increased cultural safety for ethno-racially diverse staff. • Supporting the University's <i>Sydney in 2032</i> strategic goals under the <i>Thriving Through Diversity</i> pillar. • Embedding the University values of <i>Excellence, Trust & Accountability</i>.
		RIV&V 4.1.2 Provide resources to build racial literacy, cultural responsiveness, and anti-racism capability for staff including capacity to call out racism, and effective allyship. Include intersectional challenges and inclusive leadership practices. Explore opportunities to promote and build on existing resources (e.g. NCCC training, Mosaic Anti-Racism Pledge, the University's	2026-2028	National Centre for Cultural Competence (NCCC), Indigenous Strategy & Services (ISS), Organisational Development, HR D&I Team, SAGE Team, RISE Working Group, Sydney Policy Lab,	Academic Director, National Centre for Cultural Competence (NCCC)	<i>Subject to final collaborative implementation and resourcing, example outputs and outcomes could include:</i> Output Measures Promotion and integration of existing resources (e.g. NCCC training) into staff development pathways, linking to AEF and PP&D measures. Development or curation of new learning resources (e.g. toolkits, videos, e-learning modules) on racial literacy, cultural responsiveness, anti-racism, and allyship. Number of staff trained or engaged through workshops, online modules, or learning events. Creation of new digital tools (e.g. microlearning apps, interactive guides) to support just-in-time learning.

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		Anti-Racism Statement) using new technologies and toolkits. <i>(Note: This action aligns with the RISE Actions 1.1 and 1.3, the Indigenous Workforce Plan, One Sydney, Many People, and the NCCC Strategic Plan)</i>		Mosaic Network, Marcomms		Case studies and narratives developed to illustrate intersectional challenges and inclusive leadership practices. Outcome Measures Greater understanding of intersectionality and its impact on workplace experiences. Enhanced allyship behaviours and inclusive leadership practices across teams. Broader uptake and application of existing resources. More frequent and meaningful conversations about race, culture, and equity in the workplace. Reduction in incidents of racism and improved responses when they occur. Impact Measures <i>Feedback via focus groups, surveys, feedback forms indicating:</i> - Increased staff confidence in recognising and calling out racism and microaggressions. - Cultural shift toward a more racially literate, inclusive, and anti-racist University community. - Increased sense of safety, belonging, and support among culturally and racially marginalised staff. - Supporting the University's <i>Sydney in 2032</i> strategic goals under the <i>Thriving Through Diversity</i> pillar. - Embedding the University values of <i>Excellence, Trust & Accountability</i>.
		RIV&V 4.1.3 Explore opportunities to broaden meaningful inclusivity in public displays of ethno-racial celebrations and achievements to	2026-2028	MarComms, SAGE Team, RISE Working Group, Mosaic Network	Head of Internal Communications	<i>Subject to final collaborative implementation and resourcing, example outputs and outcomes could include:</i> Output Measures Subject to resourcing, example outputs could include:

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		reflect the full diversity of the university community. <i>(Note: This action aligns with RISE Action 1.2)</i>		Steering Committee		Development of inclusive storytelling materials (e.g., digital displays, social media content, campus installations). Number of public displays, events, exhibitions, or communications highlighting diverse cultural and racial identities and achievements. Engagement with staff and student communities to co-design and co-curate content. Outcome Measures Increased visibility of underrepresented ethno-racial groups in public University spaces and communications. Broader understanding of the richness and diversity of the University community. Impact Measures <i>Feedback via focus groups, surveys, feedback forms indicating:</i> • Greater sense of belonging and cultural affirmation among diverse staff and students. • Supporting the University's <i>Sydney in 2032</i> strategic goals under the <i>Thriving Through Diversity</i> pillar. • Embedding the University values of <i>Excellence, Trust & Accountability</i>.
		RIV&V 4.1.4 Seek opportunities to promote and extend the Mosaic Network's Say My Name Campaign. <i>(Note: This Action aligns with RISE Action 1.2)</i>	2026-2028	Mosaic Network Steering Committee, RISE Working Group, HR D&I Team, SAGE Team, MarComms	Mosaic Network Chairs	<i>Subject to final collaborative implementation and resourcing, example outputs and outcomes could include:</i> Output Measures Subject to resourcing and implementation plan, example outputs could include: Expansion of the Say My Name campaign across faculties, schools, and professional units. New campaign materials developed (e.g., videos, posters, digital content, email signature templates, tutor training, student orientations/welcome weeks, recruitment, Leadership Academy,

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						Faculty & School-level initiatives, graduation ceremonies etc.). Inclusion of name pronunciation tools and cultural identity resources in onboarding and staff directories. Partnerships formed with communications, HR, and student services to amplify campaign reach. Outcome Measures Increased awareness of the importance of name pronunciation and cultural respect. Greater use of phonetic name guides and pronunciation tools in email signatures and meetings. Reduction in microaggressions and identity-based exclusion related to name mispronunciation. More inclusive communication practices embedded in daily interactions. Impact Measures <i>Feedback via focus groups, surveys, feedback forms indicating:</i> • Strengthened culture of inclusion, belonging, and mutual respect across the University. • Enhanced sense of visibility and respect among CARM staff and students. • Supporting the University's <i>Sydney in 2032</i> strategic goals under the <i>Thriving Through Diversity</i> pillar. • Embedding the University values of <i>Excellence, Trust & Accountability</i>.
		RIV&V 4.1.5 Raise awareness of different terminologies around ethno-racial diversity, such as CALD and CARM, and emergent recommendations from Diversity	2026-2028	Mosaic Network Steering Committee, RISE Working Group, HR D&I Team, SAGE Team,	Senior Manager, HR D&I, SAGE Program Manager	<i>Subject to final collaborative implementation and resourcing, example outputs and outcomes could include:</i> Output Measures Educational materials created to explain the origins, meanings, and

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		Council Australia and Human Rights Commission.		MarComms, National Centre for Cultural Competence (NCCC)		implications of terms like CALD, CARM, and others. Inclusion in the University's Inclusive Language Guide. Outcome Measures Increased staff awareness of the significance, limitations, and implications of different equity-related terms. Greater clarity and consistency in how the University refers to culturally and racially diverse communities. Impact Measures <i>Feedback via focus groups, surveys, feedback forms indicating:</i> • More respectful, accurate, and inclusive language embedded in University policies, communications, and reporting. • Strengthened cultural safety and belonging for culturally and racially diverse staff and students. • Supporting the University's <i>Sydney in 2032</i> strategic goals under the <i>Thriving Through Diversity</i> pillar. • Embedding the University values of <i>Excellence, Trust & Accountability</i>.
5. Workplace Wellbeing We have an opportunity to deepen our understanding of ethno-racially diverse staff experiences by strengthening feedback and engagement mechanisms. Through targeted data collection, inclusive consultation, and investment in peer-led initiatives, these voices can be more fully represented in organisational decision-making and culture-building. This will enrich institutional insight, foster belonging, and support more equitable and responsive practices.						
RIV&V 5.1	Workplace wellbeing initiatives at the University can fail to capture the lived experiences of staff from culturally and racially diverse backgrounds.	RIV&V 5.1.1 Monitor Sydney Listens engagement across different cultural and ethno-racial backgrounds, and report annually to identify gaps and opportunities for improvement.	Annually	SAGE Team, RISE Working Group, Organisational Development	SAGE Program Manager	<i>Subject to final collaborative implementation and resourcing, example outputs and outcomes could include:</i> Output Measures Disaggregated Sydney Listens participation and response data by race, ethnicity, and cultural background. Annual engagement report highlighting participation rates, response

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	Without disaggregated engagement data, regular assessment tools, and direct input from diverse staff, wellbeing gaps remain invisible and unaddressed. Limited investment in peer networks further weakens emotional support, advocacy, and belonging. This lack of targeted monitoring and culturally responsive support risks perpetuating disengagement, inequity, and psychological strain among ethno-racially diverse staff.	<i>(Note: This action aligns with RISE Action 1.9)</i>	2026-2028	RISE Working Group, SAGE Team	Senior Manager, HR D&I	trends, and key insights. Communication materials to share findings and encourage future participation. Outcome Measures Increased awareness of participation and/or engagement disparities across cultural and ethno-racial groups. Impact Measures <i>Feedback via focus groups, surveys, feedback forms indicating:</i> - Enhanced trust in the Sydney Listens process among ethno-racially diverse staff. - Supporting the University's <i>Sydney in 2032</i> strategic goals under the <i>Thriving Through Diversity</i> pillar. - Embedding the University values of <i>Excellence, Trust & Accountability</i>.
		RIV&V 5.1.2 Explore the benefits and feasibility of re-running the Assess to RISE tool to track progress for CARM women.				<i>Subject to final collaborative implementation and resourcing, example outputs and outcomes could include:</i> Output Measures Feasibility assessment conducted, including stakeholder consultations and resource analysis. Summary report outlining benefits, limitations, and recommendations for re-running Assess to RISE. Proposed implementation plan, including timelines, resourcing, and evaluation methods. Outcome Measures Increased clarity on the value and applicability of Assess to RISE for tracking intersectional equity progress. More robust and intersectional data to inform equity strategy and monitor progress for CARM women. Impact Measures

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						<i>Feedback via focus groups, surveys, feedback forms indicating:</i> • Empowerment of CARM women through visibility, voice, and targeted support. • Supporting the University's <i>Sydney in 2032</i> strategic goals under the <i>Thriving Through Diversity</i> pillar. • Embedding the University values of <i>Excellence, Trust & Accountability</i>.
		RIV&V 5.1.3 Invite ethno-racially diverse staff to participate in focus groups bi-annually.	Biannually	SAGE Team, RISE Working Group	SAGE Program Manager	<i>Subject to final collaborative implementation and resourcing, example outputs and outcomes could include:</i> Output Measures Focus group discussion guides developed with an intersectional equity lens. Biannual focus groups held with ethno-racially diverse staff. Number of participants engaged, disaggregated by cultural and racial identity. Summary reports produced after each round, capturing progressive impact of actions. Feedback mechanisms established to evaluate the experience and usefulness of participation. Outcome Measures Increased opportunities for CARM staff to share lived experiences and perspectives. Progressive understanding of impact of actions underway. Impact Measures <i>Feedback via focus groups, surveys, feedback forms indicating:</i> • Strengthened trust and engagement between staff and institutional leadership. • Supporting the University's <i>Sydney in 2032</i> strategic goals under the <i>Thriving Through Diversity</i> pillar.

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						Embedding the University values of <i>Excellence, Trust & Accountability</i>.
		RIV&V 5.1.4 Continue to support peer networks and grassroots initiatives such as the Mosaic and Yura Networks that foster belonging, advocacy, and emotional support.	2026-2028	HR D&I Team, Yura Network, Mosaic Network, SAGE Team	Senior Manager, HR D&I	<i>Subject to final collaborative implementation and resourcing, example outputs and outcomes could include:</i> Output Measures Number of programs, events, or initiatives led by the Mosaic Network. Development of communications and promotional materials to raise awareness and encourage participation. Number of members engaged in network activities, mentorship, or leadership roles. Outcome Measures Strengthened capacity of peer networks to support culturally and racially diverse staff. Increased participation and visibility of equity-deserving staff in community-building and leadership activities. Impact Measures <i>Feedback via focus groups, surveys, feedback forms indicating:</i> - Enhanced sense of belonging, cultural safety, and peer support among network members. - More inclusive and connected University culture that values grassroots leadership and lived experience. - Supporting the University's <i>Sydney in 2032</i> strategic goals under the <i>Thriving Through Diversity</i> pillar. - Embedding the University values of <i>Excellence, Trust & Accountability</i>.

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ID	Rationale/Evidence	Actions	Timeframe (start & end)	Person / Group Responsible for Implementing Action	Senior Leader Accountable for Action Delivery	Example Outputs, Outcomes, and Impact
6. Leadership & Accountability We have a powerful opportunity to lead systemic change by developing a university-wide anti-racism framework. Embedding leadership accountability, co-designing measurable actions, and recognising lived experience, including colonial and cultural load, can foster a more consistent, proactive approach to addressing racism. These efforts will build trust, strengthen inclusion, and create a safer, more equitable workplace culture.						
RIV&V 6.1	Despite public commitments to anti-racism, staff have expressed frustration with the disconnect between rhetoric and tangible action at the University. The lack of a university-wide anti-racism strategy, grounded in national frameworks and co-designed with diverse communities, limits leadership accountability, transparency, and measurable progress. Without a positive duty approach, colonial and cultural load remains unaddressed, and institutional structures fail to embed anti-racism into strategic planning and leadership performance expectations. This gap erodes trust, perpetuates harm, and	RIV&V 6.1.1 Seek to establish a positive duty approach to racism through the development of a university-wide anti-racism framework, incorporating the following: • Embed leadership accountabilities within the strategy to ensure responsibility for implementation and outcomes. • Refer to best practice and national strategies (e.g. the Australian Human Rights Commission's National Anti-Racism Framework and Diversity Council Australia's Racism at Work reports) for evidence-based recommendations and guiding principles. • Ensure co-design with diverse communities to embed anti-racism and inclusion goals into strategic planning, leadership	2026-2028	Indigenous Strategy & Services (ISS), National Centre for Cultural Competence (NCCC), Community & Leadership (C&L), Office of the General Council (OGC), HR, Risk Team, SAGE Team, HR D&I Team, RISE Working Group, Mosaic Network Steering Committee, Respect@Work Team	DVC-Community & Leadership, DVC-Indigenous Strategy & Services	<i>Subject to final collaborative implementation and resourcing, example outputs and outcomes could include:</i> Output Measures Documented consultation process with diverse communities. Co-developed University-wide Anti-Racism Strategy, informed by lived experience and evidence-based frameworks (e.g. AHRC, DCA). Defined leadership accountabilities and performance expectations embedded in strategic planning. Integration of anti-racism principles into institutional structures and policies. Outcome Measures Systemic reduction in racial inequities across recruitment, retention, and progression. Increased leadership accountability and visibility in anti-racism efforts. Improved alignment of strategic initiatives with anti-racism and inclusion goals. Enhanced organisational capacity to recognise and address racism's varied impacts. Impact Measures <i>Feedback via focus groups, surveys, feedback forms indicating:</i> • Strengthened trust and engagement from ethno-racially diverse staff and communities.

KEY BARRIER 3: RACIAL INCLUSION, VOICE & VISIBILITY						
ID	Rationale/Evidence	Actions	Timeframe (start & end)	Person / Group Responsible for Implementing Action	Senior Leader Accountable for Action Delivery	Example Outputs, Outcomes, and Impact
	weakens the University's ability to foster culturally safe environments for racially marginalised staff.	performance expectations, and institutional structures. • Ensure measurable outcomes and transparent reporting on progress to build trust and demonstrate commitment. • Ensure that the co-development of the Strategy as well as the Strategy itself recognises and addresses colonial and cultural load in development, implementation, and actions. <i>(Note: This action aligns with the Cultural Safety Policy currently under development within OD, as well as Respect@Work Action 1.4)</i>				• A more culturally safe and actively anti-racist institution, where racism is proactively addressed. • Embedded culture of shared responsibility and continuous improvement in racial equity. • Supporting the University's <i>Sydney in 2032</i> strategic goals under the <i>Thriving Through Diversity</i> pillar. • Embedding the University values of <i>Excellence, Trust & Accountability</i>.
7. Culturally Safe Reporting Pathways We can strengthen our response to workplace racism by ensuring culturally safe, trauma-informed reporting systems. Building racial literacy among decision-makers, establishing independent oversight, and introducing bystander training can empower staff to report safely, intervene confidently, and trust that their experiences will be addressed with care and consistency. These actions will foster collective responsibility, enhance inclusion, and support lasting systemic change.						
RIV&V 7.1	People experiencing racism at the University face reporting systems that can lack trauma-informed and culturally safe approaches, leading to mistrust, underreporting, and unresolved harm. HR and leadership teams may lack the racial literacy and	RIV&V 7.1.1 Strengthen and raise awareness of trauma-informed, culturally safe reporting systems, building trust by ensuring transparency and protection for complainants. <i>(Note: This action aligns with RISE Action 2.7 and Respect@Work Action 3.5, 3.7 and 5.1)</i>	2026-2028	Staff Complaints Process Review Team, HR, Workplace Relations, SAGE Team, RISE Working Group, Respect@Work Team, Safer	CHRO (Staff-facing), Registrar (Student-facing)	<i>Subject to final collaborative implementation and resourcing, example outputs and outcomes could include:</i> Output Measures Review reporting systems to identify potential gaps in cultural safety and trauma-informed practices specific to ethno-racially diverse experiences. Development of culturally appropriate communication materials that explain reporting processes, rights, and protections in accessible and inclusive language.

KEY BARRIER 3: RACIAL INCLUSION, VOICE & VISIBILITY						
ID	Rationale/Evidence	Actions	Timeframe (start & end)	Person / Group Responsible for Implementing Action	Senior Leader Accountable for Action Delivery	Example Outputs, Outcomes, and Impact
	anti-racism competence needed to respond appropriately, while the absence of independent oversight limits transparency and accountability. Without targeted bystander training, staff are ill-equipped to intervene in instances of intersectional racism. These gaps perpetuate psychological risk, institutional silence, and inequity in workplace culture.			Communities, National Centre for Cultural Competence (NCCC), Indigenous Strategy & Services (ISS), Student Life, Executive Director, Complaints		Training for complaints handlers and HR staff on cultural responsiveness, anti-racism, and validating negatively racialised experiences. Establishment of culturally safe support pathways (e.g., peer advocates, culturally matched advisers, or liaison officers). Awareness campaign launched to promote the updated reporting system and build trust among ethno-racially diverse staff. Feedback mechanisms established (cross-reference with Staff Complaints Process Review Team feedback mechanisms). Output Measures Increased reporting and resolution of racism-related incidents, reflecting improved trust in institutional processes. More culturally sensitive and empathetic handling of complaints involving racial discrimination or microaggressions. Impact Measures <i>Feedback via focus groups, surveys, feedback forms indicating:</i> - Increased awareness and understanding among ethno-racially diverse staff of how to report racism and discrimination safely. - Greater confidence in the fairness, confidentiality, and cultural responsiveness of the reporting process. - Strengthened institutional accountability and responsiveness to systemic racism. - Supporting the University's <i>Sydney in 2032</i> strategic goals under the <i>Thriving Through Diversity</i> pillar. - Embedding the University values of <i>Excellence, Trust & Accountability</i>.
		RIV&V 7.1.2 Monitor Sydney Listens bullying, harassment and discrimination data disaggregated by gender and	Annually	SAGE Team, RISE Working Group Workplace Relations,	SAGE Program Manager	<i>Subject to final collaborative implementation and resourcing, example outputs and outcomes could include:</i>

KEY BARRIER 3: RACIAL INCLUSION, VOICE & VISIBILITY						
ID	Rationale/Evidence	Actions	Timeframe (start & end)	Person / Group Responsible for Implementing Action	Senior Leader Accountable for Action Delivery	Example Outputs, Outcomes, and Impact
		ethno-racial background, as well as complaints relating to race or racism.		Organisational Development		Output Measures Disaggregated Sydney Listens data collected and analysed by gender and ethno-racial background. Complaints data related to race or racism tracked and categorised (e.g., by type, frequency, resolution status). Annual report produced summarising engagement levels, key themes, and demographic trends. Outcome Measures Increased visibility of participation and experience disparities across ethno-racial and gender groups. Improved understanding of the lived experiences of culturally and racially marginalised staff. Enhanced responsiveness to issues raised by ethno-racially diverse groups. Impact Measures <i>Feedback via focus groups, surveys, feedback forms indicating:</i> • Strengthened institutional accountability for addressing racial inequities and improving staff experience. • Increased trust in University feedback and complaints systems among ethno-racially diverse staff. • Supporting the University's <i>Sydney in 2032</i> strategic goals under the <i>Thriving Through Diversity</i> pillar. • Embedding the University values of <i>Excellence, Trust & Accountability</i>.
		RIV&V 7.1.3 Develop bystander training with examples of intersectional racism to equip staff with the tools to intervene safely and effectively.	2025-2028	Respect@Work Team, SAGE Team, RISE Working Group	Senior Manager, Workplace Behaviour and Conduct	<i>Subject to final collaborative implementation and resourcing, example outputs and outcomes could include:</i> Output Measures Bystander intervention training program developed including examples of intersectional racism (e.g. race and gender). Number of training sessions delivered and staff trained.

KEY BARRIER 3: RACIAL INCLUSION, VOICE & VISIBILITY						
ID	Rationale/Evidence	Actions	Timeframe (start & end)	Person / Group Responsible for Implementing Action	Senior Leader Accountable for Action Delivery	Example Outputs, Outcomes, and Impact
		<i>(Note: This action aligns with RISE Action 1.3, and Respect@Work Action 3.2, and is underway via Respect@Work)</i>				Evaluation tools designed to assess knowledge, confidence, and behavioural change. Outcome Measures Reduction in the frequency and tolerance of racist and discriminatory behaviours in the workplace. Enhanced allyship and solidarity behaviours across teams and faculties. More consistent and supportive responses to incidents of racism and microaggressions. Impact Measures <i>Feedback via focus groups, surveys, feedback forms indicating:</i> - Increased staff confidence in recognising and safely intervening in incidents of intersectional racism. - Greater understanding of how racism intersects with other forms of marginalisation. - Improved psychological safety and wellbeing for culturally and racially marginalised staff. - Alignment with the University's strategic goals under the <i>Thriving Through Diversity</i> pillar.
8. Gender-Intersectional Pay Equity While strong progress has been made in advancing gender pay equity, pay disparities at the intersections of gender, cultural background and disability status, as well as some tenure-linked disparities, are sustained by inconsistent salary review practices and limited equity oversight in senior appointments. As the organisation matures in its equity work, it is critical to apply a gender intersectional lens to ensure fair remuneration and progression for all staff.						
RIV&V 8.1	Analysis of remuneration data revealed persistent and complex equity gaps. The largest gender pay disparities occur among long-tenured academics and senior	RIV&V 8.1.1 Review remuneration data by gender, with a lens on HRMS (Workday) declared cultural background, disability status as part of remuneration reviews. Identify	2026-2028	HR Performance, Workforce Planning and Insights Team, SAGE Team, Organisational	Senior Manager, HR Diversity & Inclusion, Chief Human Resources Officer (CHRO),	<i>Subject to final collaborative implementation and resourcing, example outputs and outcomes could include:</i> Output Measures Completion of regular gender-intersectional pay equity reviews, comparing gender with cultural background, disability status using declared data in HRMS (Workday) system against the dominant

KEY BARRIER 3: RACIAL INCLUSION, VOICE & VISIBILITY						
ID	Rationale/Evidence	Actions	Timeframe (start & end)	Person / Group Responsible for Implementing Action	Senior Leader Accountable for Action Delivery	Example Outputs, Outcomes, and Impact
	professional staff, although some outliers favoured men at shorter tenures, highlighting the potential for slippage and the need for ongoing vigilance. Gender-intersectional inequities were also evident, with gaps between First Nations men and staff with disability, and within-cohort gaps favour men across most countries of birth.	patterns and outliers to inform targeted interventions. <i>(Note: This action is replicated as CP&P 6.1.1 and RIV&V 8.1.1, and is in progress)</i>		Development, HR D&I Team, Reward & Remuneration Team, Recruitment Team, HR Partnering Team,	DVC-Community & Leadership	group averages. Identification of patterns, outliers, systemic disparities and development of targeted intervention strategies based on review findings. Exploration of incorporating an equity lens checkpoint for remuneration of new senior appointments. Exploration of opportunities to increase transparency around identified issues identified and equity strategies. Outcome Measures Reduction in gender-intersectional pay gaps and disparities. Impact Measures <i>Feedback via focus groups, surveys, feedback forms indicating:</i> • Improved awareness among decision-makers of intersectional equity considerations. • Supporting the University's <i>Sydney in 2032</i> strategic goals under the <i>Thriving Through Diversity</i> pillar. • Embedding the University values of <i>Excellence, Trust & Accountability</i>.

KEY BARRIER 4: DEI in the Faculty of Engineering

4.1 Executive Summary

TABLE 108 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY OF DEI IN FoE

Background
The Faculty of Engineering (FoE) remains male-dominated and faces unique cultural and structural challenges, issues not confined to the University of Sydney. Despite leadership changes and targeted initiatives, barriers for women persist particularly in recruitment, workplace experience, physical spaces, and trust in reporting.
Data Sources
The analysis drew on: HR Diversity Dashboard 2025 Sydney Listens Staff Engagement Survey (quantitative and qualitative) SAGE Silver Focus Groups & Surveys: Lived experience of academic and professional staff in FoE across multiple DEI themes FoE Psychosocial Risk Review: Assessment of workload, wellbeing, and cultural risks
Enablers Identified
Leadership commitment to DEI. Appointment of first Associate Dean, Culture & Community. Positive cultural shifts noted since the new Dean's appointment. Supportive managers and flexible work arrangements in some teams. Structured programs for career development and interdisciplinary collaboration. Some improvements in infrastructure and teaching materials to reflect diversity. High promotion success rates for women. Some Schools showing stronger engagement and inclusive sub-cultures. 2025 Women-only academic recruitment round.
Barriers Identified
Low recruitment of women linked to low application rates. Women face exclusion, discrimination, and burnout, with limited post-hire support. Physical spaces lack adequate amenities for women and TGD staff. Lab space and resources are inequitably distributed. Flexible work practices are inconsistently applied, especially for professional staff. Professional-academic staff divide is gendered and contributes to role tension. Reporting pathways are mistrusted, with fear of retaliation and lack of accountability. Cultural change efforts are perceived as tokenistic or performative. Students and staff perpetuate sexist attitudes, with limited intervention.
Key Recommendations
Advancing Gender Equity and Inclusive Representation Strengthen recruitment practices to attract diverse talent through clear expectations, diverse panels, and bias mitigation. Support new hires with tailored induction, mentoring, and exit interviews. Embed intersectional DEI approaches and resource DEI leadership roles. Increase visibility of women and underrepresented groups through recognition, role models, and inclusive curricula. Address student behaviour and embed DEI in the learning environment. Strengthening Leadership, Dialogue, and Decision-Making Promote inclusive meeting practices and consistent implementation of performance frameworks. Build leadership capability in feedback, conflict resolution, and coaching. Increase transparency in career decisions and manage workload through peak period mapping.

Embed DEI in performance reviews and leadership expectations.

Reimagining Physical Spaces

Improve accessibility and inclusiveness of facilities and meeting spaces.

Shift lab culture from ownership to collaboration.

Enhance representation through symbolic naming of spaces after notable women in Engineering.

Enhancing Wellbeing and Operational Clarity

Clarify flexible work expectations and team roles.

Promote wellbeing principles and address workload imbalances.

Support staff with caring responsibilities through flexible teaching arrangements and targeted resources.

Building a Unified Faculty Culture

Foster collaboration and mutual respect between academic and professional staff.

Clarify professional staff roles and improve communication.

Create shared digital resources and recognise contributions, especially from frontline staff.

Promoting Respect and Accountability

Raise awareness of misconduct procedures and support services.

Adopt the Respect@Work Action Plan.

Ensure trusted pathways for managing student misconduct toward staff and peers.

4.2 Background

Since our SAGE Bronze Application, the representation of academic women in FoE has increased, but it remains heavily dominated by men.

In mid-2024, following the appointment of a new Dean, the Faculty developed a priority focus on gender diversity across academic levels, driving systemic and cultural change (Figures 27–28).

Initial actions included; appointing the first Associate Dean, Culture & Community (AD C&C) in early 2025 (with workload allocation and responsibility loading,); supported by a Faculty Academic Director, C&C (Academic Level C, 0.2 FTE and responsibility loading) and Senior Project Officer (HEO7, 0.5 FTE); partnering with HR Wellbeing to assess psycho-social risks, and collaborating with the SAGE team on a gender-intersectional self-assessment to inform a 5-year Culture & Community Action Plan.

Leadership foreword

I am delighted to present the strategic plan for our faculty, which aligns firmly with the University of Sydney's overarching vision of *Sydney in 2032*. This strategic plan reflects the University's collective aspirations and is an actionable roadmap that will guide Engineering in achieving collective excellence in teaching and research. It articulates clear mechanisms that will empower our community to drive innovation, foster collaboration and create lasting impact.

At the heart of this strategy lies a fundamental cultural transformation, deeply rooted in the University's core values of excellence, trust and accountability. This transformation seeks to redefine excellence – not as an isolated ambition but as a collective responsibility shared by every member of our academic and professional community. We will embrace a broad and inclusive definition of excellence, recognising and nurturing the diverse talents of our staff and students to advance our common mission: to conduct world-leading research and cultivate future-ready engineers who will drive meaningful global change.

Our commitment to diversity, equity and inclusion is paramount. Research shows that diverse teams drive greater innovation, enhance problem solving and improve overall performance. We will build on recent work to actively celebrate and leverage the cultural diversity of our community while taking decisive steps to enhance gender equity and Indigenous participation among both staff and students. Increasing diversity in our student body is not just about representation – it is about building a more inclusive and capable engineering workforce that can address the complex challenges of our nation. By fostering an environment in which all individuals feel valued, supported and empowered, we create a faculty that plays a foundational role in shaping a better future for our society.

Collegiality and trust will serve as the bedrock of the Faculty of Engineering, ensuring that we uphold the highest professional and ethical standards. We will cultivate a culture of mutual respect, accountability and shared purpose, fostering collaboration across disciplines and strengthening our role as a catalyst for University-wide research initiatives. By working together, our research will harness diverse expertise to not only address fundamental scientific and engineering challenges but also pioneer deep technological solutions that tackle society's most pressing issues.

Equally, we are deeply committed to fostering a student-centric culture. We will strive to create a more inclusive, caring and supportive environment in which every student receives a personalised and enriching educational experience. By cultivating this foundation of support and belonging, we will empower students with the skills, knowledge and mindset to thrive in an increasingly complex and interconnected world.

This strategic plan has been shaped by the collective efforts of our entire community, and I extend my heartfelt gratitude to all who have contributed. More than a roadmap, it is a declaration of our shared vision, values and ambitions. Through our unwavering dedication to excellence, collegiality and impact, we will position our faculty as a global leader in engineering education and research, driving positive change for generations to come.

Professor Hesham El Gamal
Dean of the Faculty of Engineering

FIGURE 27 FOE STRATEGIC PLAN 2025-28 LEADERSHIP FOREWORD

Staff and student diversity

We will actively recruit and support staff from underrepresented groups through targeted recruitment, mentorship and professional development opportunities. We will also create a supportive, inclusive environment in which all voices are valued, ensuring equitable opportunities for career growth and leadership. This will put us on the path to being a diverse, collegial and inclusive place to work.

We will launch Women in Engineering, a comprehensive and inclusive program encompassing outreach, recruitment, tailored support and curriculum options for women students. This will include engaging high school students through existing initiatives such as our Humanitarian Hackathon, Coding Fest, and Biotech Challenge, as well as leveraging generous philanthropic support including that of the Khuda Family Foundation to recruit women, particularly those facing barriers to STEM participation.

Our newly established Culture and Community Committee will oversee the progress of these actions, ensuring that we create a safe, inclusive and collegial culture that supports everyone's success. By prioritising diversity and inclusivity, we will position ourselves as leaders in engineering, preparing our graduates to lead in a dynamic and interconnected world.

FIGURE 28 FOE STRATEGIC PLAN 2025-28 COMMITMENT TO STAFF AND STUDENT DIVERSITY

Our self-assessment identified six sub-barriers to women's representation in Engineering:

- Difficulty attracting diverse talent;
- Variable sub-cultures;
- Non-inclusive physical spaces;
- Work practices and workloads;
- Professional-academic staff divide;
- Untrusted, unaccountable reporting pathways.

4.2.1 Related activities & programs of work

TABLE 109 RELATED ACTIVITIES AND PROGRAMS OF WORK

Related Portfolios & Initiatives	Description	Linkages
DVC-Community & Leadership	Development of over-arching DEI Framework and Strategy for the University.	Need for a coherent strategy, leadership, advocacy, and meaningful engagement.
FoE Associate Dean Culture & Community	Key related initiatives: Women in Engineering Strategy that includes a focus on school outreach, women students studying Engineering and recruitment and retention of women academic staff.	All actions will be co-developed with and led by the AD C&C.
HR Wellbeing Team	2024 Psychosocial Risk Review and Action Plan. Key related actions areas: • Foster a safe, respectful and inclusive culture, led and role modelled by Faculty and School leaders;	Workload, wellbeing and psychosocial issues.

	- Promote visibility, transparency, accountability and the sharing of resources across the Faculty, while still celebrating the uniqueness of FoE Schools; - Take a long-term view of FoE operating rhythm, and implement effective plans to support the sustainable functioning of the Faculty; - Clarify the supports are available to navigate psycho-social/emotional wellbeing demands inherent in FoE work.	
Academic Excellence Program	The Academic Excellence Program seeks to create a supportive academic culture by clarifying excellence measures, streamlining processes, equipping supervisors and advisors, and fostering a collegial community across the University.	Promotion barriers.
Respect@Work	The University has a positive duty obligation to proactively prevent and respond to sexual misconduct. The University has extended this positive duty obligation to eliminate all forms of unlawful workplace behaviour, including harassment, discrimination and bullying. The Respect@Work Program, led by Senior University Leaders and developed in consultation with staff has a comprehensive Action Plan aligning with the seven standards outlined by the Australian Human Rights Commission of leadership, culture, knowledge, risk management, support, reporting and response, and monitoring, evaluation and transparency.	Mistrust in reporting, fear of retaliation.
Safer Communities	The Safer Communities Office provides specialist support for those who have experienced sexual misconduct, offering confidential and immediate response, guidance on reporting options, safety planning, and referrals to services, with Mandarin-speaking staff and interpreters available on request.	Mistrust in reporting, fear of retaliation.
Staff Complaints Process Review	Following extensive 2022–2023 consultations, key improvements implemented in 2024–25 include updated web resources, streamlined online complaints forms (with anonymous reporting), and enhanced complaint-handling protocols, making the process more accessible, consistent, and supportive for all staff and affiliates.	Mistrust in reporting, fear of retaliation.

4.2.2 Data Sources Used in this Section

TABLE 110 DATA SOURCES USED IN THIS SECTION

Source	Type of Data	Details	Limitations																																																							
University of Sydney HR Diversity Dashboard	Workforce representation	Linked to central data warehouse, Snowflake. Includes demographic questions around gender, country of origin, disability status, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander, and age. Allows for intersectional representation across career cycle.	Does not include questions relating to ethno-racial background or sexuality.																																																							
	Recruitment applications, short-listed and hired.	Linked to standalone recruitment platform. Includes categories available in Snowflake, and additional demographic questions relating to ethno-racial background and sexuality.																																																								
	Promotion applications and success rates.	Manual import of Academic Promotion Unit data with Diversity Dashboard. Some high-level intersectional analyses available.	Due to low numbers, intersectional analyses are not disaggregated. Ethno-racial background filter currently limited to Anglo-Celtic, non-Anglo-Celtic, or not disclosed.																																																							
	Separation/Turnover	Linked to central platform, Snowflake which includes demographic questions around gender, country of origin, disability status, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander. Allows for intersectional representation by type and reason for leaving.	Country of origin currently limited to born in Australia, born outside Australia, or not disclosed.																																																							
2025 Sydney Listens All Staff Engagement Survey Quantitative data	% Favourable responses in FoE (Faculty and School Level). Experiences of bullying, discrimination, harassment, and sexual misconduct in FoE.	Open to staff May 2025. <i>Note: HC=Headcount; PR=Participation Rate; TGD = Trans & Gender Diverse; CNTD=Choose Not To Disclose</i> FoE gender demographics <table><thead><tr><th></th><th>Men</th><th>Women</th><th>TGD</th><th>CNTD</th></tr></thead><tbody><tr><td>Faculty of Engineering</td><td>HC:271; PR:72%</td><td>HC:138; PR:73%</td><td>na</td><td>na</td></tr><tr><td>School AMME</td><td>HC:42; PR:75%</td><td>HC:16; PR:100%</td><td>na</td><td>na</td></tr><tr><td>Engineering Administration</td><td>HC:31; PR:91%</td><td>HC:50; PR:88%</td><td>na</td><td>na</td></tr><tr><td>School of Biomedical Engineering</td><td>HC:30; PR:86%</td><td>HC:16; PR:76%</td><td>na</td><td>na</td></tr><tr><td>School of Civil Engineering</td><td>HC:23; PR:59%</td><td>HC:10; PR:83%</td><td>na</td><td>na</td></tr><tr><td>School of Computer Science</td><td>HC:45; PR:62%</td><td>HC:15; PR:54%</td><td>na</td><td>na</td></tr><tr><td>School of Chemical & Biomolecular Engineering</td><td>HC:23; PR:62%</td><td>na</td><td>na</td><td>na</td></tr><tr><td>Centres and Institutes</td><td>HC:35; PR:70%</td><td>na</td><td>na</td><td>na</td></tr><tr><td>School of Electrical & Computer Engineering</td><td>HC:32; PR:86%</td><td>na</td><td>na</td><td>na</td></tr><tr><td>School of Project Management</td><td>HC:10; PR:77%</td><td>HC:13; PR:81%</td><td>na</td><td>na</td></tr></tbody></table>		Men	Women	TGD	CNTD	Faculty of Engineering	HC:271; PR:72%	HC:138; PR:73%	na	na	School AMME	HC:42; PR:75%	HC:16; PR:100%	na	na	Engineering Administration	HC:31; PR:91%	HC:50; PR:88%	na	na	School of Biomedical Engineering	HC:30; PR:86%	HC:16; PR:76%	na	na	School of Civil Engineering	HC:23; PR:59%	HC:10; PR:83%	na	na	School of Computer Science	HC:45; PR:62%	HC:15; PR:54%	na	na	School of Chemical & Biomolecular Engineering	HC:23; PR:62%	na	na	na	Centres and Institutes	HC:35; PR:70%	na	na	na	School of Electrical & Computer Engineering	HC:32; PR:86%	na	na	na	School of Project Management	HC:10; PR:77%	HC:13; PR:81%	na	na	TGD headcounts were too low to be shown and so have been excluded from analyses.
	Men	Women	TGD	CNTD																																																						
Faculty of Engineering	HC:271; PR:72%	HC:138; PR:73%	na	na																																																						
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School of Project Management	HC:10; PR:77%	HC:13; PR:81%	na	na																																																						

2025 Sydney Listens All Staff Engagement Survey Qualitative data	Thematic analysis of 2025 Sydney Listens anonymous free text feedback from staff.	Thematic analysis of the total of 1521 free text comments from FoE staff. 68% of participants contributed at least one comment, with a median of three comments/commentor. We used Microsoft CoPilot to interrogate the datasets, asking whether positive or negative themes were raised in free text comments relating to each of the identified sub-barriers, and if any suggestions were raised by staff to address the issues. Themes were verified by humans.	We do not have permission to use direct quotes from staff. Also, due to CultureAmp settings, we could not apply multiple filters to analysis of free text comments. Applying the filter for comments from staff in FoE meant that we could not apply a second filter to thematically assess those comments by gender. Therefore, the Sydney Listens comments reflect all staff. Nevertheless, sub-cultures where staff lack trust in the complaints system and fear retaliation for speaking up will disproportionately impact members of less powerful groups, such as ECRs, First Nations staff, women and gender diverse staff, ethno-racially diverse staff, and staff with disability.															
SAGE Silver Focus Groups & Surveys	Thematic analysis of lived experience of academic and professional staff FoE. Focus groups and Surveys Offered: • Value and purpose of DEI in FoE • Culture and support for parents & carers and flexible working in FoE • Gender dynamics in management and leadership in FoE • Career barriers for women in FoE • Spaces and places in FoE	<u>Demographics</u> <table><tr><td></td><td>Academic</td><td>Professional</td></tr><tr><td>Woman</td><td>9</td><td>≤6</td></tr><tr><td>Not specified</td><td>≤6</td><td>≤6</td></tr><tr><td>TGD</td><td>0</td><td>≤6</td></tr><tr><td>Man</td><td>≤6</td><td>0</td></tr></table> Quotes are used with permission. Individuals are represented by participant numbers (Exx) to preserve anonymity.		Academic	Professional	Woman	9	≤6	Not specified	≤6	≤6	TGD	0	≤6	Man	≤6	0	
	Academic	Professional																
Woman	9	≤6																
Not specified	≤6	≤6																
TGD	0	≤6																
Man	≤6	0																

4.3 Evidence of the Barrier and Contributing Factors

4.3.1 Under-representation of women in FoE

Since 2021, FoE has seen a 22% rise in women in academic roles, particularly Level C, up from 18% to 22.5% (Figure 29, Table 111). Professional women rose 13%, from 48.5% to 54.7%.

As of 30 June 2025, the Faculty had made good progress against meeting its 2025 senior academic women targets (set by SDVC&P) (Figure 30).



FIGURE 29 PERCENTAGE MEN AND WOMEN IN ACADEMIC AND PROFESSIONAL ROLES IN FoE 2021-25

Note: Snapshots taken as at 31 March each year; Data verified by HR Workforce Information & Reporting 11 September 2025 and correct at the time of verification.

TABLE 111 2021 v 2025 CHANGE IN PERCENTAGE ACADEMIC WOMEN IN FoE

Note: Snapshots taken as at 31 March 2021 and 31 March 2025; HC = Headcount; Data verified by HR Workforce Information & Reporting 11 September 2025 and correct at the time of verification.

	2021	2025	Δ% Women
All Academic Women	18% (HC: 62)	22% (HC: 86)	+22%
Level A	25% (HC: 25)	29% (HC: 28)	+16%
Level B	23% (HC: 17)	28% (HC: 24)	+22%
Level C	8% (HC: ≤6)	17% (HC: 11)	+113%
Level D	10% (HC: ≤6)	11% (HC: ≤6)	+10%
Level E	17% (HC: 11)	20% (HC: 17)	+18%

SAGE Dean's KPI Faculty of Engineering (% Senior Academic Women & TGD)

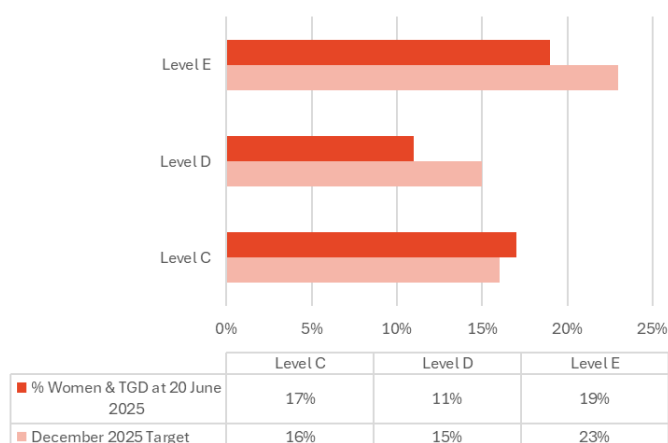


FIGURE 30 PROGRESS (AT 30 JUNE 2025) AGAINST FOE SAGE DEANS' KPI TARGETS (SET FOR 31 DECEMBER 2025) FOR % ACADEMIC ROLES HELD BY WOMEN AND TGD STAFF

Note: TGD = Trans & Gender Diverse; Data verified by HR Workforce Information & Reporting 12 September 2025 and correct at the time of verification.

With small workforce sizes potentially exaggerating percentage shifts, most FoE Schools shared increases in academic women (Table 112). Faculty centres and institutes dropped due to a sharp rise in men outpacing women. AMME's large shift came from fewer men, while the number of women stayed stable.

TABLE 112 PERCENT CHANGE IN THE PERCENTAGE ACADEMIC WOMEN IN FOE SCHOOLS 2021v 2025

Note: Snapshots taken as at 31 March 2021 and 2025; HC = Headcount; Data verified by HR Workforce Information & Reporting 12 September 2025 and correct at the time of verification.

	2021	2025	Δ% Women
Electrical & Computer Engineering	20.6% (HC: 7)	20% (HC: 9)	-3%
Computer Science	20.3% (HC: 14)	19.5% (HC: 17)	-4%
Aerospace, Mechanical and Mechatronic Engineering	9.7% (HC: 9)	16.1% (HC: 9)	+66%
Civil Engineering	14.3% (HC: 7)	20.9% (HC: 9)	+46%
Chemical & Biomolecular Engineering	20% (HC: 7)	23.3% (HC: 10)	+17%
Biomedical Engineering	24.2% (HC: 8)	36.2% (HC: 17)	+50%
Centres & Institutes	66.7% (HC: ≤6)	13.8% (HC: ≤6)	-79%
Project Management	40% (HC: ≤6)	47.8% (HC: 11)	+20%
Engineering Administration	25% (HC: ≤6)	16.7% (HC: ≤6)	-33%

Despite gains, a gender-intersectional snapshot showed ongoing gender imbalance: men made up 66% of the workforce, women 33%, and TGD individuals 0.2% (latter not shown) (Table 113). Men born outside Australia were most represented (45.5%), especially in academic (59%) and senior roles (57%). Australian-born women were least represented (12.8%), concentrated mainly in part-time and professional roles. Women born outside Australia and Australian-born men each made up 21%, but women born outside Australia held more continuing roles and far fewer senior/management roles.

TABLE 113 COUNTRY OF BIRTH + GENDER SNAPSHOT FOE WORKFORCE

Note: Snapshot taken as at 31 March 2025; HC = Headcount; HEO = Higher Education Officer; SPS = Senior Professional Staff; Data verified by HR Workforce Information & Reporting 12 September 2025 and correct at the time of verification.

	Men born in Australia		Men born outside Australia		Women born in Australia		Women born outside Australia	
	HC	%	HC	%	HC	%	HC	%
All (excluding Casual)	122	20.7	266	45.2	75	12.8	121	20.6
Full-time	111	21.1	248	47.1	58	11.0	106	20.2
Part-time	11	17.7	18	29.0	17	27.4	15	24.2
Casual	489	24.3	872	43.3	194	9.6	425	21.1
Fixed-Term	73	24.2	134	44.4	39	12.9	54	17.9
Continuing	49	16.9	133	45.9	37	12.8	69	23.8
Academic	72	18.6	227	58.7	23	5.9	63	16.3
Professional	50	24.9	39	19.4	52	25.9	58	28.9
Level A	12	12.4	56	57.7	8	8.2	20	20.6
Level B	16	18.8	45	52.9	5	5.9	19	22.4
Level C	9	14.1	43	67.2	4	6.3	7	10.9
Level D	15	27.3	34	61.8	1	1.8	5	9.1
Level E	19	22.4	49	57.6	5	5.9	12	14.1
HEO 1-4	1	20.0	2	40.0	1	20.0	0	0.0
HEO 5-7	31	22.6	29	21.2	32	23.4	44	32.1
HEO 8-10	16	31.4	6	11.8	18	35.3	11	21.6
SPS A-B	1	14.3	2	28.6	2	28.6	2	28.6
SPS C-D	1	33.3	0	0.0	0	0.0	2	66.7
Senior Staff	37	24.7	85	56.7	8	5.3	20	13.3
Management Roles	41	25.8	73	45.9	16	10.1	31	19.5

Only 0.2% of Fixed-Term, Continuing, and Casual FoE staff identified as First Nations, below the University's population parity target. Disability representation was also low: 1.3% Fixed-term, 1.4% Continuing, both evenly split by gender, and 1% Casual (68% men, 26% women, 5% TGD). Staff with disability were better represented in management (3.1%) than in the Faculty overall or University Management (1.8%), although noting again small headcounts may exaggerate percentages.

4.3.1.1 Attraction

Recruitment analysis (Table 114) showed men dominated academic applications and hires over 2021-24, with women's short-listed-to-hired rate hitting a 4-year low in 2024 (Table 115), and no TGD academic applicants hired.

Women reached parity in Level A/B applications to hires, but at Level C, they comprised 21% of applicants but only 13.3% of hires (Table 116), with a 6% conversion short-listed-to-hired vs 16.9% for men (Table 117). In contrast, fewer women applied at Levels D/E but had stronger conversion rates than men.

These findings suggest recruitment barriers for women and TGD candidates, especially attracting applicants and converting mid-career (Level C) women to hires.

TABLE 114 2021-24 GENDER REPRESENTATION THROUGH THE RECRUITMENT CYCLE BY YEAR FOR ACADEMIC JOBS IN FOE

Note: TGD = Trans & Gender Diverse; ND = Not Disclosed; HC = Headcount; Data verified by HR Workforce Information & Reporting 16 September 2025 and correct at the time of verification.

Applied	TGD		Men		ND		Women	
	HC	%	HC	%	HC	%	HC	%
Total 2021-24	31	0.4	5656	73.5	195	2.5	1810	23.5
2021	≤6	0.2	470	74	35	5.5	129	20.3
2022	≤6	0.2	807	72.3	46	4.1	261	23.4
2023	8	0.4	1526	74	57	2.8	470	22.8
2024	20	0.5	2853	73.5	57	1.5	950	24.5
Short-Listed								
Total 2021-24	8	0.6	732	65.5	97	8.7	281	25.1
2021	≤6	0.6	104	62.7	20	12.1	41	24.7
2022	0	0	193	64.8	31	10.4	74	24.8
2023	≤6	0.7	205	68.1	27	9	67	22.3
2024	≤6	1.4	230	65.2	19	5.4	99	28.1
Hired								
Total 2021-24	0	0	228	73.3	≤6	0.3	82	26.4
2021	0	0	42	75	0	0	14	25
2022	0	0	77	77.7	0	0	22	22.2
2023	0	0	65	73	0	0	24	27
2024	0	0	44	65.7	≤6	1.5	22	32.8

TABLE 115 2021-24 CONVERSION RATES FROM (A) APPLIED TO SHORT-LISTED AND (B) SHORT-LISTED TO HIRED FOR ACADEMIC JOBS BY YEAR IN FOE

Note: TGD = Trans & Gender Diverse; ND = Not Disclosed; HC = Headcount; Data verified by HR Workforce Information & Reporting 16 September 2025 and correct at the time of verification.

Conversion Applied to Short- Listed	TGD	Men	ND	Women
	% HC	% HC	% HC	% HC
2021-24	25.8	12.9	49.7	15.5
2021	100.0	22.1	57.1	31.8
2022	0.0	23.9	67.4	28.4
2023	25.0	13.4	47.4	14.3
2024	25.0	8.1	33.3	10.4

Conversion Short- Listed to Hired	TGD	Men	ND	Women
	% HC	% HC	% HC	% HC
2021-24	0.0	31.1	1.0	29.2
2021	0.0	40.4	0.0	34.1
2022	na	39.9	0.0	29.7
2023	0.0	31.7	0.0	35.8
2024	0.0	19.1	5.3	22.2

A

B

TABLE 116 2021-24 GENDER REPRESENTATION THROUGH THE RECRUITMENT CYCLE BY LEVEL FOR ACADEMIC JOBS IN FoE

Note: TGD = Trans & Gender Diverse; ND = Not Disclosed; HC = Headcount; Data verified by HR Workforce Information & Reporting 17 September 2025 and correct at the time of verification.

Applied	TGD		Men		ND		Women	
	HC	%	HC	%	HC	%	HC	%
Total A-E	31	0.4	5655	73.6	190	2.5	1808	23.5
Level A	11	0.2	3307	74.2	60	1.4	1080	24.2
Level B	8	0.4	1282	71.7	44	2.4	455	25.4
Level C	8	0.9	727	77.1	10	1.1	198	21
Level D	≤6	1	168	80.8	9	4.3	29	13.9
Level E	≤6	0.7	171	59.8	67	23.4	46	16.1
Short-Listed								
Total A-E	8	0.7	732	65.5	96	8.6	281	25.2
Level A	0	0	358	69.9	29	5.7	125	24.4
Level B	≤6	0.6	244	68.4	12	3.4	99	27.7
Level C	≤6	3.4	77	65.8	≤6	2.6	33	28.2
Level D	≤6	2.9	21	61.8	≤6	5.9	10	29.4
Level E	≤6	1	32	33	50	51.6	14	14.4
Hired								
Total A-E	0	0	228	73.3	≤6	0.3	82	26.4
Level A	0	0	126	74.6	0	0	43	25.4
Level B	0	0	72	73.5	≤6	≤6	25	25.5
Level C	0	0	13	86.7	0	0	≤6	13.3
Level D	0	0	8	61.5	0	0	≤6	38.4
Level E	0	0	9	56.3	0	0	≤6	43.8

TABLE 117 2021-24 CONVERSION RATES FROM (A) APPLIED TO SHORT-LISTED AND (B) SHORT-LISTED TO HIRED FOR ACADEMIC JOBS BY LEVEL

Note: TGD = Trans & Gender Diverse; ND = Not Disclosed; HC = Headcount; Data verified by HR Workforce Information & Reporting 18 September 2025 and correct at the time of verification.

Conversion Applied to Short-Listed	TGD	Men	ND	Women
	% HC	% HC	% HC	% HC
Total A-E	25.8	12.9	50.5	15.5
Level A	0.0	10.8	48.3	11.6
Level B	25.0	19.0	27.3	21.8
Level C	50.0	10.6	30.0	16.7
Level D	50.0	12.5	22.2	34.5
Level E	50.0	18.7	74.6	30.4

Conversion Short-Listed to Hired	TGD	Men	ND	Women
	% HC	% HC	% HC	% HC
Total A-E	0.0	31.1	1.0	29.2
Level A	na	35.2	0.0	34.4
Level B	0.0	29.5	8.3	25.3
Level C	0.0	16.9	0.0	6.1
Level D	0.0	38.1	0.0	50.0
Level E	0.0	28.1	0.0	50.0

In contrast to academic roles, from 2021–2024, women made up most applicants and hires for professional roles in FoE (Table 118-121). Interestingly, men had lower applied-to-shortlisted rates than women but higher shortlisted-to-hired, suggesting interview-stage enrichment. No candidates who disclosed their gender as TGD on the recruitment platform were hired, however a low number were recorded as new external hires in our internal workforce data, indicating some may disclose diverse gender only after accepting offers.

TABLE 118 2021-24 GENDER REPRESENTATION IN POOL OF FoE PROFESSIONAL JOB APPLICANTS ACROSS RECRUITMENT CYCLE

Note: TGD = Trans & Gender Diverse; ND = Not Disclosed; HC = Headcount; Data verified by HR Workforce Information & Reporting 19 September 2025 and correct at the time of verification.

Applied	TGD		Men		ND		Women	
	HC	%	HC	%	HC	%	HC	%
Total 2021-24	21	0.5	1561	38.1	20	0.5	2496	60.9
2021	0	0	179	37.8	≤6	0.8	291	61.4
2022	0	0	217	40.8	≤6	1	310	58.3
2023	7	0.6	401	36.4	≤6	0.3	691	62.7
2024	14	0.7	764	38.4	8	0.4	1204	60.5
Short-Listed								
Total 2021-24	≤6	0.5	275	33	≤6	0.6	550	66
2021	0	0	50	36	≤6	0.7	88	63.3
2022	0	0	57	31.8	≤6	0.6	121	67.6
2023	0	0	73	31.7	0	0	157	68.3
2024	≤6	1.4	95	33.2	≤6	1.1	184	64.3
Hired								
Total 2021-24	0	0	91	38.1	0	0	148	61.9
2021	0	0	21	44.7	0	0	26	55.3
2022	0	0	17	29.8	0	0	40	70.2
2023	0	0	27	36.5	0	0	47	63.5
2024	0	0	26	42.6	0	0	35	57.4

TABLE 119 2021-24 CONVERSION RATES FROM (A) APPLIED TO SHORT-LISTED AND (B) SHORT-LISTED TO HIRED FOR PROFESSIONAL JOBS BY YEAR

Note: TGD = Trans & Gender Diverse; ND = Not Disclosed; HC = Headcount; Data verified by HR Workforce Information & Reporting 19 September 2025 and correct at the time of verification.

Conversion Applied to Short-Listed	TGD	Men	ND	Women
	% HC	% HC	% HC	% HC
2021-24	19.0	17.6	25.0	22.0
2021	na	27.9	25.0	30.2
2022	na	26.3	20.0	39.0
2023	0.0	18.2	0.0	22.7
2024	28.6	12.4	37.5	15.3

A

Conversion Short-Listed to Hired	TGD	Men	ND	Women
	% HC	% HC	% HC	% HC
2021-24	0.0	33.1	0.0	26.9
2021	na	42.0	0.0	29.5
2022	na	29.8	0.0	33.1
2023	na	37.0	na	29.9
2024	0.0	27.4	0.0	19.0

B

TABLE 120 2021-24 GENDER REPRESENTATION IN POOL OF FoE PROFESSIONAL JOB APPLICANTS ACROSS PROFESSIONAL LEVELS

Note: TGD = Trans & Gender Diverse; ND = Not Disclosed; HC = Headcount; HEO = Higher Education Officer; SPS = Senior Professional Staff' Data verified by HR Workforce Information & Reporting 19 September 2025 and correct at the time of verification.

Applied	TGD		Men		ND		Women	
	HC	%	HC	%	HC	%	HC	%
Total	21	0.5	1561	38.1	20	0.5	2496	60.9
HEO 1-4	0	0	21	26.3	≤6	1.3	58	72.5
HEO 5-7	21	0.6	1271	36.3	16	0.5	2195	62.7
HEO 8-10	0	0	233	53.8	≤6	0.2	199	46
SPS A-B	0	0	28	40.6	≤6	2.9	39	56.5
SPS C-D	0	0	8	61.5	0	0	≤6	38.5
Short-Listed								
Total	≤6	0.5	275	33	≤6	0.6	550	66
HEO 1-4	0	0	8	38.1	≤6	4.8	12	57.1
HEO 5-7	≤6	0.7	198	31.4	≤6	0.5	425	67.5
HEO 8-10	0	0	58	39.7	≤6	0	87	59.6
SPS A-B	0	0	9	28.1	0	0	23	71.9
SPS C-D	0	0	≤6	40	0	0	≤6	60
Hired								
Total	0	0	91	38.1	0	0	148	61.9
HEO 1-4	0	0	6	66.7	0	0	≤6	33.3
HEO 5-7	0	0	70	38.3	0	0	113	61.8
HEO 8-10	0	0	12	31.6	0	0	26	68.4
SPS A-B	0	0	≤6	25	0	0	≤6	75
SPS C-D	0	0	≤6	100	0	0	0	0

TABLE 121 2021-24 CONVERSION RATES FROM (A) APPLIED TO SHORT-LISTED AND (B) SHORT-LISTED TO HIRED FOR PROFESSIONAL JOBS BY LEVEL

Note: TGD = Trans & Gender Diverse; ND = Not Disclosed; HC = Headcount; HEO = Higher Education Officer; SPS = Senior Professional Staff; Data verified by HR Workforce Information & Reporting 23 September 2025 and correct at the time of verification.

Conversion Applied to Short-Listed	TGD	Men	ND	Women
	% HC	% HC	% HC	% HC
Total	19.0	17.6	25.0	22.0
HEO 1-4	na	38.1	100.0	20.7
HEO 5-7	19.0	15.6	18.8	19.4
HEO 8-10	na	24.9	100.0	43.7
SPS A-B	na	32.1	0.0	59.0
SPS C-D	na	25.0	na	60.0

A

Conversion Short-Listed to Hired	TGD	Men	ND	Women
	% HC	% HC	% HC	% HC
Total	0.0	33.1	0.0	26.9
HEO 1-4	na	75.0	0.0	25.0
HEO 5-7	0.0	35.4	0.0	26.6
HEO 8-10	na	20.7	0.0	29.9
SPS A-B	na	22.2	na	26.1
SPS C-D	na	50.0	na	0.0

B

Intersectional analysis of academic recruitment data (Tables 122–127) showed persistent disparities across identity groups. Men dominated all cultural groups, whereas women were underrepresented, with lowest progression among African and Latin-American women. However, except for disclosure of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander identity, non-disclosure beyond gender correlated with higher hiring. Hiring managers at the University **do not see** whether candidates have disclosed any identity characteristics beyond citizenship (as that impacts visa status), gender and country of residence, pointing to potential invisible systemic barriers requiring reflection.

A women-only academic recruitment round in 2025 offers a unique opportunity to further understand potential gender- and gender-intersectional barriers to recruitment of diverse talent in FoE (Table 128).

TABLE 122 2021-24 REPRESENTATION OF GENDER BY CULTURAL BACKGROUND THROUGH THE RECRUITMENT CYCLE FOR ACADEMIC JOBS IN FOE

Note: TGD = Trans & Gender Diverse; ND = Not Disclosed; HC = Headcount; Data verified by HR Workforce Information & Reporting 23 September 2025 and correct at the time of verification.

	TGD		Men		ND		Women	
	HC	%	HC	%	HC	%	HC	%
Applied								
Aboriginal	0	0.0	≤6	50.0	0	0.0	≤6	50.0
Torres Strait Islander	0	0.0	≤6	100.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
African	0	0.0	194	89.4	≤6	0.5	22	10.1
Anglo-Celtic	≤6	1.9	86	81.1	≤6	0.9	17	16.0
Asian	7	0.3	1857	75.5	14	0.6	583	23.7
European	7	2.1	246	72.4	≤6	1.2	83	24.4
Latin-American	≤6	1.0	83	82.2	0	0.0	17	16.8
Middle-Eastern/North African	≤6	0.2	738	79.1	13	1.4	180	19.3
Not Disclosed	≤6	0.6	580	62.1	149	16.0	199	21.3
Other	≤6	0.2	1851	71.9	13	0.5	703	27.3
Pacific Islander	0	0.0	13	92.9	0	0.0	≤6	7.1
Short-Listed								
Aboriginal	0	0.0	≤6	50.0	0	0.0	≤6	50.0
Torres Strait Islander	0	na	0	na	0	na	0	na
African	0	0.0	≤6	100.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
Anglo-Celtic	0	0.0	21	84.0	0	0.0	≤6	16.0
Asian	≤6	0.4	185	71.2	≤6	0.8	72	27.7
European	≤6	2.5	52	62.5	0	0.0	25	34.4
Latin-American	0	0.0	18	85.7	0	0.0	≤6	14.3
Middle-Eastern/North African	0	0.0	55	71.4	≤6	1.3	21	27.3
Not Disclosed	≤6	1.4	194	53.0	92	25.1	75	20.5
Other	0	0.0	199	71.1	≤6	0.7	79	28.2
Pacific Islander	0	na	0	na	0	na	0	na
Hired								
Aboriginal	0	0.0	≤6	50.0	0	0.0	≤6	50.0
Torres Strait Islander	0	na	0	na	0	na	0	na
African	0	0.0	≤6	100.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
Anglo-Celtic	0	0.0	≤6	50.0	0	0.0	≤6	50.0
Asian	0	0.0	47	75.8	0	0.0	15	24.2
European	0	0.0	11	68.8	0	0.0	≤6	31.3
Latin-American	0	0.0	8	100.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
Middle-Eastern/North African	0	0.0	11	61.1	0	0.0	≤6	38.9
Not Disclosed	0	0.0	118	73.3	≤6	0.6	42	26.1
Other	0	0.0	29	74.4	0	0.0	10	25.6
Pacific Islander	0	na	0	na	0	na	0	na

TABLE 123 2021-24 CONVERSION RATES FROM (A) APPLIED TO SHORT-LISTED AND (B) SHORT-LISTED TO HIRED FOR ACADEMIC JOBS IN FOE BY GENDER AND CULTURAL BACKGROUND

Note: TGD = Trans & Gender Diverse; ND = Not Disclosed; HC = Headcount; Data verified by HR Workforce Information & Reporting 23 September 2025 and correct at the time of verification.

Conversion Applied to Short-Listed	Total % HC	TGD % HC	Men % HC	ND % HC	Women % HC
Aboriginal	40.0	na	40.0	na	40.0
Torres Strait Islander	0.0	na	0.0	na	na
African	2.8	na	3.1	0.0	0.0
Anglo-Celtic	23.6	0.0	24.4	0.0	23.5
Asian	10.6	14.3	10.0	14.3	12.3
European	23.2	28.6	21.1	0.0	30.1
Latin-American	20.8	0.0	21.7	na	17.6
Eastern/North African	8.3	0.0	7.5	7.7	11.7
Not Disclosed	39.2	83.3	33.4	61.7	37.7
Other	10.9	0.0	10.8	15.4	11.2
Pacific Islander	0.0	na	0.0	na	0.0

Conversion Short-Listed to Hired	Total % HC	TGD % HC	Men % HC	ND % HC	Women % HC
Aboriginal	50.0	na	50.0	na	50.0
Torres Strait Islander	na	na	na	na	na
African	16.7	na	16.7	na	na
Anglo-Celtic	16.0	na	9.5	na	50.0
Asian	23.8	0.0	25.4	0.0	20.8
European	20.3	0.0	21.2	na	20.0
Latin-American	38.1	na	44.4	na	0.0
Eastern/North African	23.4	na	20.0	0.0	33.3
Not Disclosed	44.0	0.0	60.8	1.1	56.0
Other	13.9	na	14.6	0.0	12.7
Pacific Islander	na	na	na	na	na

A

B

TABLE 124 2021-24 REPRESENTATION OF GENDER BY SEXUAL ORIENTATION THROUGH THE RECRUITMENT CYCLE FOR ACADEMIC JOBS IN FOE

Note: TGD = Trans & Gender Diverse; ND = Not Disclosed; HC = Headcount; LGBQ = Lesbian, Gay, Bi+, Queer/Questioning; Data verified by HR Workforce Information & Reporting 23 September 2025 and correct at the time of verification.

	TGD		Men		ND		Women	
	HC	%	HC	%	HC	%	HC	%
Applied								
Heterosexual	≤6	0.1	2810	77.6	≤6	0.1	805	22.2
LGBQ	12	2.7	363	80.8	≤6	0.4	72	16.0
ND	16	0.4	2483	68.5	191	5.3	933	25.8
Short-Listed								
Heterosexual	0	0.0	262	73.2	0	0.0	96	26.8
LGBQ	≤6	2.7	26	70.3	0	0.0	10	27.0
ND	≤6	1.0	444	61.4	97	13.4	175	24.2
Hired								
Heterosexual	0	0.0	49	70.0	0	0.0	21	30.0
LGBQ	0	0.0	≤6	80.0	0	0.0	≤6	20.0
ND	0	0.0	175	74.2	≤6	0.4	60	25.4

TABLE 125 2021-24 CONVERSION RATES FROM (A) APPLIED TO SHORT-LISTED AND (B) SHORT-LISTED TO HIRED FOR ACADEMIC JOBS IN FOE BY GENDER AND SEXUAL ORIENTATION

Note: TGD = Trans & Gender Diverse; ND = Not Disclosed; HC = Headcount; LGBQ = Lesbian, Gay, Bi+, Queer/Questioning; Data verified by HR Workforce Information & Reporting 23 September 2025 and correct at the time of verification.

A

Conversion Applied to Short-Listed	Total % HC	TGD % HC	Men % HC	ND % HC	Women % HC
Heterosexual	9.9	0.0	9.3	0.0	11.9
LGBQ	8.2	8.3	7.2	0.0	13.9
ND	20.0	43.8	17.9	50.8	18.8

B

Conversion Short-Listed to Hired	Total % HC	TGD % HC	Men % HC	ND % HC	Women % HC
Heterosexual	19.6	na	18.7	na	21.9
LGBQ	13.5	0.0	15.4	na	10.0
ND	32.6	0.0	39.4	1.0	34.3

TABLE 126 2021-24 REPRESENTATION OF GENDER BY DISABILITY STATUS THROUGH THE RECRUITMENT CYCLE FOR ACADEMIC JOBS IN FOE

Note: TGD = Trans & Gender Diverse; ND = Not Disclosed; HC = Headcount; Data verified by HR Workforce Information & Reporting 23 September 2025 and correct at the time of verification.

	TGD		Men		ND		Women	
	HC	%	HC	%	HC	%	HC	%
Applied								
No Disability	18	0.3	4101	75.9	24	0.4	1257	23.3
With Disability	≤6	8.3	33	68.8	0	0.0	11	22.9
ND	9	0.4	1522	67.8	171	7.6	542	24.2
Short-Listed								
No Disability	≤6	0.8	446	71.8	≤6	0.8	165	26.6
With Disability	≤6	12.5	≤6	75.0	0	0.0	≤6	12.5
ND	≤6	0.4	280	57.3	92	18.8	115	23.5
Hired								
No Disability	0	0.0	106	74.6	0	0.0	36	25.4
With Disability	0	0.0	≤6	100.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
ND	0	0.0	121	72.0	≤6	0.6	46	27.4

TABLE 127 2021-24 CONVERSION RATES FROM (A) APPLIED TO SHORT-LISTED AND (B) SHORT-LISTED TO HIRED FOR ACADEMIC JOBS IN FOE BY GENDER AND DISABILITY STATUS

Note: TGD = Trans & Gender Diverse; ND = Not Disclosed; HC = Headcount; Data verified by HR Workforce Information & Reporting 24 September 2025 and correct at the time of verification.

A

Conversion Applied to Short-Listed	Total	TGD	Men	ND	Women
	% HC	% HC	% HC	% HC	% HC
No Disability	11.5	27.8	10.9	20.8	13.1
With Disability	16.7	25.0	18.2	na	9.1
ND	21.8	22.2	18.4	53.8	21.2

B

Conversion Short-Listed to Hired	Total	TGD	Men	ND	Women
	% HC	% HC	% HC	% HC	% HC
No Disability	22.9	0.0	23.8	0.0	21.8
With Disability	12.5	0.0	16.7	na	0.0
ND	34.4	0.0	43.2	1.1	40.0

TABLE 128 CASE STUDY: WOMEN ONLY RECRUITMENT ROUND

Case Study: 2025 FoE Women Only Recruitment Round
In 2025, led by the new AD C&C, FoE launched a “Women Only” recruitment drive across four Schools with low female representation. All roles were Continuing (Tenure-Track) Academic from Level B-E. The campaign was widely promoted with an estimated reach of 4.6 million, including positive media coverage, and drew 597 applications from women engineers from 49 countries.
We will work with the AD to monitor applications, conversion of offers to hired, retention, progression and experience over time through a gender-intersectional lens.

4.3.1.2 Promotion

Between 2021–2024, women applying for promotion in FoE had a high success rate. As a proportion of potential pool, the percentage of women applying for Level B and Level E promotions was greater than their workforce representation at Levels A and D, respectively. However, the percentage of women applying for Levels C and D were a little lower than their workforce representation at Levels B and C, indicating potential for promotion mentoring to uplift mid-career progression for women (Table 129).

TABLE 129 2021-24 GENDER PROMOTION APPLICATIONS & OUTCOMES IN THE FACULTY OF ENGINEERING

Note: HC = Headcount; Data verified by HR Workforce Information & Reporting 24 September 2025 and correct at the time of verification.

Promotion Level Sought	Women						Men					
	2021-24 Applicants (HC)	2021-24 Successful (HC)	2021-24 Success Rate	Average 2021-24 % Academic Staff at Preceding Level	% Total Applicants	% Total Promotions	2021-24 Applicants (HC)	2021-24 Successful (HC)	2021-24 Success Rate	Average 2021-24 % Academic Staff at Preceding Level	% Total Applicants	% Total Promotions
Level B	≤8	≤8	86%	26%	47%	46%	≤8	≤8	88%	74%	53%	54%
Level C	8	8	100%	26%	22%	25%	29	24	83%	74%	78%	75%
Level D	≤8	≤8	67%	11%	8%	7%	34	26	76%	89%	92%	93%
Level E	≤8	≤8	100%	10%	15%	17%	17	15	88%	90%	85%	83%
Total	21	19	90%	18%	19%	21%	88	72	82%	82%	81%	79%

Reflecting University trends discussed in Key Barriers 1 and 3, FoE staff born outside Australia had lower success with promotion applications than those born in Australia, further highlighting the need for targeted support for CARM staff (Table 130).

TABLE 130 2021-24 GENDER INTERSECTIONAL PROMOTION APPLICATIONS & OUTCOMES IN FoE 2021-24

Note: HC = Headcount; LVL = Level; Data verified by HR Workforce Information & Reporting 24 September 2025 and correct at the time of verification.

	Women						Men					
	Applicants (HC)	Successful (HC)	Success Rate	% LVL A-D Academic Staff	% Total Applicants	% Total Promotions	Applicants (HC)	Successful (HC)	Success Rate	% LVL A-D Academic Staff	% Total Applicants	% Total Promotions
2021-24												
With Disability	0	0	na	0%	0%	0%	≤6	≤6	100%	0.9%	2%	2%
Born in Australia	≤6	≤6	100%	6%	6%	7%	14	13	93%	23%	13%	14%
Born Outside Australia	15	13	87%	14%	14%	14%	74	59	80%	57%	68%	65%
First Nations	0	0	na	0%	0	0	0	0	na	0.4%	0%	0%

4.3.1.3 Resignation

Across 2021-2024, no academic women resigned from FoE but women in continuing professional roles had an average 6.2% resignation rate compared to just 1.4% for professional men (Table 131). Resignation rates were higher for staff on Fixed-Term contracts, with academic men lower than academic women; professional women on Fixed-Term contracts were the most likely to leave of all (Table 132).

TABLE 131 2021-24 PERCENT RESIGNATIONS CONTINUING STAFF BY GENDER AND ROLE

Note: Data verified by HR Workforce Information & Reporting 24 September 2025 and correct at the time of verification.

	% Resignations Continuing Academic Men	% Resignations Continuing Professional Men	% Resignations Continuing Academic Women	% Resignations Continuing Professional Women
2021	0.8%	2.7%	0.0%	5.7%
2022	2.5%	0.0%	0.0%	5.2%
2023	4.1%	0.0%	0.0%	11.1%
2024	0.8%	2.8%	0.0%	2.9%
Average 2021-24	2.1%	1.4%	0.0%	6.2%

TABLE 132 2021-24 PERCENT RESIGNATIONS FIXED-TERM STAFF BY GENDER AND ROLE

Note: Data verified by HR Workforce Information & Reporting 24 September 2025 and correct at the time of verification.

	% Resignations Fixed-Term Academic Men	% Resignations Fixed-Term Professional Men	% Resignations Fixed-Term Academic Women	% Resignations Fixed-Term Professional Women
2021	9.6%	14.6%	9.5%	7.4%
2022	12.8%	15.7%	15.9%	15.2%
2023	11.6%	11.6%	6.0%	13.3%
2024	7.4%	0.0%	7.7%	9.4%
Average 2021-24	10.3%	10.5%	9.8%	11.3%

Additional assessment of continuing staff revealed that FoE men born in Australia, particularly those in Academic roles, were more likely to resign than their counterparts born outside Australia (Table 133). There was no difference in resignation rates between Professional women born in, or outside Australia.

TABLE 133 2021-24 PERCENT TURNOVER CONTINUING STAFF BY GENDER, ROLE AND COUNTRY OF BIRTH

Note: Data verified by HR Workforce Information & Reporting 25 September 2025 and correct at the time of verification.

	% Resignations Continuing Academics Born Outside Australia	% Resignations Continuing Professionals Born Outside Australia	% Resignations Continuing Academics Born in Australia	% Resignations Continuing Professionals Born in Australia
Men	1.1%	0.0%	5.5%	3.3%
Women	0.0%	6.2%	0.0%	6.2%

4.3.1.4 Lived experience

In 2025 Sydney Listens free-text comments and SAGE Silver Focus Groups, some FoE staff noted recent positive cultural shifts following the new Dean’s appointment in late 2024, and the impact of supportive managers, but concerns were raised that recent efforts to recruit more women could become tokenistic if not partnered with post-hire support and cultural change (Table 134).

TABLE 134 THEMES ARISING FROM 2025 SYDNEY LISTENS AND SAGE SILVER FOCUS GROUPS RELATING TO CAREER BARRIERS

Note: 2025SL = Arising from thematic analysis of free text comments from FoE staff in the 2025 Sydney Listens All Staff Engagement Survey; SSFG = Arising from thematic analysis of SAGE Silver Focus Groups. Quotes are from SAGE Silver Focus Groups only and are used with permission.

Working Well	Working Less Well	Recommendations
Positive Shifts in Career Development and Leadership Support Acknowledgement of efforts to support career development, with some staff noticing a positive culture shift in recent months. (2025SL) Leadership and talent development were supported through programs, secondments, and strategic project opportunities, enabling internal career growth. (2025SL) Some staff felt their supervisors were genuinely supportive of both professional and personal development, acting as role models. (2025SL) Staff appreciated opportunities for interdisciplinary collaboration and early-career researcher support, which contributed to career growth. (2025SL) Targeted Recruitment and Pipeline Development for Women Recruitment projects that specifically target women. (SSFG) <i>"We are literally now doing an academic recruitment campaign for women. And we are trying to attract more female students to our undergraduate cohorts, to ideally have a 50-50 commencing cohort. That's really with a view of them being a</i>	Lack of Transparent Career Pathways and Advancement Processes Staff expressed frustration with lack of transparent career development pathways, especially in some FoE Schools. (2025SL) Some women noted active obstruction by men leaders and the perception that career opportunities were limited for those not in favoured networks or leadership circles. (SSFG) <i>"I know of multiple women whose careers have been actively destroyed by their managers through the AP&D system, either due to poor management and lack of clarity, through bullying to remove key successes, or through applying double standards ... Men are commonly given awards or promotions for women's work." — E15</i> Sexist Workplace Culture Women on staff are subjected to demeaning comments. (SSFG) <i>"These female academics, women of colour, who are incredibly well educated, are on the receiving end of every single racist and sexist remark that is possible. And I've spoken to the men who talk about diversity hires when these women walk past. It's really quite shocking." — E02</i> <i>"I just can't do our annual conference this year, I just don't have it in me. I can't take another three or four days of constant backhanded comments about me not being competent, me sleeping my way into my position, which absolutely under no circumstances has happened. You know, it's that accusation from men who are quite mediocre, feeling threatened because your career is surpassing theirs." — E10</i> Women face burnout and consider leaving rather than battle on in an unsupportive environment. (SSFG) <i>"There's nothing working well to give women an incentive to stay in the faculty. It's a very hostile, negative environment to work in. I'm surprised and impressed that there are still any women around and I think that's really quite sad." — E09</i>	Inclusive and Transparent Recruitment Practices Communicate clear rationale and expectations from staff for increasing workforce diversity (e.g., recent all-women recruitment drive). Ensure diversity on selection panels, encouraging coverage of equitable recruitment alongside subject matter expertise. Supportive Onboarding and Retention for Women Develop School-level induction packs for all staff and create a process for extra check-in/support for women staff appointed to help create an inclusive environment. Career Development and Progression Equity Provide more support to women as they progress through their career, including equitable and consistent access to career development pathways across all Schools, and mentoring and sponsorship programs. Monitor to ensure that the Academic Excellence Framework is upheld and implemented consistently for all staff. Train Faculty supervisors and managers in giving constructive feedback. Transparent Communication and Decision-Making Increase transparency and consultation around career opportunities and decision-making. Work with HR during times of change to design communication practices that better include rationale

<i>potential pipeline to becoming our academics later on." — E05</i>		and mechanisms for feedback to support staff in understanding decisions and outcomes.
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4.3.2 Variable Sub-cultures

The Sydney Listens results for FoE showed mixed but encouraging signs. While overall favourability was lower than the University average (Table 135), staff responses and participation improved dramatically from 2024, possibly reflecting changes since the new Dean's late-2024 appointment.

Interestingly, women in FoE responded more favourably than men and university-wide averages for women, although concerns about management were noted (see Key Barrier 5: Non-Inclusive Managers).

However, engagement varied widely across Schools (data not shown), suggesting distinct School-based sub-cultures. This may explain apparent discrepancies between encouraging survey results and less encouraging qualitative data (Table 136) and help us target support where most needed.

TABLE 135 SYDNEY LISTENS STAFF SURVEY 2025 v 2024: PERCENTAGE FAVOURABLE RESPONSES ACROSS ENGAGEMENT FACTORS FOR WOMEN AND MEN IN FOE COMPARED TO ALL UNIVERSITY AVERAGE

Light orange shading FoE group 1-4pp lower than all University group of the same year; Dark orange shading = FoE group 5pp or more lower than all University group of the same year; No shading = No difference between FoE group and all University group of the same year; Light green shading = FoE group 1-4pp higher than all University group of the same year; Dark green shading = FoE group 5pp or more higher than all University group of the same year; Green font = women higher than men of the same year; Red font = women lower than men of the same year; Black font = no difference between women and men of the same year.

	2024 All University (n=6146; PR=61%)	2024 All University Men (n=2406; PR=59%)	2024 All University Women (n=3696; PR=63%)	2024 Δ Women v Men All University	2024 All FoE (n=269; PR=48%)	2024 All FoE Men (n=169; PR=43%)	2024 All FoE Women (n=99; PR=57%)	2024 Δ Women v Men FoE	2025 All University (n=7080; PR=66%)	2025 All University Men (n=2813; PR=64%)	2025 All University Women (n=4212; PR=66%)	2025 Δ Women v Men All University	2025 All FoE (n=411; PR=72%)	2025 All FoE Men (n=271; PR=72%)	2025 All FoE Women (n=138; PR=73%)	2025 Δ Women v Men FoE
Engagement	68%	67%	70%	3	63%	59%	70%	11	69%	67%	70%	3	68%	64%	75%	11
Company Confidence	49%	48%	50%	2	46%	42%	51%	9	50%	49%	51%	2	51%	49%	57%	8
Alignment & Involvement	72%	72%	72%	0	67%	66%	69%	3	73%	72%	73%	1	71%	70%	72%	2
Collaboration & Communication	55%	55%	55%	0	51%	49%	55%	6	57%	57%	57%	0	58%	57%	61%	4
Enablement	58%	58%	59%	1	50%	47%	57%	10	61%	59%	62%	3	57%	55%	62%	7
Feedback & Recognition	55%	55%	55%	0	47%	45%	51%	6	56%	56%	56%	0	55%	54%	57%	3
Innovation	51%	48%	53%	5	51%	48%	55%	7	52%	50%	54%	4	56%	55%	57%	2
Leadership	46%	43%	47%	4	38%	33%	47%	14	44%	42%	46%	4	43%	40%	51%	9
Learning & Development	64%	63%	65%	2	58%	54%	63%	9	64%	63%	66%	3	63%	62%	64%	2
Management	75%	76%	74%	-2	65%	65%	65%	0	75%	76%	75%	-1	69%	70%	66%	-4
Service & Quality Focus	49%	46%	50%	4	42%	38%	48%	10	50%	49%	51%	2	52%	50%	56%	6
Social Connection	57%	55%	57%	2	53%	48%	61%	13	57%	56%	58%	2	56%	53%	61%	8
Teamwork & Ownership	65%	64%	66%	2	59%	55%	66%	11	66%	65%	67%	2	63%	61%	67%	6
Work & Life Blend	64%	64%	64%	0	57%	55%	59%	4	66%	66%	66%	0	63%	63%	65%	2
Action	47%	42%	49%	7	34%	30%	39%	9	51%	47%	53%	6	40%	35%	50%	15
Diversity & Inclusion	60%	61%	60%	-1	61%	62%	60%	-2	61%	61%	61%	0	59%	60%	59%	-1
Safety	82%	82%	82%	0	80%	81%	78%	-3	82%	83%	82%	-1%	83%	85%	82%	-3

TABLE 136 THEMES ARISING FROM 2025 SYDNEY LISTENS AND SAGE SILVER FOCUS GROUPS RELATING TO FOE CULTURE

Note: 2025SL = Arising from thematic analysis of free text comments from FoE staff in the 2025 Sydney Listens All Staff Engagement Survey; SSFG = Arising from thematic analysis of SAGE Silver Focus Groups. Quotes are from SAGE Silver Focus Groups only and are used with permission.

Working Well	Working Less Well	Recommendations
Positive DEI Efforts & Cultural Shifts Acknowledgement of efforts to change culture and foster DEI. (SSFG) Appreciation for initiative to redesign teaching resources and materials to be more visibly inclusive (SSFG) <i>"What we're trying to achieve in the educational design space is more of an opening of eyes to that diversity question ... just being a bit more aware that you are dealing with a diverse cohort and they need to be able to see themselves in the teaching materials, the case studies." — E01</i> Visible diversity of gender and race among faculty staff. (SSFG) <i>"Just from observation, when I joined Engineering, I was quite surprised by how diverse everyone was in comparison to [another faculty] where I was for many years." – E05</i> Leadership & Team Dynamics There was optimism about new leadership being more visible and engaged with staff. (2025SL) A few staff felt a sense of shared purpose within their teams, despite broader concerns about cohesion. (2025SL)	Concerns about Over-riding Faculty Values Amid recognition of progress on diversity and inclusion, there were also concerns about tokenistic efforts that maintain the status quo. (SSFG) <i>"Look, I absolutely agree that attempts are being made and projects are starting [but] what we've seen in this space, time and time again, is that reviewing things quietly and trying to build on what we have normally ends without a lot of action." – E04</i> There were perceptions that caring for staff and students, including addressing DEI, runs a poor second to research and business success. (SSFG) <i>"In prioritising business success, it can feel like students and staff are treated as commodities." – E07</i> Leadership & Organisational Culture There was a strong view that problems are systemic and embedded in a tradition built by white, men academics. (SSFG) <i>"It's easy to feel powerless against such a massive, well I'm going to call it what it is, such a massive wall of racism and sexism that exists in this faculty." – E02</i> Feelings of Exclusion & Isolation Some comments highlighted feelings of exclusion from decision-making processes and unequal access to opportunities, often linked to perceptions of favouritism and internal cliques. For example, there were suggestions of exclusive leadership networks that limited diverse representation and advancement. (2025SL, SSFG) <i>"In my experience, the culture remains deeply misogynistic. Women are frequently undermined, excluded from opportunities or actively targeted by those in positions of authority. Disturbingly, some individuals in leadership have openly admitted to blocking my progression because I was a woman." – E11</i> Entrenched Sexism	Strengthen DEI Strategy & Representation to boost DEI Values ‘ Take an intersectional approach to DEI initiatives in the Faculty, ensuring all groups are supported and feel seen in the Faculty. Ensure the Faculty Culture & Community committee is active and properly resourced. Embed vision and actions around a desired respectful culture into the implementation of the new Faculty strategy, to ensure a systemic focus and accountability on positive behaviours. Review teaching materials and student communications to ensure they showcase diversity. Invite women as guest lecturers and include papers by women on reading lists. Coaching & Culture Change for STEM Contexts Develop coaching materials that talk to the STEM mindset. <i>"I think one of the things we should do is try to coach people in a way that suits their STEM mindset. [Some of the training language used] does not get through to STEM people very well. The way that STEM people think about the world is very, very different." – E08</i> <i>"It's really hard to have a transformational learning experience via an online module ... [a</i>

	Women face discrimination in a variety of ways – some subtle, some overt, but all entrenched in a culture of sexism. (SSFG) <i>"Men are getting bolder in what they will say publicly in meetings ... things like the [SAGE] bronze award get weaponised because it 'can't be that bad, we won this award'. Meanwhile, incidents just keep happening." – E15</i> <i>"I presented findings from [a gender parity] report and requested feedback. Three (out of about 40 academics) replied saying they didn't think we should be pursuing gender parity as a strategic priority. Two of their responses were to the effect that if women don't want to do engineering we shouldn't make them." – E18</i> Students tend to be men and often exhibit sexist attitudes towards women staff. (SSFG) <i>"I think the other thing to keep in mind about Engineering is that it is, at a student level, very, very male dominated ... You know, there's horrifying research coming out of high schools and particularly private schools in this country about the way that young men are treating women. I don't think it's good enough to say, oh, we didn't expect it. Like, they walk in the door here, where it is also a masculine culture. What do we expect? We don't do anything to address culture, we just let it fester." – E10</i>	<i>retreat] where you come back a slightly different person than when you left is very resource-intensive, but it's totally worth it. So if we were talking about ways to shift the culture in engineering, that might be something to think about." – E03</i> Inclusive Practices & Accountability Use structured meeting practices, such as rotating meeting leadership, or using an external facilitator, to ensure all voices are included and heard. Ensure trusted and accountable pathways to manage student misconduct towards Faculty staff and other students.
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4.3.3 Physical spaces do not foster inclusivity

Much of FoE operates in older buildings not designed for a diverse workforce or modern technology.

2025 Sydney Listens comments and SAGE Focus Groups acknowledged recent improvements, but staff felt physical spaces still fall short, especially the lack of toilets for women and TGD staff/students (Table 137).

Staff also saw opportunities to foster inclusion through imagery in teaching/research spaces and naming of buildings and lecture theatres.

TABLE 137 THEMES ARISING FROM 2025 SYDNEY LISTENS AND SAGE SILVER FOCUS GROUPS RELATING TO PHYSICAL SPACES

Note: 2025SL = Arising from thematic analysis of free text comments from FoE staff in the 2025 Sydney Listens All Staff Engagement Survey; SSFG = Arising from thematic analysis of SAGE Silver Focus Groups. Quotes are from SAGE Silver Focus Groups only and are used with permission.

Working Well	Working Less Well	Recommendations
Amenities Improvements Appreciation that some toilets have been upgraded. (SSFG) Social & Collaborative Spaces Meeting spaces like the Engineering lawn were welcomed and were felt to encourage better social connections among the faculty population. (SSFG) <i>"We have a culture issue, which extends to people not really knowing how to treat each other. I think part of that is because we don't have many spaces for people to interact with one another outside of a specific activity. The Engineering lawns have been a great success for that, and I'd love to see more areas in buildings that invite people to spend time in them."</i> – E04 There was acknowledgement that the University is investing in future-ready infrastructure, including upgrading teaching and research facilities to create collaborative environments that better support both students and researchers. (2025SL)	Inadequate Amenities & Facilities There is a serious lack of access to basic amenities, especially women's and gender-neutral toilets, and accessible toilets, which undermines efforts to attract and retain women and TGD staff and students. (SSFG) <i>"If we want to have more females, or more inclusivity, in Engineering, I think it's high time we think about how we can prioritise funding for basic facilities like toilets, like we do for labs."</i> – E14 <i>"Asking any woman in Engineering to leave a building to go to a bathroom is just unacceptable. Asking anyone in general is unacceptable; that should have been solved 30 years ago."</i> – E04 <i>"The toilets in my building are dire. We've just had a big cosmetic improvement but it didn't change the inequity e.g. my building has one women's toilet on the 2nd floor and 2 on the 4th floor ... There are no gender-neutral toilets. The design of the stalls is very 1960s and are not inclusive of many bodies (anyone bigger than me really, anyone using a wheelchair or crutches, anyone carrying a backpack.)"</i> – E22 Space & Infrastructure Limitations Lab space is not shared equitably. (SSFG) <i>"More established academics have longstanding claims on lab space, even if that space is not being actively used. In the meantime, EMCRs struggle to get lab space. Because of the historical bias towards men, the distribution of lab space is a gendered issue."</i> – E22	Inclusive Facilities Convert more toilets to be gender inclusive and accessible. Social & Collaborative Spaces Provide more meeting spaces for staff and students to come together socially. <i>"Our PhD students sit in a huge open plan office with the kitchen inside the office. This is noisy and causes many students to work from home when they can ... If we want the benefits of the students interacting and sharing their social identities, we need to create physical spaces where they can do that while still being productive."</i> – E22 Visibility & Recognition of Women in Engineering Feature images and achievements of pioneering and current women in engineering in teaching and research spaces. Explore opportunities to name new buildings, lecture rooms and open spaces to honour women alumni. <i>"A lot of our building names are male, because in past years, you know, we had a lot of male engineers. If there are opportunities where we can rename a building for, maybe, the first female civil engineer who graduated, or something like that, that would make female students feel more welcome. I think these are some small changes that can really make the place inclusive."</i> – E14 Equitable Access to Lab Spaces Review access and protocols to ensure equitable use of lab spaces and equipment. Shift culture from "owned space" to "collaborative space".

4.3.4 Work practices that are inconsistent, exhausting, and inflexible

A major theme from the 2024 Psychosocial Risk Review was role overload, resourcing gaps, and role conflict, driven by inconsistent communication and expectations.

Qualitative data echoed this. Staff noted good progress on support for parents/carers and flexible work but flagged sub-cultures with inconsistent, exhausting, and inflexible remote work expectations (Table 138).

TABLE 138 THEMES ARISING FROM 2025 SYDNEY LISTENS AND SAGE SILVER FOCUS GROUPS RELATING TO WORK PRACTICES

Note: 2025SL = Arising from thematic analysis of free text comments from FoE staff in the 2025 Sydney Listens All Staff Engagement Survey; SSFG = Arising from thematic analysis of SAGE Silver Focus Groups. Quotes are from SAGE Silver Focus Groups only and are used with permission.

Working Well	Working Less Well	Recommendations
Positive Experiences with Flexibility & Support Open-mindedness to flexible working in some areas. (SSFG) <i>"It does feel like a relatively accepting place. I don't think ever have I been in a situation where I felt that I was being negligent of my work for picking up my son. That's not really been the vibe. It does feel like we've made some good adjustments for those types of things."</i> – E01	Flexible Work & Inconsistent Application Some staff felt that flexibility was inconsistently applied, and while some managers are supportive, others are not, leading to uneven experiences across teams. (SSFG) <i>"I'm always the one, when we advertise, to ensure we say part-time or full-time, to increase the talent pool. So I do always make that point, to be more inclusive in that regard. But some people are just a little bit old-fashioned still, and it has to be full-time, and all five days on campus."</i> – E05 Caregiving & Accessibility Challenges Staff – especially those working flexibly or part-time – often feel expected to attend to work outside their official hours. (SSFG) <i>"I was walking out of the building at 5.15pm and I saw a senior male professor who holds a leadership role in my school walking in. He said 'Going home?' And I said 'Yep, I'm done' and he said 'It's too early!' I think he would be genuinely confused as to why his banter is upsetting or the implications for a workplace that is inclusive of people with carer responsibilities."</i> – E19 Wellbeing & Workload Concerns Engineering staff reported excessive and unfairly distributed workloads, compounded by administrative burdens, lack of support, and job insecurity, leading to widespread stress, burnout, and diminished wellbeing. Despite some leadership efforts, systemic issues and poor resource allocation continue to undermine staff morale and productivity. (2025SL) There was a general sense that wellbeing initiatives (e.g., Wellbeing Week) were tokenistic and did not address the underlying workload issues that affected work-life balance. (2025SL)	Clarify Flexible Work Practices in FoE Set clearer guidelines around flexible working practices, and consider core work hours, and reasonable response times for emails, including student inquiries. Communicate team-level role and responsibilities, ensuring they are consistent with Faculty and University expectations, reinforcing boundaries and managing stakeholder expectations. Manage Workload & Project Timing Map peak periods of demand across the Faculty and use this to inform the implementation of new projects, minimising impact where possible, to staff during periods of known high demand. Embed Wellbeing in Work Culture Tailor and communicate ways of working wellbeing principles, enabling regular, dedicated time for deep work, respite and recovery. Onboarding & Peer Support Develop School level onboarding guide consistent with Faculty and University expectations, which equips new starters and leaders on systems, processes and services available that support wellbeing for staff and students. Establish a cross-School staff "buddy" system between similar role types, to create opportunities for peer support, mentoring and networking.

4.3.5 A divide between professional and academic staff

Academic men and women in FoE responded more favourably than University averages and their own 2024 results, with women showing stronger positivity across many factors (Table 139). In contrast, professional men and women scored below their all-staff counterparts (Table 140), although still more positively than FoE academic staff (Table 141), a trend seen across the University.

Distinct patterns emerged in workplace experience (detailed data available upon request). Professional staff raised concerns about career stagnation, limited autonomy, and weak development opportunities, alongside a disconnect with management. Professional women also felt less safe voicing dissent and were less likely than professional men to believe in equal opportunity. Despite this, they showed stronger intent to stay than professional men and academic staff, suggesting a complex balance between commitment and perceived barriers.

Academic women were broadly positive about their work environment, but both genders flagged career progression and development as ongoing challenges. Notably, academic staff in FoE reported lower intention to stay than the broader University academic cohort, indicating retention risks. Academic women also felt disconnected from managers, echoing concerns raised by professional women.

Qualitative data highlighted a complex relationship between gender and role in FoE, where women are mostly in professional roles and men in academic ones (Table 142). Tension between academics and professional staff may stem from a culture of overwork, where academics feel burdened by administrative tasks that conflict with their sense of purpose and professional identity. While they may expect these tasks to be handled by others, professional staff have their own role responsibilities, creating a tricky power dynamic that can fuel frustration and unprofessional behaviour.

TABLE 139 SYDNEY LISTENS STAFF SURVEY 2025 v 2024: PERCENTAGE FAVOURABLE RESPONSES ACROSS CATEGORIES FOR ACADEMIC WOMEN AND MEN IN FOE COMPARED TO ALL UNIVERSITY ACADEMIC AVERAGE

Light orange shading = FoE group 1-4pp lower than all University group; Dark orange shading = FoE group 5pp or more lower than all University group; No shading = No difference between FoE group and all University group; Light green shading = FoE group 1-4pp higher than all University group; Dark green shading = FoE group 5pp or more higher than all University group; Green font = women higher than men; Red font = women lower than men; Black font = no difference between women and men.

	2024 All University Academic Staff (n=1871; PR=47%)	2024 All University Academic Men (n=909; PR=45%)	2024 All University Academic Women (n=953; PR=50%)	2024 Δ University Academic Women v Academic Men	2024 All FoE Academic Staff (n=164; PR=43%)	2024 All FoE Academic Men (n=132; PR=44%)	2024 All FoE Academic Women (n=31; PR=39%)	2024 Δ FoE Academic Women v Academic Men	2025 All University Academic Staff (n=2329; PR=53%)	2025 All University Academic Men (n=1151; PR=53%)	2025 All University Academic Women (n=1165; PR=54%)	2025 Δ University Academic Women v Academic Men	2025 All FoE Academic Staff (n=275; PR=71%)	2025 All FoE Academic Men (n=221; PR=73%)	2025 All FoE Academic Women (n=53; PR=63%)	2025 Δ FoE Academic Women v Academic Men
Engagement	60%	59%	62%	3	59%	57%	66%	9	65%	63%	66%	3	64%	62%	73%	11
Company Confidence	47%	45%	48%	3	45%	44%	51%	7	50%	48%	51%	3	51%	50%	56%	6
Alignment & Involvement	66%	65%	67%	2	66%	66%	66%	0	68%	67%	70%	3	70%	69%	73%	4
Collaboration & Communication	46%	46%	47%	1	49%	47%	57%	10	52%	52%	52%	0	57%	56%	60%	4
Enablement	47%	48%	46%	-2	46%	45%	50%	5	51%	52%	51%	-1	54%	54%	57%	3
Feedback & Recognition	50%	48%	52%	4	49%	47%	59%	12	52%	51%	53%	2	54%	53%	58%	5
Innovation	44%	41%	46%	5	52%	48%	67%	19	48%	45%	50%	5	57%	56%	63%	7
Leadership	35%	33%	38%	5	35%	31%	54%	23	38%	36%	40%	4	42%	40%	54%	14
Learning & Development	61%	59%	64%	5	59%	57%	65%	8	64%	62%	66%	4	63%	63%	63%	0
Management	68%	67%	70%	3	66%	65%	68%	3	71%	70%	72%	2	70%	71%	67%	-4
Service & Quality Focus	35%	32%	37%	5	36%	35%	38%	3	41%	39%	43%	4	48%	48%	52%	4
Social Connection	46%	46%	46%	0	49%	47%	60%	13	50%	49%	51%	2	55%	55%	55%	0
Teamwork & Ownership	55%	52%	57%	5	54%	52%	62%	10	59%	57%	61%	4	59%	59%	58%	-1
Work & Life Blend	52%	53%	51%	-2	54%	53%	54%	1	56%	56%	57%	1	61%	62%	59%	-3
Action	36%	33%	39%	6	34%	32%	45%	13	41%	38%	44%	6	37%	35%	46%	11
Diversity & Inclusion	52%	52%	52%	0	58%	58%	57%	-1	55%	54%	56%	2	58%	58%	58%	0
Safety	76%	77%	76%	-1	78%	80%	74%	-6	77%	77%	77%	0	83%	84%	81%	-3

TABLE 140 SYDNEY LISTENS STAFF SURVEY 2025 v 2024: PERCENTAGE FAVOURABLE RESPONSES ACROSS CATEGORIES FOR PROFESSIONAL WOMEN AND MEN IN FoE COMPARED TO ALL UNIVERSITY PROFESSIONAL AVERAGE

Light orange shading = FoE group 1-4pp lower than all University group; Dark orange shading = FoE group 5pp or more lower than all University group; No shading = No difference between FoE group and all University group; Light green shading = FoE group 1-4pp higher than all University group; Dark green shading = FoE group 5pp or more higher than all University group; Green font = women higher than men; Red font = women lower than men; Black font = no difference between women and men.

	2024 All University Professional Staff (n=4275; PR=70%)	2024 All University Professional Men (n=1497; PR=72%)	2024 All University Professional Women (n=2743; PR=69%)	2024 Δ University Professional Women v Professional Men	2024 All FoE Professional Staff (n=105; PR=57%)	2024 All FoE Professional Men (n=37; PR=43%)	2024 All FoE Professional Women (n=68; PR=71%)	2024 Δ FoE Professional Women v Professional Men	2025 All University Professional Staff (n=4751; PR=74%)	2025 All University Professional Men (n=1662; PR=76%)	2025 All University Professional Women (n=3047; PR=73%)	2025 Δ University Professional Women v Professional Men	2025 All FoE Professional Staff (n=136; PR=77%)	2025 All FoE Professional Men (n=50; PR=71%)	2025 All FoE Professional Women (n=85; PR=81%)	2025 Δ FoE Professional Women v Professional Men
Engagement	72%	71%	72%	1	70%	66%	72%	6	71%	70%	72%	2	75%	72%	76%	4
Company Confidence	50%	50%	50%	0	47%	38%	51%	13	51%	50%	51%	1	53%	46%	57%	11
Alignment & Involvement	74%	76%	74%	-2	69%	65%	71%	6	75%	75%	75%	0	73%	76%	71%	-5
Collaboration & Communication	59%	60%	58%	-2	54%	55%	54%	-1	60%	61%	59%	-2	61%	61%	61%	0
Enablement	69%	70%	68%	-2	64%	65%	64%	-1	70%	71%	70%	-1	67%	67%	68%	1
Feedback & Recognition	57%	60%	56%	-4	45%	41%	47%	6	58%	59%	57%	-2	56%	57%	56%	-1
Innovation	54%	53%	55%	2	50%	51%	50%	-1	54%	53%	55%	2	53%	52%	52%	0
Leadership	50%	50%	50%	0	43%	41%	44%	3	47%	46%	48%	2	45%	40%	49%	9
Learning & Development	65%	65%	66%	1	57%	46%	63%	17	65%	63%	65%	2	63%	60%	64%	4
Management	77%	81%	75%	-6	64%	64%	64%	0	78%	80%	76%	-4	66%	66%	66%	0
Service & Quality Focus	55%	55%	55%	0	51%	49%	53%	4	55%	55%	55%	0	59%	60%	58%	-2
Social Connection	61%	61%	61%	0	59%	54%	62%	8	61%	61%	61%	0	57%	46%	64%	18
Teamwork & Ownership	70%	70%	69%	-1	67%	67%	67%	0	70%	70%	70%	0	71%	69%	72%	3
Work & Life Blend	69%	71%	68%	-3	61%	62%	61%	-1	71%	72%	70%	-2	68%	67%	69%	2
Action	51%	48%	53%	5	32%	24%	37%	13	56%	53%	57%	4	47%	37%	53%	16
Diversity & Inclusion	64%	67%	62%	-5	66%	74%	62%	-12	63%	65%	63%	-2	62%	66%	60%	-6
Safety	84%	86%	84%	-2	81%	85%	79%	-6	85%	86%	84%	-2	83%	85%	82%	-3

TABLE 141 SYDNEY LISTENS STAFF SURVEY 2025: PERCENTAGE FAVOURABLE RESPONSES ACROSS CATEGORIES FOR PROFESSIONAL WOMEN AND MEN IN ALL UNIVERSITY AND FoE COMPARED TO ACADEMIC WOMEN AND MEN

Light orange shading = academic staff 1-4pp lower than professional staff; Dark orange shading = academic staff 5pp or more lower than professional staff; No shading = No difference between academic staff and professional staff; Light green shading = academic staff 1-4pp higher than professional staff; Dark green shading = academic staff 5pp or more higher than all professional staff

	2025 All University Professional Staff (n=4751; PR=74%)	2025 All University Professional Men (n=1662; PR=76%)	2025 All University Professional Women (n=3047; PR=73%)	2025 All University Academic Staff (n=2329; PR=53%)	2025 All University Academic Men (n=1151; PR=53%)	2025 All University Academic Women (n=1165; PR=54%)	2025 All FoE Professional Staff (n=136; PR=77%)	2025 All FoE Professional Men (n=50; PR=71%)	2025 All FoE Professional Women (n=85; PR=81%)	2025 All FoE Academic Staff (n=275; PR=71%)	2025 All FoE Academic Men (n=221; PR=73%)	2025 All FoE Academic Women (n=53; PR=63%)
Engagement	71%	70%	72%	65%	63%	66%	75%	72%	76%	64%	62%	73%
Company Confidence	51%	50%	51%	50%	48%	51%	53%	46%	57%	51%	50%	56%
Alignment & Involvement	75%	75%	75%	68%	67%	70%	73%	76%	71%	70%	69%	73%
Collaboration & Communication	60%	61%	59%	52%	52%	52%	61%	61%	61%	57%	56%	60%
Enablement	70%	71%	70%	51%	52%	51%	67%	67%	68%	54%	54%	57%
Feedback & Recognition	58%	59%	57%	52%	51%	53%	56%	57%	56%	54%	53%	58%
Innovation	54%	53%	55%	48%	45%	50%	53%	52%	52%	57%	56%	63%
Leadership	47%	46%	48%	38%	36%	40%	45%	40%	49%	42%	40%	54%
Learning & Development	65%	63%	65%	64%	62%	66%	63%	60%	64%	63%	63%	63%
Management	78%	80%	76%	71%	70%	72%	66%	66%	66%	70%	71%	67%
Service & Quality Focus	55%	55%	55%	41%	39%	43%	59%	60%	58%	48%	48%	52%
Social Connection	61%	61%	61%	50%	49%	51%	57%	46%	64%	55%	55%	55%
Teamwork & Ownership	70%	70%	70%	59%	57%	61%	71%	69%	72%	59%	59%	58%
Work & Life Blend	71%	72%	70%	56%	56%	57%	68%	67%	69%	61%	62%	59%
Action	56%	53%	57%	41%	38%	44%	47%	37%	53%	37%	35%	46%
Diversity & Inclusion	63%	65%	63%	55%	54%	56%	62%	66%	60%	58%	58%	58%
Safety	85%	86%	84%	77%	77%	77%	83%	85%	82%	83%	84%	81%

TABLE 142 THEMES ARISING FROM 2025 SYDNEY LISTENS AND SAGE SILVER FOCUS GROUPS RELATING TO DIVIDE BETWEEN PROFESSIONAL AND ACADEMIC STAFF

Note: 2025SL = Arising from thematic analysis of free text comments from FoE staff in the 2025 Sydney Listens All Staff Engagement Survey; SSFG = Arising from thematic analysis of our SAGE Silver Focus Groups. Quotes are from SAGE Silver Focus Groups only and are used with permission.

Working Less Well	Recommendations
Strain on Professional–Academic Collaboration & Resourcing Academic staff feel overwhelmed by administrative tasks, suggesting a lack of support or coordination with professional staff. However, professional staff feel overburdened, potentially straining relationships with academic colleagues who depend on them. (2025SL) Professional staff feel undervalued despite being essential to academic operations. (2025SL) Fragmented communication between academic and professional teams, leading to inefficiencies and frustration. (2025SL) The academic v professional staff divide carries gendered overtones. (SSFG). <i>“Male staff often seem very put out when I put counter suggestions forward. I’m a professional staff member and female and I have spoken to my colleagues in similar positions, and they have noted the same.” — E13</i>	Strengthen Academic–Professional Collaboration Improve collaboration and shared responsibility, emphasising the need for academic and professional staff to work as partners, sharing both successes and challenges to foster mutual outcomes and accountability. Establish systems outlining ‘ways of working’ so as partnering is mutually beneficial, inefficiencies are addressed and staff are supportive of each other while respecting each other’s work commitments. Identify opportunities to bolster intra-Faculty collaboration, supporting collegiality and trust, the efficient distribution of resources, a reduction in siloed project work, and the celebration of collective success. Role Clarity & Resource Equity Clarify roles and expectations for professional staff and communicate to academic staff. Consider adding professional staff in under-resourced schools and redistributing workload to better match capacity. Infrastructure & Knowledge Sharing Establish a central digital repository to access shared documents, best practice policies and procedures, systems, and specifying intra-Faculty functions. Recognition & Communication Explore opportunities to provide greater recognition of professional staff efforts, particularly those managing frontline responsibilities. Design communication practices to include rationale and feedback during times of change to support staff in understanding decisions and outcomes.

4.3.6 Reporting pathways that are not trusted or perceived to be safe to drive accountability and culture shift

The workplace and cultural issues discussed so far are intensified by perceptions that reporting complaints at the University is unsafe and ineffective.

2025 Sydney Listens survey data showed gendered differences in experiences with misconduct that were particularly apparent within FoE. Women in FoE reported more bullying and sexual harassment compared to the University average for women whereas the opposite was found for men (Table 143). Although about a third of both genders reported misconduct, women tended to report to managers, while men in FoE preferred to report to HR (in contrast to men and women overall in the University).

Women in FoE were more likely than FoE men and women overall to cite low confidence/trust in reporting pathways and accountability. Local workplace culture also strongly influenced their decisions, supporting previous discussion to the impact of distinct sub-cultures within FoE. Men were more likely not to report because they were afraid of retaliation.

Qualitative data highlighted mistrust in opaque complaint processes, fear of retaliation, and a belief that misconduct often goes unaddressed (Table 144).

TABLE 143 2025 SYDNEY LISTENS FOE STAFF (A & B) EXPERIENCES OF BULLYING, HARASSMENT, RACISM, AND SEXUAL HARASSMENT; (C) REPORTING & REPORTING PATHWAY; (D) REASONS FOR NOT REPORTING

Note: HC = Headcount

A	All University			Faculty of Engineering		
	Men	Women	Δ All University Women v. Men	Men	Women	Δ FoE Women v. Men
In the Last 12 months have you:						
No Incidents	65% (HC: 1688)	62% (HC: 2467)	-3%	65% (HC: 162)	53% (HC: 71)	-12%
Witnessed bullying	12% (HC: 311)	13% (HC: 533)	1%	8% (HC: 20)	20% (HC: 27)	12%
Been aware of any misconduct	11% (HC: 298)	11% (HC: 433)	0%	13% (HC: 32)	11% (HC: 15)	-2%
Experienced bullying	8% (HC: 216)	10% (HC: 393)	2%	6% (HC: 15)	16% (HC: 21)	10%
Experienced discrimination	5% (HC: 130)	6% (HC: 253)	1%	3% (HC: ≤10)	9% (HC: 12)	6%
Witnessed discrimination	5% (HC: 137)	6% (HC: 255)	1%	5% (HC: 13)	9% (HC: 12)	3%
Witnessed racism	4% (HC: 103)	4% (HC: 175)	0%	2% (HC: ≤10)	6% (HC: ≤10)	4%
Experienced racism	2% (HC: 57)	2% (HC: 93)	0%	1% (HC: ≤10)	1% (HC: ≤10)	0%
Witnessed sexual harassment	1% (HC: 18)	1% (HC: 36)	0%	2% (HC: ≤10)	3% (HC: ≤10)	1%
Experienced threats or physical harm	1% (HC: 30)	1% (HC: 29)	0%	1% (HC: ≤10)	1% (HC: ≤10)	0%
Witnessed threats or physical harm	1% (HC: 24)	1% (HC: 36)	0%	1% (HC: ≤10)	1% (HC: ≤10)	0%
Experienced sexual harassment	0.2% (HC: ≤10)	1% (HC: 25)	1%	0%	2% (HC: ≤10)	2%
Prefer not to say	13% (HC: 334)	14% (HC: 557)	1%	15% (HC: 37)	17% (HC: 23)	2%

B	All University			Faculty of Engineering		
	Men	Women	Δ All University Women v. Men	Men	Women	Δ FoE Women v. Men
Did you report this?						
Yes	34% (HC: 208)	36% (HC: 367)	2%	36% (HC: 19)	37% (HC: 15)	1%
No	66% (HC: 399)	64% (HC: 640)	-2%	64% (HC: 34)	63% (HC: 26)	-1%

C

	All University			Faculty of Engineering		
	Men	Women	Δ All University Women v. Men	Men	Women	Δ FoE Women v. Men
Who did you report this to?						
Manager	67% (HC: 136)	76% (HC: 276)	9%	44% (HC: ≤10)	73% (HC: 11)	29%
HR	35% (HC: 71)	31% (HC: 111)	-4%	56% (HC: ≤10)	33% (HC: ≤10)	-23%
Riskware	15% (HC: 30)	13% (HC: 47)	-2%	11% (HC: ≤10)	0%	-11%
Externally	7% (HC: 14)	4% (HC: 16)	-3%	11% (HC: ≤10)	7% (HC: ≤10)	-4%
Other	21% (HC: 43)	18% (HC: 65)	-3%	17% (HC: ≤10)	47% (HC: ≤10)	30%

D

	All University			Faculty of Engineering		
	Men	Women	Δ All University Women v. Men	Men	Women	Δ FoE Women v. Men
Why did you not report this?						
Fear of negative career implications	47% (HC: 181)	45% (HC: 283)	-2%	44% (HC: 15)	44% (HC: 11)	0%
Other	14% (HC: 54)	22% (HC: 137)	8%	15% (HC: ≤10)	24% (HC: ≤10)	9%
Unfamiliar with the report process	7% (HC: 29)	9% (HC: 60)	2%	6% (HC: ≤10)	4% (HC: ≤10)	-2%
Didn't think action would be taken	46% (HC: 180)	42% (HC: 264)	-4%	44% (HC: 15)	56% (HC: 14)	12%
Lack of trust in managers and/or HR	47% (HC: 183)	44% (HC: 280)	-3%	35% (HC: 12)	56% (HC: 14)	21%
Not wanting to recall the matter	6% (HC: 25)	8% (HC: 49)	2%	0%	4% (HC: ≤10)	4%
Unsure of what is considered unlawful conduct	11% (HC: 41)	9% (HC: 56)	-2%	9% (HC: ≤10)	4% (HC: ≤10)	-5%
Resolved without complaint required	8% (HC: 31)	9% (HC: 60)	1%	9% (HC: ≤10)	8% (HC: ≤10)	-1%
Afraid of retaliation	47% (HC: 184)	37% (HC: 232)	-10%	47% (HC: 16)	36% (HC: ≤10)	-11%
Culture of working area	25% (HC: 98)	29% (HC: 181)	4%	21% (HC: ≤10)	40% (HC: ≤10)	19%

TABLE 144 THEMES ARISING FROM 2025 SYDNEY LISTENS AND SAGE SILVER FOCUS GROUPS RELATING TO STAFF COMPLAINTS

Note: 2025SL = Arising from thematic analysis of free text comments from FoE staff in the 2025 Sydney Listens All Staff Engagement Survey; SSFG = Arising from thematic analysis of SAGE Silver Focus Groups. Quotes are from SAGE Silver Focus Groups only and are used with permission.

Working Less Well	Recommendations
Lack of Confidence in Complaint Process HR was described as obstructive, making it difficult for staff to raise concerns or resolve issues, especially when complaints involved direct managers. (2025SL) Staff reported that raising issues through formal channels often went nowhere, despite participating in surveys, psychosocial risk assessments, and team meetings. (2025SL, SSFG) <i>"I have had those instances where I was urging, urging people to make an official complaint, or go to someone, go to HR. And they were just like, no point. So there is a, I don't want to call it distrust but ..."</i> – E05 Fear, Retaliation & Lack of Accountability Fear of retaliation was a recurring theme; staff worried that speaking up may negatively affect their colleagues or themselves, especially in small teams. (SSFG) <i>"There's no real way for [concerns] to be reported without significant risk of retaliation and career consequences. Some senior male staff make this well known to the junior women so they actively don't speak out."</i> – E15 No accountability for those doing the wrong thing. (SSFG) <i>"There's no repercussions for the things that get said or done to us or students, anyone. They just get away with that, and they know they can get away with it. So they continue to do it."</i> – E09 Cultural Avoidance & Distrust A cultural "unwillingness" to discuss or take action on systemic problems. (SSFG) <i>"There is definitely a culture of avoidance and silence rather than discussing work issues head on as they happen. I suspect this is gendered, that is a more male way of approaching a problem, to avoid any emotional tension which may result after an awkward conversation."</i> – E13 <i>"I think there's a perception that you can't ever admit that anything's really wrong, like you can't report on the issues, or the number of complaints and grievances. You deal with them quickly and quietly, and pat yourself on the back."</i> – E03	Strengthen Complaint Pathways & Workplace Conduct Raise awareness within FoE of the refreshed Staff Complaints Procedure, available support services, and what constitutes misconduct. Define and communicate a clear escalation pathway to navigate disrespect, poor conduct and bullying; define supervisor/manager expectations; enhance capability to resolve conflict. Adopt the Respect@Work Action Plan, to support elimination of inappropriate workplace behaviours. <i>"A meaningful change would involve independent oversight of workplace culture, real accountability for harmful behaviours and ... clear, enforced consequences for misconduct."</i> — E11

4.4 Action Plan

Note: Some of these actions overlap with those outlined in other sections but are reiterated here in response to issues raised in this section. We have been deliberately non-prescriptive with the framing of our outputs, outcomes, and impacts in developing these actions. By framing actions in a non-prescriptive way, it gives us flexibility to develop a three-year implementation plan with responsible leads that aligns and sequences with current and planned work at the point of implementation. These leads are actively structuring delivery of the actions into planned work where appropriate, or factoring into workflow where actions are stand alone.

KEY BARRIER 4: DEI IN THE FACULTY OF ENGINEERING						
ID	Rationale/Evidence	Actions & Outputs	Timeframe (start & end)	Person / Group responsible for implementing action	Senior Leader accountable for action delivery	Example Outputs, Outcomes, and Impacts
1. Advancing gender equity and inclusive representation in Engineering through targeted recruitment, support, and visibility As awareness of the value of diversity grows, Engineering has a unique opportunity to strengthen inclusive recruitment and leadership. By enhancing transparency in selection, tailoring development pathways, and addressing the distinct experiences of under-represented groups such as women and gender diverse individuals, the Faculty of Engineering can foster an environment where all contributions from a diverse workforce are valued. Visible role models, inclusive curricula, and intersectional support structures are key to building a culture of belonging. With sustained, data-informed, and embedded efforts, diversity, equity, and inclusion can drive meaningful and lasting change.						
FoE 1.1	Focus on attracting diverse talent and ensuring equitable hiring practices and recruitment panel experiences.	FoE 1.1.1 Subject to resourcing, continue to work with Recruitment to explore approaches and resources to support and uplift the role of hiring managers in providing an inclusive recruitment experience for diverse candidates by: (1) Creating and disseminating guidelines for inclusive recruitment, including expectations of completion of Hiring for Excellence within the last two	2026-2028	Recruitment Team, HR D&I Team, SAGE Team	Director, Recruitment	<i>Subject to final collaborative implementation and resourcing, example outputs and outcomes could include:</i> Output Measures Mechanism to monitor uptake and impact of guidelines and resources. Inclusive Recruitment Guidelines created and disseminated. Resources developed to support pre-appointment engagement. Outcome Measures Managers and recruitment panels using the resources. Managers using the Keeping in Touch approach where relevant. Completion rate of "Hiring for Excellence" training. Impact Measures <i>Feedback via focus groups, surveys, feedback forms indicating:</i> Increased manager confidence and capability in delivering feedback and fostering connection with new hires.

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		years, checklists for Hiring Managers on how DEI was considered through the process, tips for chairing diverse and inclusive recruitment panels where all participants have voice across levels of seniority and discipline-specific expertise, and guidance on how to convey constructive feedback to unsuccessful candidates; (2) Developing resources to support a Keeping in Touch approach by managers for incoming staff members between acceptance of offer and appointment to try to facilitate feelings of connection. <i>(Note: This action is replicated as FoE 1.1.1 and CP&P 9.1.2, and updates and replaces Recruitment Cygnet Actions 7 and 12. It aligns with/expands the Good Practice Guide, Disability Confident Recruiter, and planned work on inclusive TGD recruitment).</i>				• Positive feedback from candidates and managers on the inclusivity and professionalism of the recruitment process. • Supporting the University's <i>Sydney in 2032</i> strategic goals under the <i>Thriving Through Diversity</i> pillar. • Embedding the University values of <i>Excellence, Trust & Accountability</i>.

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		FoE 1.1.2 Monitor the 2025 women only recruitment campaign applications, conversion of offers to hired, retention, progression and experience over time through a gender-intersectional lens. Leverage successful communication approaches and mechanisms into future recruitment to encourage diverse applicants, irrespective of whether or not the recruitment is gender-focused or general.	2025-2028	FoE Culture & Community Team, SAGE Team	AD Culture & Community	<i>Subject to final collaborative implementation and resourcing, example outputs and outcomes could include:</i> Output Measures Number of applications received, offers made, and hires completed in the women-only campaign. Disaggregated data reports by gender and intersecting identities where data allow (e.g. race, disability, LGBTQ+ status). Retention and progression tracking for hires from the campaign. Surveys or feedback mechanisms capturing candidate and employee experience. Documentation of successful communication strategies used during the campaign. Outcome Measures Sustained increase in representation of women across roles and levels in FoE. Improved recruitment messaging and outreach strategies based on campaign learnings. Increased understanding of barriers and enablers for diverse women candidates. Impact Measures <i>Feedback via focus groups, surveys, feedback forms indicating:</i> • Positive candidate and hiring manager experiences. • Contribution to sector-wide leadership in equitable recruitment and inclusive workplace culture. • Supporting the University's <i>Sydney in 2032</i> strategic goals under the <i>Thriving Through Diversity</i> pillar. • Embedding the University values of <i>Excellence, Trust & Accountability</i>.
FoE 1.2	Ensure new hires are welcomed and supported	FoE 1.2.1 Develop overarching Faculty as well as School-level induction packs	2026-2028	FoE Culture & Community Team, FoE Executive	Deputy Dean, Engineering, AD	<i>Subject to final collaborative implementation and resourcing, example outputs and outcomes could include:</i>

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	throughout their career journey.	for new starters, including commitment to DEI principles, expectations around ways of working, staff diversity networks, and systems and services to support wellbeing.		Services, SAGE Team	Culture & Community	Output Measures Induction packs developed and distributed at Faculty and School levels to all new starters and their managers. Inclusion of DEI principles, staff diversity networks, and wellbeing resources in all induction materials. Feedback collected on usefulness and clarity of induction materials. Outcome Measures Increased awareness among new FoE staff and their managers of DEI commitments, inclusive work practices, and available support services. Engagement of FoE staff with staff diversity networks and wellbeing programs. Impact Measures <i>Feedback via focus groups, surveys, feedback forms indicating:</i> • Improved onboarding experience. • Consistent understanding of expectations around respectful and inclusive ways of working. • Enhanced reputation of the faculty as a welcoming and inclusive workplace. • Supporting the University's <i>Sydney in 2032</i> strategic goals under the <i>Thriving Through Diversity</i> pillar. • Embedding the University values of <i>Excellence, Trust & Accountability</i>.
		FoE 1.2.2 Explore the feasibility of implementing a buddy system for new academic and professional hires.	2026-28	FoE Culture & Community Team, SAGE Team	AD Culture & Community	<i>Subject to final collaborative implementation and resourcing, example outputs and outcomes could include:</i> Output Measures Completion of pilot proposal and process Draft framework or model for buddy system developed Number of pilot buddy pairings trialled (if applicable) Outcome Measures Uptake of buddy system across Faculties and departments

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						Improved time-to-productivity for new hires Impact Measures <i>Feedback via focus groups, surveys, feedback forms indicating:</i> • Positive experience for buddies and new hires. • Strengthened workplace culture of collegiality and support. • Enhanced cross-functional relationships and informal knowledge sharing. • Supporting the University's <i>Sydney in 2032</i> strategic goals under the <i>Thriving Through Diversity</i> pillar. • Embedding the University values of <i>Excellence, Trust & Accountability</i>.
		FoE 1.2.3 Form a group of senior (Level D and E) staff from across all FoE Schools to provide ongoing connection and tailored support for new women and TGD hires, including regular rotating confidential check-ins.	2026-2028	FoE Culture & Community Team, SAGE Team	AD Culture & Community	<i>Subject to final collaborative implementation and resourcing, example outputs and outcomes could include:</i> Output Measures Check-in group formed. Members made aware of support resources, including TGD inclusion training, Safer Communities, Respect@Work Bystander Training, and Wellbeing to empower them to support new women and TGD hires. Terms of Reference developed and agreed, including pathways for support and escalation if required. Outcome Measures Number of confidential check-ins scheduled and completed per staff member. Tailored support plans developed for women and TGD staff. Impact Measures <i>Feedback via focus groups, surveys, feedback forms indicating:</i> • Check-in group members feel equipped to support new women and TGD hires. • Sense of belonging and psychological safety among women and TGD staff.

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						- Improved staff confidence in navigating workplace systems and culture. - Positive feedback on the relevance and effectiveness of tailored support. - Supporting the University's <i>Sydney in 2032</i> strategic goals under the <i>Thriving Through Diversity</i> pillar. - Embedding the University values of <i>Excellence, Trust & Accountability</i>.
		FoE 1.2.4 Create and disseminate a regular FoE newsletter that includes communication of career and development opportunities for academic and professional staff, as well as setting Faculty culture via inclusion of community news alongside University and Faculty operational updates. Include periodic pieces demonstrating the value a diverse workforce brings to engineering, taking a gender-intersectional approach.	2026-2028	FoE Executive Services, FoE Culture & Community Team, SAGE Team	AD Culture & Community, Faculty General Manager, FoE Head of Executive Services	<i>Subject to final collaborative implementation and resourcing, example outputs and outcomes could include:</i> Output Measures Newsletter template created, tested, and refined. Staff feedback mechanism included. Number of newsletters produced and distributed per year Outcome Measures Engagement metrics (e.g., open rates, click-through rates, feedback responses) Increased participation of FoE staff in development programs and Faculty events Impact Measures <i>Feedback via focus groups, surveys, feedback forms indicating:</i> - Increased awareness of career development opportunities among staff - Improved staff engagement with Faculty communications - Positive feedback on newsletter relevance and tone across diverse groups - Strengthened sense of community and connection within the faculty - Strengthened alignment between staff development and Faculty strategic goals

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						- Supporting the University's <i>Sydney in 2032</i> strategic goals under the <i>Thriving Through Diversity</i> pillar. - Embedding the University values of <i>Excellence, Trust & Accountability</i>.
		FoE 1.2.5 Monitor participation in career development opportunities by academic and professional staff across all Schools.	Annually	FoE Culture & Community Team, FoE Executive Services, SAGE Team	AD Culture & Community, Faculty General Manager	<i>Subject to final collaborative implementation and resourcing, example outputs and outcomes could include:</i> Output Measures Data collection systems established to monitor nomination and participation in career development, disaggregated by gender and identity characteristics. Outcome Measures Increased visibility of disparities or gaps in access to development opportunities. Impact Measures <i>Feedback via focus groups, surveys, feedback forms indicating:</i> - Reduction in barriers to advancement for women, TGD staff, and other underrepresented cohorts. - Strengthened culture of inclusive talent development across the faculty. - Supporting the University's <i>Sydney in 2032</i> strategic goals under the <i>Thriving Through Diversity</i> pillar. - Embedding the University values of <i>Excellence, Trust & Accountability</i>.
		FoE 1.2.6 Establish Faculty-level strategies to increase the representation of women in senior/management roles and support them in those positions.	2026-2028	FoE Culture & Community Team, SAGE Team	FoE Deputy Dean, AD Culture & Community	<i>Subject to final collaborative implementation and resourcing, example outputs and outcomes could include:</i> Output Measures Localised approaches (e.g. mentoring, coaching, peer support) created and offered across FoE and FoE Schools. Feedback collected from participants on relevance and effectiveness of support. Outcome Measures

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						Participation rates of women in senior/management support initiatives. Improved visibility and recognition of women leaders across Schools. Increased representation of women in senior and management roles across the Faculty. Impact Measures <i>Feedback via focus groups, surveys, feedback forms indicating:</i> - Increased readiness and confidence among FoE women to apply for and succeed in senior roles. - Improved satisfaction of FoE women in leadership. - Supporting the University's <i>Sydney in 2032</i> strategic goals under the <i>Thriving Through Diversity</i> pillar. - Embedding the University values of <i>Excellence, Trust & Accountability</i>.
FoE 1.3	Embed inclusive practices and support underrepresented groups.	FoE 1.3.1 Form a Faculty Culture & Community Committee, with academic and professional staff representation. Ensure that it is effectively resourced, includes workload acknowledgement, and has accountability to the FoE Leadership Team.	2026	FoE Culture & Community Team, SAGE Team	AD Culture & Community	<i>Subject to final collaborative implementation and resourcing, example outputs and outcomes could include:</i> Output Measures Committee formed with workload acknowledgement (e.g. time release, recognition in performance planning) and resourcing. Reporting mechanisms established between Community & Culture Committee and FoE Leadership Team. Outcome Measures Increased capacity and consistency in delivering DEI initiatives across the Faculty. Improved coordination and visibility of DEI efforts at School and Faculty levels. Strengthened accountability and responsiveness to DEI priorities. Impact Measures <i>Feedback via focus groups, surveys, feedback forms indicating:</i> Enhanced trust and credibility in DEI governance structures within FoE.

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						• Institutionalisation of DEI as a core strategic priority within Faculty operations. • Supporting the University's <i>Sydney in 2032</i> strategic goals under the <i>Thriving Through Diversity</i> pillar. • Embedding the University values of <i>Excellence, Trust & Accountability</i>.
		FoE 1.3.2 Recruit an Associate Dean ISS to help build First Nations representation and inclusion.	2026	Dean, Engineering	Dean, Engineering, DVC-Indigenous Strategy & Services (ISS)	<i>Subject to final collaborative implementation and resourcing, example outputs and outcomes could include:</i> Output Measures Associate Dean Indigenous Strategy and Services (ISS) recruited to lead First Nations inclusion efforts. Outcome Measures Enhanced capacity to develop and implement First Nations strategies and partnerships. Increase in recruitment, retention, and experience of First Nations staff in FoE. Impact Measures <i>Feedback via focus groups, surveys, feedback forms indicating:</i> • Enhanced trust and credibility in DEI governance structures within FoE. • Supporting the University's <i>Sydney in 2032</i> strategic goals under the <i>Thriving Through Diversity</i> pillar. • Embedding the University values of <i>Excellence, Trust & Accountability</i>.
		FoE 1.3.3 Heads of Schools to monitor workload for staff with heavy service loads (e.g. sitting on recruitment and promotion panels, University committees, outreach)	2026-2028	Heads of School, SAGE Team	AD Culture & Community	<i>Subject to final collaborative implementation and resourcing, example outputs and outcomes could include:</i> Output Measures Guidance for Managers on how to support staff with heavy service loads. Documentation of service activities (e.g. committee participation, outreach, mentoring) used to inform workload.

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						Outcome Measures Increased recognition of the often-invisible service contributions made by women staff. More equitable distribution of teaching and service responsibilities across academic staff. Impact Measures <i>Feedback via focus groups, surveys, feedback forms indicating:</i> - Reduced burnout and improved job satisfaction among staff with heavy service loads. - Supporting the University's <i>Sydney in 2032</i> strategic goals under the <i>Thriving Through Diversity</i> pillar. - Embedding the University values of <i>Excellence, Trust & Accountability</i>.
FoE 1.4	Promote diverse role models in education and support women students.	FoE 1.4.1 Review teaching materials and student communications to reflect diversity. Invite women guest lecturers, create guidelines to increase the representation of women in the tutor pool, and diversify reading lists where relevant.	2026-2028	AD Student Life, AD Teaching & Learning, SAGE Team, FoE Education Portfolio	FoE AD Education, FoE Head of Education	<i>Subject to final collaborative implementation and resourcing, example outputs and outcomes could include:</i> Output Measures Encourage reference to scholarly work by diverse people in course content. If no such scholarly work exists, consider shared reflection on this absence and the impact it may have on inclusive design and process in Engineering. Diversity of disciplines, backgrounds, and identities represented among invited women speakers. Mechanisms to collect FoE student and staff feedback on guest lectures and course content explored. Outcome Measures Increased visibility and recognition of women's contributions to the field. Broader representation of perspectives and voices in curriculum and classroom discussions. Greater intentionality among teaching staff in curating inclusive

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						content. Impact Measures <i>Feedback via focus groups, surveys, feedback forms indicating:</i> - Enhanced student engagement and awareness of gender equity in academia and professional practice. - Strengthened pipeline and inspiration for women and gender-diverse students to pursue academic and leadership roles. - Institutional reputation as a leader in inclusive and equitable education practices. - Supporting the University's <i>Sydney in 2032</i> strategic goals under the <i>Thriving Through Diversity</i> pillar. - Embedding the University values of <i>Excellence, Trust & Accountability</i>.
		FoE 1.4.2 Embed DEI principles in FoE student orientation and ongoing campaigns and monitor impact of the recently introduced buddy system and onboarding events for incoming women students.	2027-2028	AD Student Life, AD Teaching, SAGE Team, FoE Education Team	FoE AD Education, FoE Head of Education	<i>Subject to final collaborative implementation and resourcing, example outputs and outcomes could include:</i> Output Measures DEI principles and expectations integrated into student orientation materials and sessions. Representation of diverse speakers and facilitators in orientation activities. Explore mechanisms to collect student engagement metrics (e.g. attendance, participation, feedback). Outcome Measures Greater understanding of respectful communication, inclusive learning environments, and cultural safety. Contribution to a more inclusive and respectful Faculty culture from the outset of the student journey. Impact Measures <i>Feedback via focus groups, surveys, feedback forms indicating:</i> Decrease in Faculty staff experience of non-inclusive student behaviours.

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						- Stronger sense of belonging and inclusion among students from diverse backgrounds. - Reduction in incidents of bias, exclusion, or misunderstanding in academic and social settings. - Supporting the University's <i>Sydney in 2032</i> strategic goals under the <i>Thriving Through Diversity</i> pillar. - Embedding the University values of <i>Excellence, Trust & Accountability</i>.
2. Strengthen leadership, dialogue, and decision-making practices to build a transparent and inclusive Engineering culture Across the Faculty, diverse leadership styles, meeting dynamics, and decision-making approaches offer a foundation for more inclusive and responsive practices. By building structured opportunities for open dialogue and conflict resolution, staff can feel more engaged and supported. Strengthening the consistent use of performance frameworks and clarifying career progression pathways can enhance trust and confidence in institutional processes. Recognising and proactively managing the unique rhythms of STEM work - especially during peak periods - can support wellbeing and productivity. These efforts collectively contribute to a high-performing, equitable, and connected academic culture.						
FoE 2.1	Promote inclusive and effective meeting practices.	FoE 2.1.1 Integrate intersectional inclusion nudges into everyday processes and ways of working, such as inclusive meeting guidelines for Chairs and participants, and event, and project planning checklists. For example, include prompts such as "Have we considered how overlapping identities may affect access or experience in this initiative?". <i>(Note: This action is replicated as FoE 2.1.1 and NIC:M 2.1.3,</i>	2026-2028	HR D&I Team, SAGE Team FoE Culture & Community Team to promote in FoE	SAGE Program Manager, Senior Manager HR D&I	<i>Subject to final collaborative implementation and resourcing, example outputs and outcomes could include:</i> Output Measures Everyday processes and materials reviewed and/or created to identify spots for feasible and meaningful inclusion nudges. Number of checklists/templates/processes updated to include intersectional inclusion prompts and inclusive ways of working. Outcome Measures Uptake of inclusive planning practices across different organisational units. Impact Measures <i>Feedback via focus groups, surveys, feedback forms indicating:</i> - Managers find the materials helpful. - Increased satisfaction with managers across diverse staff cohorts. - Increased staff feelings of belonging and inclusion. - Supporting the University's <i>Sydney in 2032</i> strategic goals under the <i>Thriving Through Diversity</i> pillar.

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		<i>and aligns with Respect@Work Action 3.3)</i>				Embedding the University values of <i>Excellence, Trust & Accountability</i>.
FoE 2.2	Leadership capability building.	FoE 2.2.1 Build capability of FoE supervisors and managers in DEI principles, constructive feedback and conflict resolution. Develop coaching materials tailored to the STEM mindset. Collaborate with SAGE Team, Organisational Development, Leadership Academy and other teams to use/build on existing materials or materials planned within this broader action plan as relevant, to reduce duplication.	2026-2028	FoE Culture & Community Team, SAGE Team	Dean, Engineering, AD Culture & Community, FoE Deputy Dean	<i>Subject to final collaborative implementation and resourcing, example outputs and outcomes could include:</i> Output Measures Use materials tailored to STEM disciplines (e.g. logic-based frameworks, evidence-driven scenarios). Number of materials, workshops, coaching sessions, or peer learning circles delivered. Feedback collected from participants on training relevance and effectiveness. Outcome Measures Increased confidence and competence among managers and supervisors in applying inclusive leadership practices and addressing conflict. Improved quality and consistency of feedback and conflict resolution across teams. Greater engagement with DEI principles among STEM staff due to discipline-relevant framing. Enhanced team dynamics and psychological safety. Impact Measures <i>Feedback via focus groups, surveys, feedback forms indicating:</i> - Increased satisfaction with managers across diverse staff cohorts. - Increased staff feelings of belonging and inclusion. - Supporting the University's <i>Sydney in 2032</i> strategic goals under the <i>Thriving Through Diversity</i> pillar. - Embedding the University values of <i>Excellence, Trust & Accountability</i>.
		FoE 2.2.2 Work with Faculty and University School Leadership Teams to explore	2026-2028	DVC-Community & Leadership, SAGE Academic	DVC-Community & Leadership, FoE Deans, FoE Deputy	<i>Subject to final collaborative implementation and resourcing, example outputs and outcomes could include:</i>

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		how to operationalise DEI strategy at the local level through embedding DEI expectations around Head of School performance, as well as annual performance reviews (AP&Ds and PP&Ds) aligned with performance expectations for Deans and <i>Thriving Through Diversity</i> KPMs. <i>(Note: This action is replicated as Action L&A 1.1.5 and NIC:M 1.1.2, FoE 2.2.2, and aligns with Respect@Work Action 1.4.)</i>		Director, SAGE Team, Respect@Work Team, Faculty and University School Leadership Teams (specifically Foe Culture & Community Team)	Dean, Heads of Schools	Output Measures Exploration of mechanisms to incorporate DEI into performance expectations across levels. Refresh and promote guidance materials to support DEI goal-setting and reflection. Guidance for managers on evaluating DEI contributions. Outcome Measures Increased prioritisation of DEI in individual and team goal-setting. More consistent recognition of DEI-related work, including service, mentoring, and inclusive leadership. Enhanced accountability for DEI progress at all levels of leadership. Improved integration of DEI into strategic planning and operational decision-making. Impact Measures <i>Feedback via focus groups, surveys, feedback forms indicating:</i> • Strengthened leadership commitment to equity and inclusion. • Supporting the University's <i>Sydney in 2032</i> strategic goals under the <i>Thriving Through Diversity</i> pillar. • Embedding the University values of <i>Excellence, Trust & Accountability</i>.
3. Reimagine physical spaces to promote accessibility, connection, and inclusive representation The Faculty of Engineering has a complex but valuable opportunity to reimagine its physical environments to better reflect inclusive values. By redesigning spaces to be accessible, gender-inclusive, and collaboration-focused, we can foster greater participation, visibility, and connection for all staff and students. Intentional space planning and symbolic recognition of diversity can help shift the built environment from reinforcing legacy norms to actively supporting equity and belonging.						
FoE 3.1	Improve inclusiveness and accessibility of physical spaces.	FoE 3.1.1 Subject to resourcing, seek opportunities to convert more toilets to be gender inclusive and accessible.	2026-2032	Central Operations Services (COS) SAGE Team	VP Operations	<i>Subject to final collaborative implementation and resourcing, example outputs and outcomes could include:</i> Output Measures Development and consultation of a plan to install more gender-inclusive and accessible toilets across FoE buildings. Gender-inclusive and accessible toilets converted or newly built across FoE buildings.

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						Signage and communications updated to reflect inclusive facilities and spaces. Outcome Measures Increased comfort and safety for women and TGD staff and students, as well as those with disabilities. Greater visibility of the faculty's commitment to inclusion through physical infrastructure. Impact Measures <i>Feedback via focus groups, surveys, feedback forms indicating:</i> - Improved sense of belonging and inclusion across diverse staff and student groups. - Long-term transformation of the faculty's physical environment to reflect inclusive values. - Supporting the University's <i>Sydney in 2032</i> strategic goals under the <i>Thriving Through Diversity</i> pillar. - Embedding the University values of <i>Excellence, Trust & Accountability</i>.
		FoE 3.1.2 Subject to resourcing, seek to identify private and comfortable spaces in each FoE building for breast/chest feeding/expressing/parents room.	2026-2032	Central Operations Services (COS), SAGE Team, HR D&I Team	VP Operations	<i>Subject to final collaborative implementation and resourcing, example outputs and outcomes could include:</i> Output Measures Review of buildings to identify any available spaces Ensure rooms are clean, private and comfortable. Signage and communication to staff. Outcome Measures Number of new parents rooms established. Communication campaign. Increased comfort and safety for parents and carers. Impact Measures <i>Feedback via focus groups, surveys, feedback forms indicating:</i> Improved sense of belonging of parents and carers in FoE.

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						- Long-term transformation of the faculty's physical environment to reflect inclusive values. - Supporting the University's <i>Sydney in 2032</i> strategic goals under the <i>Thriving Through Diversity</i> pillar. - Embedding the University values of <i>Excellence, Trust & Accountability</i>.
FoE 3.2	Foster equitable access and cultural change.	FoE 3.2.1 Review access and protocols to ensure equitable use of lab spaces to help shift culture from "owned" to "collaborative."	2026-2028	FoE Head of Operations Manager, AD Research, SAGE Team	Dean, Engineering, Heads of School, FoE AD Research	<i>Subject to final collaborative implementation and resourcing, example outputs and outcomes could include:</i> Output Measures Review and staff consultation of current lab access protocols, usage patterns, and allocation practices. Development of a lab access equity framework or toolkit. Number of labs with updated, transparent access guidelines promoting shared use. Number of staff and students engaged in consultation or training on collaborative lab culture. Outcome Measures Increased awareness of inequities in lab access and ownership norms. More equitable and transparent allocation of lab time, space, and resources. Greater collaboration across research groups, disciplines, and equity groups. Reduction in informal gatekeeping or exclusionary practices. Impact Measures <i>Feedback via focus groups, surveys, feedback forms indicating:</i> - Strengthened culture of shared responsibility and inclusive research environments. - Improved access to research infrastructure for early-career, women, and underrepresented researchers. - Enhanced innovation and interdisciplinary collaboration through shared lab use.

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						- Supporting the University's <i>Sydney in 2032</i> strategic goals under the <i>Thriving Through Diversity</i> pillar. - Embedding the University values of <i>Excellence, Trust & Accountability</i>.
FoE 3.3	Increase visibility and representation.	FoE 3.3.1 Utilise physical and digital photography and communications to feature achievements of pioneering and current women and TGD people in engineering in teaching and research spaces. Take a gender-intersectional lens.	2026-2028	FoE Culture and Community Team, MarComms, FoE Executive Services, FoE Education Portfolio, Central Operations Services, SAGE Team	AD Culture & Community, FoE Head of Executive Services, FoE Head of Education	<i>Subject to final collaborative implementation and resourcing, example outputs and outcomes could include:</i> Output Measures Number of physical displays (e.g. posters, banners, wall installations) and digital features (e.g. website profiles, social media posts) created. Diversity of genders featured across disciplines, career stages, and backgrounds. Frequency of updates to digital and physical content. Engagement metrics (e.g. views, shares, comments, student/staff feedback). Outcome Measures Increased visibility and recognition of women's and TGD people's contributions to engineering. More inclusive representation in teaching and research environments. Impact Measures <i>Feedback via focus groups, surveys, feedback forms indicating:</i> - Enhanced sense of belonging and inspiration among women and TGD students and staff. - Greater awareness of diverse career pathways and role models in engineering. - Supporting the University's <i>Sydney in 2032</i> strategic goals under the <i>Thriving Through Diversity</i> pillar. - Embedding the University values of <i>Excellence, Trust & Accountability</i>.
		FoE 3.1.2 Subject to resourcing, explore naming	2026-2032	AD Culture & Community, FoE	VP Operations	<i>Subject to final collaborative implementation and resourcing, example outputs and outcomes could include:</i>

KEY BARRIER 4: DEI IN THE FACULTY OF ENGINEERING						
ID	Rationale/Evidence	Actions & Outputs	Timeframe (start & end)	Person / Group responsible for implementing action	Senior Leader accountable for action delivery	Example Outputs, Outcomes, and Impacts
		physical spaces (e.g. new builds, lecture theatres, meeting rooms) after notable diverse people (e.g. women, First Nations) in Engineering to increase visibility and representation.		Culture & Community Team, Central Operations Services (COS), SAGE Team		Output Measures Review of potential rooms or new buildings that could be named after notable women and diverse people in Engineering. Development of nomination and selection criteria for honourees. Communication materials created to share the stories and achievements of those honoured. Outcome Measures Number of spaces officially named after notable women in and diverse people in Engineering. Increased visibility of diverse contributions to Engineering within the Faculty and broader community. Strengthened pipeline of women entering and advancing in Engineering disciplines. More inclusive and representative campus environment. Impact Measures <i>Feedback via focus groups, surveys, feedback forms indicating:</i> - Enhanced sense of inspiration and belonging among women and diverse students and staff. - Greater awareness of diverse role models in Engineering and academia. Long-term transformation of the Faculty's identity to reflect inclusive values and diverse histories. - Institutional recognition of the importance of representation in shaping inclusive learning and research spaces. - Supporting the University's <i>Sydney in 2032</i> strategic goals under the <i>Thriving Through Diversity</i> pillar. - Embedding the University values of <i>Excellence, Trust & Accountability</i>.

KEY BARRIER 4: DEI IN THE FACULTY OF ENGINEERING						
ID	Rationale/Evidence	Actions & Outputs	Timeframe (start & end)	Person / Group responsible for implementing action	Senior Leader accountable for action delivery	Example Outputs, Outcomes, and Impacts
4. Enhance wellbeing and operational clarity through structured work practices, responsibility alignment, collaboration, and resource support Staff bring dedication and expertise to their roles, but without clear expectations around work hours, communication, and role boundaries, it can be difficult to maintain focus and access support. In under-resourced Schools, this is compounded by capacity constraints, yet teams continue to show resilience and commitment. Strengthening onboarding and wellbeing strategies offers an opportunity to build on these strengths, enabling staff to thrive and contribute sustainably in a demanding academic and professional environment.						
FoE 4.1	Foster a shared understanding of flexible work and role clarity/expectations.	FoE 4.1.1 Build on the University's existing Wellbeing Principles to encourage Deans to set clearer guidelines at Faculty and University School levels for flexible work, core hours for meetings, wellbeing measures such as encouraging a weekly meeting-free day or empowering staff to proactively block out time for deep work, and email response expectations. Identify and communicate digital settings for staff who wish to block emails and Teams messages out of hours. Provide pathways for escalation if local implementation is not consistent with Faculty expectations. <i>(Note: This action is replicated as P&C 2.1.2 and FoE 4.1.1).</i>	2026-2028	SAGE Team, HR D&I Team, MarComms, Wellbeing Team, Information Communications & Technology (ICT), Faculty and University School Senior Leaders and Teams with carriage over DEI, Workplace Relations Team	DVC-Community and Leadership, Deans	<i>Subject to final collaborative implementation and resourcing, example outputs and outcomes could include:</i> Output Measures Normalise flexibility for parents and carers through leadership messaging and role modelling. Development and dissemination of Faculty and University School guidelines on flexible work, core hours, and communication norms. Options explored and documented for staff to opt into settings that block emails and Teams messages outside working hours. Inclusion of wellbeing principles in induction, team planning, and performance conversations. Awareness campaign launched to promote inclusive scheduling and digital wellbeing. Number of Faculties and Schools adopting and communicating these guidelines locally. Communication of clear escalation pathways (e.g. contact point, reporting form, or review process). Feedback mechanisms established to assess staff preferences and experiences. Outcome Measures Uptake of wellbeing tools or practices (e.g. calendar blocks for deep work, meeting-free periods). Increased consistency in the application of flexible work and communication expectations across teams. Greater staff clarity and confidence in navigating flexible work arrangements. Improved responsiveness to concerns about inconsistent or

KEY BARRIER 4: DEI IN THE FACULTY OF ENGINEERING						
ID	Rationale/Evidence	Actions & Outputs	Timeframe (start & end)	Person / Group responsible for implementing action	Senior Leader accountable for action delivery	Example Outputs, Outcomes, and Impacts
						inequitable implementation. Enhanced team planning and collaboration through shared understanding of core hours and boundaries. Impact Measures <i>Feedback via focus groups, surveys, feedback forms indicating:</i> - Increased awareness among managers and staff of the impact of out-of-hours scheduling on carers and work-life balance. - Reduction in staff stress and burnout related to unclear or inconsistent expectations. - Enhanced digital wellbeing and reduced pressure to respond outside working hours. - Improved equity in access to flexible work, especially for carers and staff with accessibility needs. - Supporting the University's <i>Sydney in 2032</i> strategic goals under the <i>Thriving Through Diversity</i> pillar. - Embedding the University values of <i>Excellence, Trust & Accountability</i>.
		FoE 4.1.2 Seek opportunities to improve collaboration and shared responsibility between academic and professional staff for mutually beneficial partnering and respectful work practices such as collaborative goals and activities, and clarity around roles and responsibilities.	2026-2028	FoE Executive Services; FoE Culture & Community Team, SAGE Team	AD Culture & Community, Faculty General Manager	<i>Subject to final collaborative implementation and resourcing, example outputs and outcomes could include:</i> Output Measures Opportunities to communicate and educate staff on roles and responsibilities (e.g. Staff spotlight in new FoE newsletter). Number of joint planning sessions, cross-functional workshops, or team-building activities held. Inclusion of collaboration goals in team charters or work plans. Outcome Measures Increased clarity and consistency in understanding of responsibilities across teams. More effective and efficient collaboration on shared projects and initiatives.

KEY BARRIER 4: DEI IN THE FACULTY OF ENGINEERING						
ID	Rationale/Evidence	Actions & Outputs	Timeframe (start & end)	Person / Group responsible for implementing action	Senior Leader accountable for action delivery	Example Outputs, Outcomes, and Impacts
						Reduction in siloed working and role-based misunderstandings. Impact Measures <i>Feedback via focus groups, surveys, feedback forms indicating:</i> - Improved staff satisfaction and reduced role-related conflict or ambiguity. - Strengthened culture of partnership and shared accountability across academic and professional domains. - Increased mutual respect and understanding of each group's contributions and expertise. - Supporting the University's <i>Sydney in 2032</i> strategic goals under the <i>Thriving Through Diversity</i> pillar. - Embedding the University values of <i>Excellence, Trust & Accountability</i>.
		FoE 4.3.4 Create a central digital repository for shared documents, policies, and procedures.	2026-2028	FoE Executive Services, SAGE Team, FoE Heads of Portfolio, FoE School Managers	AD Culture & Community, Faculty General Manager, FoE Head of Executive Services, FoE Heads of Portfolio, FoE School Managers	<i>Subject to final collaborative implementation and resourcing, example outputs and outcomes could include:</i> Output Measures Centralised digital repository platform created and accessible to all relevant staff. Frequency of updates and maintenance of repository content. User access and usage metrics (e.g. logins, downloads, search queries). Outcome Measures Increased ease of access to up-to-date and authoritative information. Improved consistency in the application of policies and procedures across teams. Reduced duplication of effort and time spent locating key documents. Enhanced collaboration and knowledge sharing across academic and professional staff. Impact Measures <i>Feedback via focus groups, surveys, feedback forms indicating:</i> Strengthened operational efficiency and transparency.

KEY BARRIER 4: DEI IN THE FACULTY OF ENGINEERING						
ID	Rationale/Evidence	Actions & Outputs	Timeframe (start & end)	Person / Group responsible for implementing action	Senior Leader accountable for action delivery	Example Outputs, Outcomes, and Impacts
						- Improved staff confidence in processes and decision-making. - Contribution to a more connected, informed, and cohesive Faculty culture. - Support for onboarding, compliance, and continuous improvement efforts. - Supporting the University's <i>Sydney in 2032</i> strategic goals under the <i>Thriving Through Diversity</i> pillar. - Embedding the University values of <i>Excellence, Trust & Accountability</i>.
		FoE 4.3.5 Recognise and celebrate professional staff contributions, especially those in frontline roles and/or long tenured.	2026-2028	FoE Executive Services, FoE Culture and Community Team, SAGE Team	AD Culture & Community, Faculty General Manager, Head of Executive Services	<i>Subject to final collaborative implementation and resourcing, example outputs and outcomes could include:</i> Output Measures Number of recognition initiatives implemented (e.g. awards, shout-outs, appreciation events). Frequency of public acknowledgements in newsletters, meetings, or digital platforms. Inclusion of professional staff achievements in Faculty communications and reporting. Outcome Measures Increased visibility and appreciation of professional staff contributions among academic and leadership teams. Greater engagement and retention of professional staff. Strengthened relationships and collaboration between academic and professional teams. Impact Measures <i>Feedback via focus groups, surveys, feedback forms indicating:</i> - Improved morale and sense of value among professional staff, especially those in frontline roles. - Contribution to broader equity and inclusion goals by addressing status hierarchies in recognition practices.

KEY BARRIER 4: DEI IN THE FACULTY OF ENGINEERING						
ID	Rationale/Evidence	Actions & Outputs	Timeframe (start & end)	Person / Group responsible for implementing action	Senior Leader accountable for action delivery	Example Outputs, Outcomes, and Impacts
						- Supporting the University's <i>Sydney in 2032</i> strategic goals under the <i>Thriving Through Diversity</i> pillar. - Embedding the University values of <i>Excellence, Trust & Accountability</i>.
		FoE 4.1.3 Identify opportunities to bolster intra-Faculty research collaboration and celebrate collective success.	2026-2028	AD Culture & Community, AD Research, SAGE Team	Dean, Engineering	<i>Subject to final collaborative implementation and resourcing, example outputs and outcomes could include:</i> Output Mechanisms Number of cross-School or cross-team collaborative initiatives launched or supported. Faculty-wide events, showcases, or communications highlighting shared achievements. Development of platforms or channels (e.g. newsletters, intranet features, town halls) to share success stories. Outcome Measures Participation rates in collaborative activities and recognition events. Greater visibility and appreciation of collective contributions and interdisciplinary work. More frequent sharing of resources, expertise, and ideas across Schools and units. Impact Measures <i>Feedback via focus groups, surveys, feedback forms indicating:</i> - Strengthened Faculty identity and cohesion. - Enhanced sense of community and shared purpose among staff. - Improved innovation and problem-solving through interdisciplinary collaboration. - Higher staff morale and engagement. - Supporting the University's <i>Sydney in 2032</i> strategic goals under the <i>Thriving Through Diversity</i> pillar. - Embedding the University values of <i>Excellence, Trust & Accountability</i>.

KEY BARRIER 4: DEI IN THE FACULTY OF ENGINEERING						
ID	Rationale/Evidence	Actions & Outputs	Timeframe (start & end)	Person / Group responsible for implementing action	Senior Leader accountable for action delivery	Example Outputs, Outcomes, and Impacts
FoE 4.2	Provide support for staff with caring responsibilities.	FoE 4.2.1 Explore options to partner with Central Operations Services to pilot a proportion (e.g. 10%) of parking near FoE building/s to be reserved for staff with school-drop/pick up off responsibilities and teaching commitments that day. <i>(Note: Cross-reference with P&C 6.1.1)</i>	2026-2028	AD Culture & Community, Central Operations Services (COS), SAGE Team	VP Operations	<i>Subject to final collaborative implementation and resourcing, example outputs and outcomes could include:</i> Output Measures Proposal developed and submitted in partnership with CoS for a parking pilot. Number and percentage of parking spaces identified and reserved for eligible staff. Eligibility criteria and booking/verification process established. Communication materials created to promote the pilot and explain access. Outcome Measures Increased punctuality and reduced stress for staff balancing school drop-offs and teaching. Improved access to parking for staff with time-sensitive caregiving and teaching responsibilities. Greater awareness of the need for flexible, family-friendly infrastructure. Impact Measures <i>Feedback via focus groups, surveys, feedback forms indicating:</i> - Enhanced work-life balance and wellbeing for staff with caregiving responsibilities. - Contribution to broader equity and accessibility goals in campus planning and operations. - Supporting the University's <i>Sydney in 2032</i> strategic goals under the <i>Thriving Through Diversity</i> pillar. - Embedding the University values of <i>Excellence, Trust & Accountability</i>.
		FoE 4.2.2 Monitor use and impact of schemes to support carers in FoE, including academic and professional	2026-2028	FoE Culture and Community Team, SAGE Team	AD Culture & Community, Faculty General Manager	<i>Subject to final collaborative implementation and resourcing, example outputs and outcomes could include:</i> Output Measures Feasibility assessment for options to offer care allowances during FoE

KEY BARRIER 4: DEI IN THE FACULTY OF ENGINEERING						
ID	Rationale/Evidence	Actions & Outputs	Timeframe (start & end)	Person / Group responsible for implementing action	Senior Leader accountable for action delivery	Example Outputs, Outcomes, and Impacts
		staff as well as HDR students. Explore potential to reimburse for primary caring expenses for out of hours work events.				events and key meetings held out of hours. Review of existing travel grant guidelines to ensure they allow flexibility for non-traditional personal circumstances. Communication materials promoting the availability of these supports. Number of staff supported through these mechanisms, disaggregated by gender and caring responsibilities. Outcome Measures Increased participation of staff with caring responsibilities in conferences, networking, and professional development events. Improved planning and inclusivity in event design and funding schemes. Impact Measures <i>Feedback via focus groups, surveys, feedback forms indicating:</i> • Reduction in barriers to participation in key academic and professional opportunities. • Strengthened culture of equity, flexibility, and support for diverse life circumstances. • Supporting the University's <i>Sydney in 2032</i> strategic goals under the <i>Thriving Through Diversity</i> pillar. • Embedding the University values of <i>Excellence, Trust & Accountability</i>.
5. Establish trusted, transparent pathways to prevent misconduct and promote a respectful Faculty culture Staff are deeply committed to fostering respectful and safe workplaces. By strengthening complaint and misconduct procedures, through trusted escalation pathways, consistent enforcement, and visible support, FoE can build confidence and encourage early resolution. In under-resourced environments, even small improvements in transparency and accountability can empower staff to speak up, address conflict constructively, and reinforce a culture where respectful behaviours are actively upheld.						

KEY BARRIER 4: DEI IN THE FACULTY OF ENGINEERING						
ID	Rationale/Evidence	Actions & Outputs	Timeframe (start & end)	Person / Group responsible for implementing action	Senior Leader accountable for action delivery	Example Outputs, Outcomes, and Impacts
FoE 5.1	Build awareness via communication, policy adoption, and cultural change.	FoE 5.1.1 Build understanding of what misconduct in the workplace is, and raise awareness of the refreshed Staff Complaints Procedure, Respect@Work, and available support services. Explore having dedicated FoE Champions/'go-to' staff. <i>(Note: This action aligns with Respect@Work Action 3.5, 3.7 and 5.1)</i>	2026-2028	FoE Culture and Community Team, Safer Communities, Respect@Work Team, Staff Complaints Process Review Team, SAGE Team	Dean, AD Culture & Community, FoE Head of Executive Services, Faculty General Manager	<i>Subject to final collaborative implementation and resourcing, example outputs and outcomes could include:</i> Output Measures Number of staff briefings, workshops, or online modules delivered on workplace misconduct, Respect@Work, and the Staff Complaints Procedure. Distribution of updated materials (e.g. flowcharts, FAQs, posters) outlining misconduct definitions, reporting pathways, and support services. Visibility of support services (e.g. HR, Equity Office, Respect@Work contact points, EAP) across Faculty communication channels. Staff engagement metrics (e.g. attendance, resource downloads, intranet page views). Outcome Measures Increased reporting and earlier resolution of workplace issues. Reduction in unresolved or escalated conflict and misconduct. Impact Measures <i>Feedback via focus groups, surveys, feedback forms indicating:</i> • Increased staff understanding of what constitutes workplace misconduct, including bullying, harassment, and discrimination. • Greater confidence in how to raise concerns and navigate the complaints process. • Improved awareness and use of support services and Respect@Work resources. • More consistent and informed responses to misconduct concerns across teams and leadership. • Strengthened trust in institutional processes and commitment to staff wellbeing and safety. • Supporting the University's Sydney in 2032 strategic goals under the <i>Thriving Through Diversity</i> pillar.

KEY BARRIER 4: DEI IN THE FACULTY OF ENGINEERING						
ID	Rationale/Evidence	Actions & Outputs	Timeframe (start & end)	Person / Group responsible for implementing action	Senior Leader accountable for action delivery	Example Outputs, Outcomes, and Impacts
						Embedding the University values of <i>Excellence, Trust & Accountability</i>.
		FoE 5.1.3 Build visibility of pathways for managing student misconduct toward staff and peers, and vice versa. <i>(Note: This action aligns with Respect@Work Action 3.5 and 3.7)</i>	2026-2028	FoE Culture and Community Team, Safer Communities, Student Life, SAGE Team, Respect@Work Team, Student Life	AD Culture & Community, AD Education, FoE Head of Education	<i>Subject to final collaborative implementation and resourcing, example outputs and outcomes could include:</i> Output Measures Clear, accessible documentation outlining definitions of student misconduct and reporting procedures. Number of staff and students trained or briefed on misconduct pathways and expectations. Establishment or refinement of reporting and escalation mechanisms (e.g. online forms, designated contacts). Visibility of support services and misconduct policies across FoE platforms. Outcome Measures Increased staff and student awareness of what constitutes misconduct and how to report it. Greater confidence among staff and students in the fairness and responsiveness of the process. Consistent and timely handling of misconduct cases. Improved collaboration between academic, professional, and student support teams in managing incidents. Impact Measures <i>Feedback via focus groups, surveys, feedback forms indicating:</i> - Strengthened trust in institutional processes and commitment to staff and student wellbeing. - Supporting the University's <i>Sydney in 2032</i> strategic goals under the <i>Thriving Through Diversity</i> pillar.

KEY BARRIER 4: DEI IN THE FACULTY OF ENGINEERING						
ID	Rationale/Evidence	Actions & Outputs	Timeframe (start & end)	Person / Group responsible for implementing action	Senior Leader accountable for action delivery	Example Outputs, Outcomes, and Impacts
						Embedding the University values of <i>Excellence, Trust & Accountability</i>.

KEY BARRIER 5: Non-Inclusive Culture: Managers

5.1 Executive Summary

TABLE 145 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY OF NON-INCLUSIVE CULTURE: MANAGERS

Background
<i>Non-Inclusive Culture: Managers</i> appears last in the suite of barriers. This is intentional as unit managers create, support and promote diversity, equity and inclusion. The unit level culture of inclusion rests on their shoulders, is informed by their actions, their behaviours (e.g. empathy, respect, awareness), knowledge (e.g. policies, obligations and services) and lived experience. Addressing this barrier commits the University from the ground up to a culture of inclusion. It is a bold step which centres the unit level and empowers managers to facilitate change while holding managers to account to ensure an equitable and inclusive culture.
Data Sources
The analysis drew on: HR Diversity Dashboard 2025 Sydney Listens Staff Engagement Survey (quantitative and qualitative) SAGE Silver Focus Groups & Surveys: Lived experience of staff in and outside management roles, across diverse identities
Enablers Identified
Trust-based relationships between managers and their supervisors. Senior leaders who model inclusive behaviours and encourage their reports to do likewise. A level of autonomy so that managers can structure their team in a way that works for the individuals, and the collective (e.g. flexible work practices that foster inclusivity across a range of needs). Clarity of roles and expectations, including performance expectations around DEI. Access to leadership development opportunities, including training and mentoring, especially those that focus on DEI. Acknowledgement and respect for managerial expertise – over and above role-based skills.
Barriers Identified
Role overload impinges on a manager's capacity to lead inclusively or engage with training. Managers often feel pulled into operational tasks (e.g. overshadowed and burdened by admin creep), away from a more strategic, and people-orientated approach to leadership. A lack of institutional support, including from HR and systems that can be inherently discriminatory. DEI training is sometimes perceived as basic, compliance-driven, or lacking practical/strategic application. Some managers feel unprepared to deal with complex leadership issues, especially around inclusion. Poor understanding of intersectionality. Psychological safety risks for speaking up, especially against a manager's own supervisor. Managers are often promoted based on tenure or research excellence rather than people leadership skills. No obvious repercussions for poor managers who ignore DEI practices.
Key Recommendations
Activate Leadership and Local Accountability to Embed DEI Strategy Develop a DEI Strategy and Governance Map to clarify linkages and reduce silos. Collaborate with Faculty and School leaders to create measurable DEI performance expectations for managers. Investigate links between manager dissatisfaction and staff retention using focus groups and analytics. Build Inclusive Leadership Capability Through Embedded, Practical Learning and Support Deliver varied DEI learning formats via Leadership Academy and onboarding. Assess digital tools to support managers with real-time inclusion resources. Embed intersectional inclusion prompts into everyday processes. Map peak workload periods to better time DEI initiatives. Establish peer circles for managers to share inclusive leadership strategies. Create a centralised DEI support hub and visual guide to internal support teams. Pilot short, digestible intersectionality content in existing communication channels.

5.2 Background

Throughout our Cygnet and Silver self-assessments, staff repeatedly emphasised the vital role of managers in translating good organisational policies into inclusive practice. A supportive manager was often key to staff feeling valued, respected, recognised, included, supported and able to bring their authentic selves to work, benefiting both individuals and team productivity (Figure 31). A stretched and non-inclusive manager delivered the opposite experience.

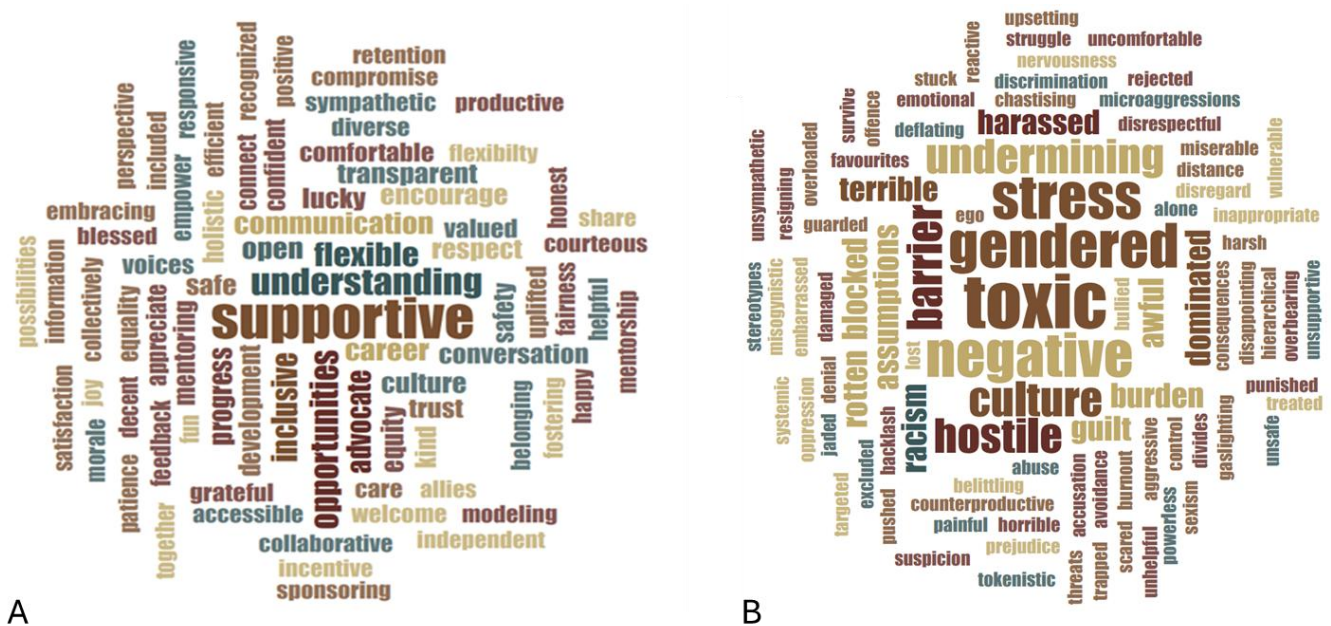


FIGURE 31 WORD CLOUDS GENERATED FROM ALL SAGE SILVER FOCUS GROUPS DESCRIBING THE IMPACT OF (A) INCLUSIVE AND (B) NON-INCLUSIVE MANAGERS

Additionally, expectations of inclusive managers have evolved alongside expanded understanding of gender inclusion and intersectional practice. Although we aim to take an intersectional approach to DEI initiatives, understanding of intersectionality itself and how it can manifest in the workplace remains largely confined to DEI practitioners and champions. This matters, because of the often-unintentional negative impacts non-inclusive managers can have on their staff, illustrated by the variable manager experience of staff when viewed through an intersectional lens (Table 146).

Non-inclusive managers are often cited as a major risk to talent retention and team engagement. Although a preliminary comparison of Faculty and University School staff satisfaction with managers and resignation rates in 2024 did not reveal a strong linkage here (Tables 147–148), further ongoing monitoring of engagement factors linked to manager satisfaction could deepen understanding of staff retention dynamics.

Senior Leaders and key stakeholders demonstrated clear recognition of DEI progress at the University and the role of managers, including themselves, in fostering an inclusive and equitable workplace culture (Table 149). However, good practice does not always follow good intention. Having demonstrated the impact of non-inclusive managers throughout this submission, we will not focus on that aspect here, but rather on what gets in the way of inclusive managers. Through focus groups, surveys and analysis of the 2025 Sydney Listens free text comments from staff in people leadership roles, we identified three main sub-barriers that managers at the University felt reduced their capacity to be inclusive leaders (Figure 32):

- Role overload and lack of support;
- Utility of DEI training;
- Organisational culture not genuinely prioritising DEI.

Exclusionary behaviours and cultural norms cascade down the line, underscoring the need for inclusion initiatives to be embedded at every level.

TABLE 146 2025 SYDNEY LISTENS PERCENTAGE FAVOURABLE RESPONSES TOWARDS LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT AT THE INTERSECTION OF (A) GENDER AND CARING RESPONSIBILITIES; (B) GENDER AND ANGLO-CELTIC OR NON-ANGLO CELTIC BACKGROUND; (C) GENDER AND DISABILITY; (D) GENDER AND SEXUALITY

Light orange shading = Sub-group 1-4pp lower than socially dominant group; Dark orange shading = sub-group 5pp or more lower than socially dominant group; No shading = No difference between sub-group and socially dominant group; Light green shading = sub-group 1-4pp higher than socially dominant group; Dark green shading = sub-group 5pp or more higher than socially dominant group; Green font = women or trans and gender diverse higher than men; Red font = women or gender diverse lower than men; Black font = no difference between women or gender diverse and men.

A	Men with no Caring Responsibilities (n=1351; PR=98%)	Women with no Caring Responsibilities (n=1803; PR=96%)	Gender Diverse with no Caring Responsibilities (n=25; 91%)	Δ pp Women v. Men, no Caring Responsibilities	Δ pp Gender Diverse v. Men, no Caring Responsibilities	Men with Caring Responsibilities (n=1219; PR=98%)	Women with Caring Responsibilities (n=2118; PR=98%)	Gender Diverse with Caring Responsibilities (n=11; PR=100%)	Δ pp Women v. Men, no Caring Responsibilities	Δ pp Gender Diverse v. Men, no Caring Responsibilities
The senior leaders at my Faculty, University School or Portfolio role model trust & accountability	60	62	43	2	-17	58	60	45	2	2
My supervisor genuinely cares about my wellbeing	84	84	90	0	6	81	82	91	1	10
My supervisor/advisor gives me useful feedback on how well I am performing	76	77	67	1	-9	72	73	73	1	1
My supervisor keeps me informed about what is happening at the University of Sydney	76	74	76	-2	0	74	72	82	-2	8
My supervisor is a great role model for staff	76	77	76	1	0	72	72	82	0	10

B	Men, Anglo-Celtic Background (n=937; PR=98%)	Women, Anglo-Celtic Background (n=1582; PR=97%)	Gender Diverse, Anglo-Celtic Background (n=16 PR=94%)	Δ pp Women v. Men, Anglo-Celtic Background	Δ pp Gender Diverse v. Men, Anglo-Celtic Background	Men, non Anglo-Celtic Background (n=1523; PR=98%)	Women, non Anglo-Celtic Background (n=2219; PR=97%)	Gender Diverse, non Anglo-Celtic Background (n=11; PR=100%)	Δ pp Women v. Men, non Anglo-Celtic Background	Δ pp Gender Diverse v. Men, non Anglo-Celtic Background
The senior leaders at my Faculty, University School or Portfolio role model trust & accountability	59	62	56	3	-3	61	61	27	0	-34
My supervisor genuinely cares about my wellbeing	84	84	88	0	4	82	83	91	1	9
My supervisor/advisor gives me useful feedback on how well I am performing	73	74	69	1	-4	76	76	73	0	-3
My supervisor keeps me informed about what is happening at the University of Sydney	74	73	81	-1	7	77	73	82	-4	5
My supervisor is a great role model for staff	74	76	81	2	7	75	73	73	-2	-2

C	Men, No Disability, Illness, or Injury (n=2286; PR=98%)	Women, No Disability, Illness, or Injury (n=3173; PR=97%)	Gender Diverse, No Disability, Illness, or Injury (n=11; PR=92%)	Δ pp Women v. Men, No Disability, Illness, or Injury	Δ pp Gender Diverse v. Men, No Disability, Illness, or Injury	Men, With Disability, Illness, or Injury (n=308; PR=96%)	Women, With Disability, Illness, or Injury (n=727; PR=56%)	Gender Diverse, With Disability, Illness, or Injury (n=19; PR=100%)	Δ pp Women v. Men, With Disability, Illness, or Injury	Δ pp Gender Diverse v. Men, With Disability, Illness, or Injury
The senior leaders at my Faculty, University School or Portfolio role model trust & accountability	61	62	45	1	-16	46	56	47	-10	1
My supervisor genuinely cares about my wellbeing	83	83	73	0	-10	79	83	95	12	16
My supervisor/advisor gives me useful feedback on how well I am performing	75	75	55	0	-20	67	72	68	-4	-4
My supervisor keeps me informed about what is happening at the University of Sydney	76	72	73	-4	-3	69	72	79	7	7
My supervisor is a great role model for staff	74	74	64	0	-10	69	74	84	10	10

D	Men, Heterosexual (n=1795; PR=98%)	Women, Heterosexual (n=2872; PR=97%)	Gender Diverse, Heterosexual (n=≤6; PR=100%)	Δ pp Women v. Men, Heterosexual	Δ pp Gender Diverse v. Men, Heterosexual	Men, Not Heterosexual (n=442; PR=98%)	Women, Not Heterosexual (n=446; PR=97%)	Gender Diverse, Not Heterosexual (n=26; PR=96%)	Δ pp Women v. Men, Diverse Sexualities	Δ pp Gender Diverse v. Men, Diverse Sexualities
The senior leaders at my Faculty, University School or Portfolio role model trust & accountability	61	63	N/A	2	N/A	57	61	27	4	-30
My supervisor genuinely cares about my wellbeing	83	84	N/A	1	N/A	83	83	88	0	5
My supervisor/advisor gives me useful feedback on how well I am performing	76	76	N/A	0	N/A	75	72	65	-3	-10
My supervisor keeps me informed about what is happening at the University of Sydney	77	74	N/A	-3	N/A	74	71	73	-3	-1
My supervisor is a great role model for staff	75	76	N/A	1	N/A	75	74	73	-1	-1

TABLE 147 PERCENTAGE FAVOURABLE RESPONSES TOWARDS MANAGEMENT IN 2024 SYDNEY LISTENS COMPARED TO 2024 RESIGNATIONS OF ACADEMIC MEN AND WOMEN ON CONTINUING EMPLOYMENT CONTRACTS

Note: HC = Headcount; PR = Participation Rate; Data verified by HR Workforce Information & Reporting 24 September 2025 and correct at the time of verification.

	2024 % Favourability towards Managers Continuing Academic Men	2024 % Resignations Continuing Academic Men	2024 % Favourability towards Managers Continuing Academic Women	2024 % Resignations Continuing Academic Women
Business	73% (HC:68; PR:49%)	5.0%	68% (HC:42; PR:56%)	5.4%
FASS	56% (HC: 117; PR: 64%)	5.5%	56% (HC:144; PR:66%)	4.1%
Engineering	59% (HC:71; PR:55%)	0.8%	na	0.0%
FMH	67% (HC:82; PR:37%)	3.6%	68% (HC:181; PR:52%)	2.9%
Science	56% (HC:119; PR:58%)	2.9%	73% (HC:72; PR:62%)	1.7%
Conservatorium	47% (HC:15; PR:33%)	0.0%	52% (HC:15; PR:60%)	0.0%
Architecture	70% (HC:26; PR:81%)	0.0%	47% (HC: 19; PR: 73%)	3.8%
Law	58% (HC:19; PR:40%)	2.2%	75% (HC:16; PR:44%)	2.9%

TABLE 148 PERCENTAGE FAVOURABLE RESPONSES TOWARDS MANAGEMENT IN 2024 SYDNEY LISTENS COMPARED TO 2024 RESIGNATIONS OF PROFESSIONAL MEN AND WOMEN ON CONTINUING EMPLOYMENT CONTRACTS

Note: HC = Headcount; PR = Participation Rate; Data verified by HR Workforce Information & Reporting 24 September 2025 and correct at the time of verification.

	2024 % Favourability towards Managers Continuing Professional Men	2024 % Resignations Continuing Professional Men	2024 % Favourability towards Managers Continuing Professional Women	2024 % Resignations Continuing Professional Women
Business	83% (HC:18; PR:64%)	0.0%	73% (HC:51; PR:64%)	10.0%
FASS	84% (HC:24; PR:59%)	2.6%	63% (HC:64; PR:74%)	9.1%
Engineering	66% (HC:28; PR:78%)	2.8%	57% (HC: 49; PR:75%)	2.9%
FMH	71% (HC:42; PR:59%)	1.4%	70% (HC:141; PR:59%)	9.1%
Science	73% (HC:26; PR:46%)	3.2%	72% (HC:76; PR:58%)	5.5%
Conservatorium	na	0.0%	na	10.0%
Architecture	86% (HC:11; PR:85%)	8.3%	65% (HC:17; PR:100%)	11.8%
Law	na	14.3%	48% (HC: 11; PR: 61%)	0.0%

TABLE 149 SENIOR LEADER AND KEY STAKEHOLDER VIEWS ON INCLUSION AND THE ROLE OF MANAGERS AT THE UNIVERSITY

Note: Arising from thematic analysis of structured interviews with Senior Leaders and staff in DEI leadership roles across the University, and an HR Partners Focus Group. Quotes are used with permission.

What is working well	Working less well	Recommendations
Strategic Integration of DEI DEI is embedded in the Sydney 2032 strategy, cascading into faculty strategies and policies. <i>“I was heartened to see DEI embedded throughout the Sydney 2032 strategy. It’s not just one tokenistic aspect. I think that is really positive.” – L05</i> There has been a shift from awareness-raising to change in practice. <i>“There’s been a real move from awareness-raising to a much more structured documentation of and drive towards change in practices. I think that’s a reflection of the university’s increasing maturity in this space.” – L03</i> Leadership Commitment and Culture Senior leadership, including executives, are actively engaged and authentic in their approach to DEI. <i>“There is a lot of leadership engagement with diversity, equity and inclusion. They take it very seriously. And there is a real honesty and authenticity when things aren’t going well to confront these issues and to be honest about these issues... and see how we can fix it.” – L01</i> Some leaders are proactive and resourceful in supporting DEI initiatives. <i>“I have a new leader who is very much supportive and makes things happen ... It has made such a difference to have somebody who is willing to not just talk the talk,</i>	Concerns about Ongoing Commitment A diverse population does not automatically lead to an inclusive culture. Concerns exist about whether the University is truly welcoming to people from varied backgrounds. <i>“We can have these ambitious and well-communicated targets ... but more important is whether or not our institutional systems, our ways of working, are built to include diversity in an authentic way. Do we actually want to make a place that will offer safety and opportunity for people to contribute in their unique way.” – L31</i> The senior executive lacks diversity, remaining predominantly white-Anglo, cisgendered, and without disability, which raises questions about the depth of DEI commitment. <i>“We do have a culture here at Sydney ... and I think perhaps only a certain type of person can thrive in that culture. We seem to have a bit of a monoculture at the top.” – L17</i> Inconsistent Implementation DEI-related policies are not universally implemented. Their effectiveness often depends on local managers, who set the cultural tone for their teams. <i>“Often it’s driven by what type of manager you have and, as a large organisation, we struggle to train all of our managers all the time. Sometimes people are rewarded not necessarily for their management competence, but for their technical competence. So they end up a manager when in fact they shouldn’t actually be one.” – L04</i> Many managers exhibit avoidance behaviours, especially around sensitive topics, which undermines DEI efforts. <i>“We see a large population of our people leaders engaging in avoidance behaviour ... There’s an inability to face things head on and have an open dialogue ... We see that play out often in everyday</i>	Strategic Alignment and Governance Continue to resource DEI programs in alignment with Sydney 2032 strategic goals. Embed DEI as a business-as-usual expectation across the university. The appointment of a new Deputy Vice-Chancellor for Community and Leadership presents an opportunity to develop a cohesive DEI strategy with a coordinated governance structure. <i>“We don’t have a cohesive DEI strategy at the moment. We have several different strategies ... one focused on disability, one focused on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employment outcomes, one focused on gender. We don’t have one cohesive strategy that drives all of that work and kind of threads it together.” – L04</i> Accountability and Leadership Ensure DEI strategy is driven through policy and enacted at the local team level. Measurement against DEI performance expectations should filter down to local managers. <i>“The university should be a place where inclusive leadership is not optional, but considered as a core capability of anyone in a leadership role. Leaders would be evaluated based on DEI outcomes. It should be embedded into performance reviews, promotions and governance structures.” – L09</i> Encourage visible leadership from the university executive on difficult DEI topics. <i>“I think we could be braver. I think we can make bolder choices to showcase and then be an example for the rest of society.” – L13</i>

<i>they're walking the walk and they're putting a budget behind it as well. That's a huge thing."</i> – L05 Performance expectations for DEI are set for some levels of leadership. Inclusive Policies and Practices The University has excellent DEI-supportive policies, including flexible work arrangements, generous parental and carer leave, strong enterprise agreements and work conditions. <i>"If I think about our entitlements and our benefits and the programs we offer for people who work here, our enterprise agreements, our work conditions, I think they're way above the norm. I think we do well in that sense."</i> – L15 DEI success stories include academic plans for students with disabilities, narrowing the gender pay gap, use of preferred names and pronouns in university records, recruitment targeting women and Indigenous applicants, student equity programs, the RISE project for CARM women. Training and Awareness Cultural Competency training modules are available and well-regarded. There is broad awareness and engagement with DEI across faculties and schools, creating a platform for action. <i>"I'm very intentional about making sure that I'm working with as many different people and hearing as many different voices as I can. The particular area I work in has a lot of different people from different cultures, different sexualities, different backgrounds."</i> – L14	<i>conversations, but more so during the performance review cycles, where [behaviours] may be glossed over and not adequately held to account."</i> – L31 Lack of Accountability and Resourcing Accountability for DEI does not consistently reach the team leader level. Local units often choose whether to act, with limited oversight. <i>"We may look to action plan around DEI, but it's largely left up to the organisational unit to choose whether or not they want to take action, and if they do take action, whether or not there's accountability around measures for improvement."</i> – L31 Insufficient time and funding allocations hinder managers' ability to implement DEI actions effectively.	Promote champions and allies for change in the DEI space. Capability Building and Support Provide targeted training for managers to better understand the needs of disadvantaged cohorts and manage complex team dynamics. <i>"I think the biggest opportunity is going to be in uplifting the capability of the people that are actually out there, like the managers who are having that day-to-day practical impact on the teams."</i> – L28 HR should offer practical support to managers, including guidance on: • Managing part-time, flexible, and remote workers • Understanding disability-related needs • Accommodating DEI goals in everyday practice • Systems and processes Establish an independent, transparent complaints system to ensure staff feel safe reporting exclusionary behaviour. <i>"We need appropriate procedures and policies so that people can make complaints when they don't feel included. and they're not going to feel that will suffer any consequences as a result."</i> – L14 Conduct exit interviews to assess whether poor culture is contributing to the loss of diverse staff.
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FIGURE 32 WORD CLOUD GENERATED FROM MANAGERS IN SAGE SILVER FOCUS GROUPS DESCRIBING BARRIERS TO INCLUSIVE MANAGEMENT

5.2.1 Related activities & programs of work

TABLE 150 RELATED ACTIVITIES & PROGRAMS OF WORK

Related Portfolios & Initiatives	Description	Linkages
DVC-Community & Leadership	Development of over-arching DEI Framework and Strategy for the University.	Need for a coherent strategy, leadership, advocacy, and meaningful engagement.
Academic Excellence Framework	The Framework seeks to create a supportive academic culture by clarifying excellence, streamlining processes, equipping supervisors, and fostering a collegial community across the University.	Service pillar; Collegiality pillar
Leadership Academy	The University Leadership Academy unites leaders across the University, providing the support, confidence, and tools they need to build high-performing, diverse teams throughout every stage of their career. Drawing on contemporary scholarship from The University academics and external experts, the Academy aims to deliver leadership programs, activities, resources, and events that are evidence-based, impactful, and tailored to the University of Sydney context.	Leadership training and development
Respect@Work	The University has a positive duty obligation to proactively prevent and respond to sexual misconduct. The University has extended this positive duty obligation to eliminate all forms of unlawful workplace behaviour, including harassment, discrimination and bullying. The Respect@Work Program, led by Senior University Leaders and developed in consultation with staff has a comprehensive Action Plan aligning with the seven standards outlined by the Australian Human Rights Commission of leadership, culture, knowledge, risk management, support, reporting and response, and monitoring, evaluation and transparency.	Manager capability training and reporting pathways
Safer Communities	The Safer Communities Office provides specialist support for those who have experienced sexual misconduct, offering confidential and immediate response, guidance on reporting options, safety planning, and referrals to services, with Mandarin-speaking staff and interpreters available on request.	Manager capability training and reporting pathways

5.2.2 Data sources used in this section

TABLE 151 DATA SOURCES USED IN THIS SECTION

Source	Type of Data	Details	Limitations
University of Sydney HR Diversity Dashboard	Resignation rates	Linked to central data warehouse, Snowflake. Includes demographic questions around gender, country of origin, disability status, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander, and age. Allows for intersectional representation across career cycle.	Does not include questions relating to ethno-racial background or sexuality.
2025 Sydney Listens All Staff Engagement Survey Quantitative data	% Favourable responses across engagement factors and question set.	Open to staff May 2025.	Both cultural background and ethno-racial demographics are available, but much lower disclosure of the latter, leading to more limited availability of gender-intersectional data due to Culture Amp privacy parameters. For this reason, and to better align with workforce data, which does not capture ethno-racial data, cultural background is used more frequently here. TGD headcounts were too low to be shown across cultural and ethno-racial groupings and so have been excluded from analyses.
2025 Sydney Listens All Staff Engagement Survey Qualitative data	Thematic analysis of 2025 Sydney Listens anonymous free text feedback from staff in people leadership roles.	Thematic analysis of the total of 9963 comments from People Leaders (74% commented, median 3 comments per commenter). We used Microsoft CoPilot to interrogate the datasets, asking whether positive or negative themes were raised in free text comments relating to each of the identified sub-barriers, and if any suggestions were raised by staff to address the issues. Themes were verified by humans.	We do not have permission to use direct quotes from staff.
SAGE Silver Focus Groups & Surveys	Thematic analysis of lived experience of staff. Focus Groups and Surveys offered: - Women in Management and Leadership roles - Men in Management and Leadership roles	Demographics Most of the 24 participants were women and professional staff. Fifteen were in a leadership/manager role. We have focused on comments from managers, as issues raised by staff not in leadership roles reflected those raised through this submission.	

	- LGBTQIA+ staff in Management and Leadership roles - Women, not in Management or Leadership roles - Men, not in Management or Leadership roles - LGBTQIA+ staff, not in Management or Leadership roles	<table><tr><th></th><th>Professional</th><th>Academic</th><th>Academic & Professional</th><th>Leadership Role</th></tr><tr><td>Woman</td><td>11</td><td>≤6</td><td>≤6</td><td>9</td></tr><tr><td>Man</td><td>≤6</td><td>≤6</td><td>≤6</td><td>≤6</td></tr><tr><td>TGD</td><td>≤6</td><td>≤6</td><td>0</td><td>≤6</td></tr><tr><td>Not specified</td><td>≤6</td><td>0</td><td>0</td><td>0</td></tr></table>		Professional	Academic	Academic & Professional	Leadership Role	Woman	11	≤6	≤6	9	Man	≤6	≤6	≤6	≤6	TGD	≤6	≤6	0	≤6	Not specified	≤6	0	0	0												
		Professional	Academic	Academic & Professional	Leadership Role																																		
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		<table><tr><th colspan="2">Ethnicity</th></tr><tr><td>Anglo-Celtic</td><td>7</td></tr><tr><td>European</td><td>≤6</td></tr><tr><td>Middle Eastern/North African</td><td>≤6</td></tr><tr><td>Asian</td><td>≤6</td></tr><tr><td>Not specified</td><td>≤6</td></tr><tr><th colspan="2">Disability</th></tr><tr><td>Yes</td><td>≤6</td></tr><tr><td>No</td><td>15</td></tr><tr><td>Not specified</td><td>≤6</td></tr><tr><th colspan="2">LGBTQIA+</th></tr><tr><td>Yes</td><td>8</td></tr><tr><td>No</td><td>13</td></tr><tr><td>Not specified</td><td>≤6</td></tr><tr><th colspan="2">Caring responsibilities</th></tr><tr><td>Yes</td><td>11</td></tr><tr><td>No</td><td>7</td></tr><tr><td>Not specified</td><td>≤6</td></tr></table>	Ethnicity		Anglo-Celtic	7	European	≤6	Middle Eastern/North African	≤6	Asian	≤6	Not specified	≤6	Disability		Yes	≤6	No	15	Not specified	≤6	LGBTQIA+		Yes	8	No	13	Not specified	≤6	Caring responsibilities		Yes	11	No	7	Not specified	≤6	
	Ethnicity																																						
	Anglo-Celtic	7																																					
	European	≤6																																					
Middle Eastern/North African	≤6																																						
Asian	≤6																																						
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Yes	≤6																																						
No	15																																						
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LGBTQIA+																																							
Yes	8																																						
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Not specified	≤6																																						
Caring responsibilities																																							
Yes	11																																						
No	7																																						
Not specified	≤6																																						

Quotes are used with permission. Individuals are represented by participant numbers (Mxx) to preserve anonymity.

5.3 Evidence of the Barrier and Contributing Factors

5.3.1 Role overload

Time challenges and a lack of support – technical and personal – are key challenges for managers, limiting their ability to lead inclusively. In 2025 Sydney Listens, overall staff engagement improved from 2024, however, leaders, especially academic men, still reported lower satisfaction in Collaboration, Communication and Enablement compared to their non-leader peers (Table 152). Improved sentiment in 2025 may reflect early benefits of the Digital Sydney Strategy, part of the broader *Sydney in 2032 Strategy* to transform the University's digital environment, which is encouraging, but systemic pressures persist in the meantime.

Thematic analysis of our qualitative data revealed managers who felt overwhelmed and drawn into operational tasks, which took their attention away from a more strategic, people-focused style of leadership. Some felt ill-equipped to deal with DEI issues within their teams and found HR and central processes slow, complex and unresponsive. Interestingly, these pressures were also recognised by staff not in leadership roles, indicating this is an issue for future managers/leaders (Table 153).

Reaching automatically for training to upskill intersectional DEI understanding and practice in leaders who are already experiencing multiple training requirements, operational/administration overload and time poverty runs the risk of disengaging this critically important cohort. Seeking opportunities to streamline the delivery of intersectional DEI resources and guidance into existing processes may be one lever to build inclusion capability without further contributing to role overload.

TABLE 152 2025 SYDNEY LISTENS STAFF SURVEY: PERCENTAGE FAVOURABLE RESPONSES ACROSS CATEGORIES AT THE INTERSECTION OF GENDER, JOB CATEGORY, AND LEADERSHIP – IMPACT OF LEADERSHIP ROLE

Light orange shading = People Leaders 1-4pp lower than non-People Leaders; Dark orange shading = People Leaders 5pp or more lower than non-People Leaders; No shading = No difference between People Leaders and non-People Leaders; Light green shading = People Leaders 1-4pp higher than non-People Leaders; Dark green shading = People Leaders 5pp or more higher than non-People Leaders; Green font = women higher than men; Red font = women lower than men; Black font = no difference between women and men.

	2025 Men Academic Not People Leader (n=666; PR=48%)	2025 Women Academic Not People Leader (n=645; PR=47%)	Δ pp Women Academic Not People Leader v. Men Academic Not People Leader	2025 Men Professional Not People Leader (n=1222; PR=72%)	2025 Women Professional Not People Leader (n=2259; PR=70%)	Δ pp Women Professional Not People Leader v. Men Professional Not People Leader	2025 Men Academic People Leader (n=485; PR=63%)	2025 Women Academic People Leader (n=520; PR=65%)	Δ pp Women Academic People Leader v. Men Academic People Leader	2025 Men Professional People Leader (n=440; PR=88%)	2025 Women Professional People Leader (n=788; PR=85%)	Δ pp Women Professional People Leader v. Men Professional People Leader
Engagement	64%	67%	3	69%	71%	2	62%	65%	3	73%	73%	0
Company Confidence	50%	51%	1	50%	52%	2	46%	51%	5	50%	50%	0
Alignment & Involvement	66%	68%	2	74%	74%	0	67%	72%	5	79%	78%	-1
Collaboration & Communication	55%	55%	0	62%	60%	-2	48%	49%	1	57%	58%	1
Enablement	55%	54%	-1	71%	71%	0	48%	48%	0	69%	66%	-3
Feedback & Recognition	52%	53%	1	58%	57%	-1	49%	53%	4	60%	59%	-1
Innovation	49%	53%	4	54%	55%	1	41%	46%	5	51%	54%	3
Leadership	37%	40%	3	45%	47%	2	36%	40%	4	50%	51%	1
Learning & Development	63%	66%	3	62%	64%	2	59%	67%	8	67%	69%	2
Management	71%	72%	1	79%	76%	-3	68%	71%	3	81%	77%	4
Service & Quality Focus	42%	45%	3	55%	55%	0	35%	40%	5	55%	54%	-1
Social Connection	49%	50%	1	59%	59%	0	49%	51%	2	64%	66%	2
Teamwork & Ownership	58%	59%	1	70%	70%	0	56%	63%	6	70%	71%	1
Work & Life Blend	57%	57%	0	71%	69%	-2	55%	56%	1	75%	72%	-3
Action	35%	38%	3	49%	53%	4	42%	52%	10	66%	68%	2
Diversity & Inclusion	54%	55%	1	63%	61%	-2	54%	58%	4	69%	67%	-2
Safety	77%	75%	-2	86%	84%	-2	79%	79%	0	88%	87%	-1

TABLE 153 THEMES ARISING FROM 2025 SYDNEY LISTENS AND SAGE SILVER FOCUS GROUPS RELATING TO MANAGER ROLE OVERLOAD

Note: 2025SL = Arising from thematic analysis of free text comments from staff in people leadership roles in the 2025 Sydney Listens All Staff Engagement Survey; SSFG = Arising from thematic analysis of comments from staff in people leadership roles in SAGE Silver Focus Groups. Quotes are from SAGE Silver Focus Groups only and are used with permission.

Working Well	Working Less Well	Recommendations
Flexible Work Arrangements Flexibility was repeatedly cited by staff in leadership roles as a key enabler for inclusive leadership, especially for working parents, carers, and staff with diverse needs. When flexibility was respected and not judged, it contributed to a more inclusive and equitable workplace. (2025SL)	Time Pressures and Competing Demands Leadership overload and reactive culture were consistently identified as barriers to inclusive leadership. Rapidly changing responsibilities without consultation, lack of support, and systemic pressures contribute to stress, confusion, and reduced productivity among managers. This can lead to downward pressure on teams, stifling inclusive dialogue and fostering a compliance-driven culture where dissent is discouraged and trust erodes. (SSFG, 2025SL) <i>"You are so busy, and you've got all this compliance training, like the cyber security and all the essential training. And then this [DEI] is like a 'nice to have'. I'm not saying I view it in that way, but I'm just saying most people probably would. I think, in order to really build that cohesive and inclusive culture across the university, it isn't a 'nice to have', it should be as core as the cyber security and other things that we're made to do."</i> – M09 <i>"It's sometimes difficult to be on top of everything that you need to be, because things can shift so frequently in this space. I feel a bit bombarded sometimes. You know, you go through a stream of town halls, then you get emails, then you've got surveys, and you've got training for this, training for that. It can feel quite overwhelming."</i> — M12 <i>"Having a team is not considered as workload."</i> — M01 Capability and Confidence in Managing Diversity Managers can feel ill-equipped to support diverse team members or navigate conflicting views within teams. They say inclusion work can be emotionally taxing, especially when systems meant to support it fall short. (SSFG, 2025SL) <i>"If one of my staff was bullying or discriminating against another staff member I would need additional support."</i> – M04 <i>"The diversity of our team [can be a] challenge, in showing explicit inclusion for particular groups that may be at odds in their views (e.g. Jewish and Arab colleagues; religious colleagues and secular LGBTQIA+ colleagues etc)."</i> — M03	Support Structures for Managers Ensure accessible assistance for managers, including mentors for newer leaders. <i>"Finding resources to help people and having someone who has done this before – a leader who is identified as a person to assist teams and managers."</i> – M21 Build on the Leadership Academy models of peer circles or communities of practice where managers can discuss challenges and share strategies. Rotate topics to include intersectionality, using case studies or anonymised staff feedback. Review the discoverability and utility of support pathways, teams, and resources for managers navigating diverse teams or non-inclusive managers themselves. Streamline Delivery of DEI Information, Resources and Guidance Integrate intersectional inclusion nudges into everyday processes such as meeting, event, and project planning checklists. For example, include prompts such as "Have we considered how overlapping identities may affect access or experience in this initiative?" Present intersectional data (e.g. promotion rates by race and gender) alongside narratives to highlight patterns and gaps as part of quarterly reporting or leadership dashboards. Use short, digestible content (e.g. 2-minute videos, infographics, or email nudges) focused on intersectionality. Embed these into existing communication channels like newsletters or manager portals.

		Seek to value-add intersectional DEI principles and case studies into relevant compliance training and processes where possible to reduce standalone training modules. Explore opportunities to provide "just in time" automated delivery to managers of relevant DEI resources and guidance to interrupt role overload with targeted support at point of need. Thoughtfully Plan Timing of Key DEI Upskill Initiatives Map peak demand periods to inform timing of key DEI initiatives/capability building to reduce pressure during high-load periods.
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5.3.2 Utility of DEI training

Through this submission we have demonstrated the negative impact limited understanding and application of intersectional inclusion at both organisational and managerial levels can have on staff career and workplace experience. Building manager capability around an intersectional mindset and approach is essential for advancing inclusive practice across the University, however role overload means that we should be thoughtful and strategic in the way we do so.

Uptake of DEI training has typically been less than 10% of fixed-term and continuing staff (Table 154). Managers were usually more likely to engage with training than non-managers, and women more likely than men.

TABLE 154 PERCENTAGE MANAGER AND NON-MANAGER PARTICIPATION IN DEI TRAINING 2022-2024

Note: HC = Headcount

	Managers (Men)				Managers (Women)				
	HC Training	Average Hours	HC Staff Cohort	% Staff Cohort	HC Training	Average Hours	HC Staff Cohort	% Staff Cohort	
Continuing									
2023	48	3.6	653	7.4	99	2.8	769	12.9	
2024	47	1.2	709	6.6	59	2.1	888	6.6	
Average				7.0				9.8	
Fixed Term									
2023	23	2	269	8.6	42	1.5	377	11.1	
2024	30	2.7	319	9.4	42	2.2	491	8.6	
Average				9.0				9.8	
	Non-Managers (Men)				Non-Managers (Women)				
Continuing									
2023	137	5	1519	9.0	303	3.7	2068	14.7	
2024	62	1.5	1573	3.9	148	1.1	2175	6.8	
Average				6.5				10.7	
Fixed Term									
2023	75	3.6	1243	6.0	201	4.5	2113	9.5	
2024	67	1.6	1388	4.8	121	2.4	2274	5.3	
Average				5.4				7.4	

All SAGE Silver focus group participants had completed DEI training and were generally positive about the experience. However, some felt that the messaging could be delivered in more effective ways (Table 155). They recommended varied formats and called for more time and support to complete training.

TABLE 155 THEMES ARISING FROM 2025 SYDNEY LISTENS AND SAGE SILVER FOCUS GROUPS RELATING TO DEI TRAINING FOR MANAGERS

Note: 2025SL = Arising from thematic analysis of free text comments from staff in people leadership roles in the 2025 Sydney Listens All Staff Engagement Survey; SSFG = Arising from thematic analysis of comments from staff in people leadership roles in SAGE Silver Focus Groups. Quotes are from SAGE Silver Focus Groups only and are used with permission.

Working Well	Working Less Well	Recommendations
Positive Impact of DEI Training and Development DEI training is widely available, well-used, and generally considered high quality. (SSFG) Professional Development and Mentorship Access to training, secondments, and leadership development programs (e.g., the Leadership Academy) helps managers grow their inclusive leadership capabilities. (2025SL) Mentors and experienced colleagues are valued as sources of support and guidance, especially when navigating complex or unfamiliar situations. (SSFG) <i>"I can feel unprepared whenever anything new and sticky comes up. And you know the one thing in terms of resources that this institution has in spades is very experienced people to go have a chat to. Just having those conversations with colleagues. That's one of the great things about this university."</i> – M14	Low Awareness of Intersectionality and Inclusive Practice The University has made progress promoting inclusion around single aspects of identity (e.g. gender, race, disability), but more needs to be done to address intersectionality. (SSFG) <i>"I think we can, as an organisation, say we are well aware about our gender balance on various committees. But if you ask those same questions around race, I think people wouldn't even know what the answer is, or have even thought about it. We haven't engaged in those discussions at the same level that we have around gender."</i> – M14 <i>"Our current programs and practices seem to be tailored towards specific groups (LGBTQIA+, women, people with a disability, First Nations colleagues) and this does come with the risk of thinking of these groups as separate, monolithic. Not only is each of these groups diverse in itself, but I cannot think of initiatives that reflect the intersectionality of most people's lived experience (in my case CALD and gay)."</i> — M03 Tailoring of DEI Training Training materials should be appropriately geared to the target audience to avoid redundancy or perceived irrelevance, especially for experienced staff. (SSFG) <i>"The issue I had with those modules is the number of them I had to do for somebody who'd already been an academic in Australia for 19 years. I felt like I was being told, 'None of your experience matters'."</i> – M13 <i>"How do we provide the kind of resources that we've all talked about, but not in a patronising way? For example, I've been looking at little videos about unconscious bias and things like that. But I'm imagining sending it to, you know, male professors"</i>	Accessibility and Utility Managers expressed a desire for DEI training to be more meaningful, suggesting they see potential value if it were better designed or implemented. For example, it should be easily accessible, well-advertised, supported by leadership, including provision of time and funding where needed. A range of formats were suggested, including self-guided online modules, in-person workshops (valued for networking), excursions to events. Training should encourage active engagement. <i>"I want to hear people's stories, I want the little talk-throughs and case studies, also the opportunity to meet peers from across the university. I find that really enriching and energising."</i> – M09 Topics for DEI Training suggested by Managers Cultural Awareness: Training that builds understanding of diverse cultural backgrounds, especially in relation to Indigenous engagement, religious diversity, and marginalised communities. Unconscious Bias and Bystander Training: Managers suggested that these modules need to be more practical, with real examples and opportunities to apply learning. Inclusive Leadership and Mentorship: Training that supports inclusive leadership pipelines, especially for culturally diverse women. Managers want training that goes beyond compliance to build inclusive cultures, mentor diverse talent, and address systemic bias. Psychological Safety and Respectful Communication: Training should help managers navigate emotionally charged situations, foster psychological safety, and model respectful disagreement.

	<i>in my faculty and having them either refuse to watch it or roll their eyes. I think that is a particular challenge working in a university environment, where you have to respect people's knowledge but you also have to get things done, and make sure people are behaving responsibly and respectfully." — M11</i> Lack of Practical Relevance DEI modules such as unconscious bias, bystander training, and conflict of interest management are described as not genuine and not promoting applicability. Managers report that these trainings do not include real-world examples or opportunities to apply the concepts in meaningful ways. (2025SL) Missed Opportunities for Impact There is frustration that DEI training exists but is not embedded into leadership behaviours or followed through in practice. Managers feel that training is offered, but inclusive leadership is not modelled, making the training feel performative. (2025SL) Ideological Concerns Some managers expressed discomfort with what they perceive as ideological bias in DEI programs, suggesting that identity politics is being prioritised over merit or broader societal improvement. (2025SL)	Equity in Career Progression: Training that helps managers understand and address bias in promotions, recognition, and development opportunities. Intersectionality: Manager training should explicitly address intersectionality, not just single identity aspects. <i>"There are elements of bias identified and discouraged [in current training modules], but specifically addressing intersectionality is not something I recall seeing (except in the Good Practice Guidelines training about Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander inclusion)." – M04</i> <i>"I do think we sort of get in our comfortable spots and think, Yeah, I'm a good manager, I'm a good people leader, without actually reflecting whether something has changed, or what am I missing out on, or what do I need to be aware of now?" — M10</i> Non-Training Based Learning Opportunities Explore non-training based opportunities to foster empathy and psychological safety in teams, including everyday practices, team rituals and structures, communication, and system supports to build supportive and safe team environments, understand impact of hierarchies and power dynamics, foster empathy for people in different situations. Pair managers with staff from marginalised groups for reverse mentoring to help leaders gain insight into lived experiences and systemic barriers. Host regular staff-led panels or storytelling sessions where individuals share their intersectional experiences. These can be informal, voluntary, and embedded into existing team meetings or leadership forums. Offer one-on-one or small group coaching for managers focused on inclusive leadership. Use real scenarios and reflective practice to explore intersectionality in decision-making, team dynamics, and communication.
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5.3.3 Organisational culture and prioritisation of DEI

Managers who had high-trust relationships with their own supervisors, and who were given autonomy and flexibility in decision-making, felt empowered to lead inclusively. When managers led inclusively, it fostered psychologically safe team cultures, enabling open dialogue, democratic decision-making, constructive feedback, and authenticity, creating a positive feedback loop where the managers thrive as well as unit members.

In contrast, some managers feared retaliation or reputational harm for raising concerns or challenging decisions, which discourages open dialogue and inclusive leadership. There can be a perception that speaking up is punished, especially when views diverge from senior leadership or dominant narratives. Managers also reported feeling undervalued, particularly when their decisions were overridden or their wellbeing was not considered. The emotional toll of managing complex interpersonal dynamics without adequate support led to exhaustion and disengagement.

Managers need a clear understanding of their roles, expectations and pathways to raise concerns without fear of retaliation. While managers in our surveys and focus groups acknowledged the University had strong DEI policies, there was some scepticism that senior leadership did not demonstrate diversity beyond gender, and that there was no apparent accountability for leaders who failed to foster inclusive cultures (Table 156).

TABLE 156 THEMES ARISING FROM 2025 SYDNEY LISTENS AND SAGE SILVER FOCUS GROUPS RELATING TO DEI AS AN ORGANISATIONAL PRIORITY

Note: 2025SL = Arising from thematic analysis of free text comments from staff in people leadership roles in the 2025 Sydney Listens All Staff Engagement Survey; SSFG = Arising from thematic analysis of comments from staff in people leadership roles in SAGE Silver Focus Groups. Quotes are from SAGE Silver Focus Groups only and are used with permission.

Working Well	Working Less Well	Recommendations
Institutional Commitment Managers note the University is genuinely committed to diversity and inclusion, reflected in its strategy, policies, and public messaging. The University's efforts to improve Indigenous representation, support LGBTQ+ inclusion, and address systemic inequities are seen as meaningful steps. (2025SL, SSFG) DEI is viewed as aligned with the University's 2032 vision and broader goals to be a better place to work and a leader in societal impact. Managers express hope that the University will stay strong in its DEI commitments, even in the face of external pressures. (2025SL) Cultural Transformation DEI is recognised by managers as part of broader cultural transformation efforts, including improving psychological safety, staff engagement, and inclusive leadership. Some managers describe a positive culture shift in recent months, linked to increased transparency and inclusion. (2025SL, SSFG) <i>"It really is the role of managers and leaders to set that culture, and to put in place the mechanisms by which the desired culture can thrive and take root. So it's not contributing to it, it's really taking ownership of it." — M14</i> Visibility and Representation There is appreciation for visible DEI initiatives, such as Acknowledgement of Country, inclusive leave policies, and representation in communications. These actions	Perceived Tokenism and Virtue Signalling DEI is sometimes described as performative, with visible commitments not matched by meaningful action. Managers mention that DEI efforts feel like "lip service", especially when inclusive behaviours are not modelled by leadership. (2025SL, SSFG) Despite DEI being a stated priority, managers note that leadership remains homogenous, especially lacking culturally diverse women. This undermines trust in the University's commitment to equity. (2025SL, SSFG) Contradictions Between Policy and Practice Some managers highlighted a disconnect between the University's DEI messaging and its systems, such as the inability to accommodate name preferences for front-of-house and back-of-house systems, or rostering to support carers. This undermines trust in the sincerity of DEI initiatives. (2025SL, SSFG) <i>"I have [teaching] colleagues who have parental requirements that mean a 9am lecture is near impossible. However the timetable allows no flexibility for me to alter this time (no space available across the whole campus)." — M18</i> Inclusive leadership was seen as dependent on improved systems and clearer role definitions to avoid burnout and disengagement. (SSFG, 2025SL) <i>"Even a supportive manager cannot outweigh systems deadnaming people, or policies (or the Enterprise Agreement) specifying breastfeeding 'mother' etc." — M04</i> Lack of Accountability Managers are often promoted based on tenure rather than people management skills, contributing to poor leadership outcomes. There is a	Leadership Visibility and Structural Commitment State DEI goals at every opportunity, embedding them into leadership communications such as town halls and newsletters. <i>"Our primary resource needs to be conversation, with leadership having it on their agenda in town halls, newsletters, and maintaining a continuing discussion, [showing] genuine management understanding." — M07 (Team member)</i> Establish senior positions dedicated to diversity and inclusion, such as Associate Deans for DEI, to signal institutional commitment and keep inclusion top of mind. <i>"I was somewhat stunned that there weren't associate deans for diversity and inclusion already at USyd. At my previous institution, they were just part of the landscape [so] it was on our minds all the time." — M13</i> Accountability for Inclusive Leadership Assess leaders on the culture they foster within their teams and hold them accountable for alignment with DEI principles. Where leaders refuse to learn or adapt, consider whether they are suited to their roles. <i>"If you've got someone who refuses to learn and refuses to grow, it might not be an issue of can we teach them better, it might be an issue of they're in the wrong environment and the wrong job. Being a manager means you need to be proficient in learning new ideas and adapting to your team. If you're incapable of that, then</i>

are seen by managers as helping to foster a sense of belonging and respect for diverse identities. (2025SL, SSFG) Clear Role Definition and Expectations Managers benefit from clarity around roles, responsibilities, and expectations, which helps them lead fairly and consistently. (2025SL)	lack of accountability for managers who fail to meet DEI expectations, including failure to discipline or remove those who negatively impact team culture. (2025SL, SSFG) <i>"It's almost impossible when someone is meeting standard academic requirements but is a huge problem for the culture, for everyone's well-being. It's frustrating that no matter how many times we change things, we still don't seem to be able to get rid of horrible people." – M14</i> Lack of Support and Hierarchical Challenges Many managers feel excluded from decision-making processes, describing a top-down culture where consultation is either symbolic or absent. This lack of involvement undermines trust, morale, and the sense of ownership over work and outcomes (2025SL). Managers may not feel supported by their own leaders, especially when decisions are overridden or unconscious bias goes unacknowledged. (SSFG) <i>"So, as an example, a staff member wants to change to flexible working arrangements. That has to go to the faculty general manager, who quite often has no familiarity or awareness of the situation. And 9 times out of 10 they will just support the manager's decision. But I have had instances where they've refused it. It's a higher level coming in and saying, 'Oh no, we can't accommodate things like that'." – M10</i> <i>"Unconscious bias is always lurking there, even managers who think they're very inclusive. It can be difficult to negotiate if someone is extremely senior and thinks that they're not biased. I find one of my biggest challenges, and I'm confident it's familiar to everyone in the room, is managing up. I spend a lot of time kind of covertly trying to shield my team." — M11</i>	<i>that's not an inclusion issue, it's an employment issue." – M22(Team member)</i> Invest in inclusive leadership development Build on targeted development programs and the Leadership Academy to foster a more diverse leadership pipeline.
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5.4 Action Plan

Note: Some of these actions overlap with those outlined in other sections but are reiterated here in response to issues raised in this section. We have been deliberately non-prescriptive with the framing of our outputs, outcomes, and impacts in developing these actions. By framing actions in a non-prescriptive way, it gives us flexibility to develop a three-year implementation plan with responsible leads that aligns and sequences with current and planned work at the point of implementation. These leads are actively structuring delivery of the actions into planned work where appropriate, or factoring into workflow where actions are stand alone.

KEY BARRIER 5: Non-Inclusive Culture: Managers						
ID	Rationale/Evidence	Actions	Timeframe (start & end)	Person / Group Responsible for Implementing Action	Senior Leader Accountable for Action Delivery	Example Outputs, Outcomes, and Impacts
1. Activate Leadership and Local Accountability to Embed DEI Strategy The University has demonstrated a strong strategic commitment to embedding DEI across the institution. Building on this foundation, there is a valuable opportunity to translate intent into visible, accountable action through empowered leadership at all levels. By enhancing governance consistency, strengthening local implementation, and aligning communication efforts, the University can amplify the impact of its DEI initiatives. Establishing clear DEI performance expectations, supporting local leaders, and fostering senior champions who model inclusive behaviours will help ensure DEI is integrated, sustained, and transformative. Coordinated governance, targeted resourcing, and consistent messaging will further enable cultural change from both the top down and the ground up.						
NIC:M 1.1	DEI efforts lack cohesion and visibility across the institution to support manager visibility and engagement.	NIC:M 1.1.1 Strengthen DEI governance and accountability, and rationale for resourcing by: (1) Building on the DEI and ISS Stakeholder map (Figure 2) through development of a Culture & Community Governance and Accountability map inclusive of DEI, with linkages and shared outcomes highlighted, as well as unique value and impact; (2) Mapping actions from different programs against one another to identify and leverage overlaps and reduce silos, and	2025-2026	Office of the SDVCP, SAGE Team	DVC-Community & Leadership	<i>Subject to final collaborative implementation and resourcing, example outputs and outcomes could include:</i> Output Measures (1) DEI Strategy and Governance Map developed, building on the existing DEI and ISS Stakeholder Map, with linkages, shared outcomes, and unique contributions clearly illustrated. (2) Across-program action map identifying overlaps, synergies, and areas of siloed activity across DEI, ISS, and related initiatives. (3) Communication materials (e.g., presentations, visuals, talking points) incorporating these maps for use in staff and manager engagement. Outcome Measures Reduction in duplicated or siloed efforts, with more coordinated and efficient program delivery.

KEY BARRIER 5: Non-Inclusive Culture: Managers						
ID	Rationale/Evidence	Actions	Timeframe (start & end)	Person / Group Responsible for Implementing Action	Senior Leader Accountable for Action Delivery	Example Outputs, Outcomes, and Impacts
		(3) Using these maps in staff and manager communications where relevant, to illustrate how they work together and reduce perceptions of duplication. <i>(Note: This action is replicated as L&A 1.1.2 and NIC:M 1.1.1, and is currently in progress)</i>				Use of the maps in planning, reporting, and governance processes. Enhanced collaboration across departments and functions due to visibility of shared outcomes and interdependencies. Improved resource allocation, efficiencies and decision-making processes based on clear visibility of overlaps and gaps. Impact Measures <i>Feedback via focus groups, surveys, feedback forms indicating:</i> - Improved clarity and alignment across teams regarding roles, responsibilities, and strategic connections between DEI and ISS efforts. - Increased engagement and understanding among staff and managers of how different initiatives contribute to shared goals. - Cultural shift toward systems thinking and collaboration in DEI, reducing fragmentation in strategic initiatives. - Stronger shared organisational narrative around inclusion, strategy, and impact, enhancing internal trust and external reputation. - Supporting the University's <i>Sydney in 2032</i> strategic goals under the <i>Thriving Through Diversity</i> pillar. - Embedding the University values of <i>Excellence, Trust & Accountability</i>.
		NIC:M 1.1.2 Work with Faculty and University School Leadership Teams to explore how to operationalise DEI strategy at the local level through embedding DEI expectations around Head of School performance, as well as annual performance reviews (AP&Ds and PP&Ds) aligned	2026-2028	DVC-Community & Leadership, SAGE Academic Director, SAGE Team, Respect@Work Team, Faculty and	DVC-Community & Leadership, Deans and Heads of Schools	<i>Subject to final collaborative implementation and resourcing, example outputs and outcomes could include:</i> Output Measures Exploration of mechanisms to incorporate DEI-related performance expectations across levels. Refresh and promote guidance materials to support DEI goal-setting and reflection. Guidance for managers on evaluating DEI contributions.

KEY BARRIER 5: Non-Inclusive Culture: Managers						
ID	Rationale/Evidence	Actions	Timeframe (start & end)	Person / Group Responsible for Implementing Action	Senior Leader Accountable for Action Delivery	Example Outputs, Outcomes, and Impacts
		performance expectations for Deans and <i>Thriving Through Diversity</i> KPMs. <i>(Note: This action is replicated as Action L&A 1.1.5 and NIC:M 1.1.2, FoE 2.2.2, and aligns with Respect@Work Action 1.4.)</i>		University School Leadership Teams		Outcome Measures Increased prioritisation of DEI in individual and team goal-setting. More consistent recognition of DEI-related work, including service, mentoring, and inclusive leadership. Enhanced accountability for DEI progress at all levels of leadership. Improved integration of DEI into strategic planning and operational decision-making. Impact Measures <i>Feedback via focus groups, surveys, feedback forms indicating:</i> • Strengthened leadership commitment to equity and inclusion. • Supporting the University's <i>Sydney in 2032</i> strategic goals under the <i>Thriving Through Diversity</i> pillar. • Embedding the University values of <i>Excellence, Trust & Accountability</i>.
2. Build Inclusive Leadership Capability Through Embedded, Practical Learning and Support Managers are uniquely positioned to foster inclusive, high-performing teams. Many already bring empathy, adaptability, and a commitment to fairness, but to fully realise their potential as inclusive leaders, they need ongoing support and practical tools. When DEI learning is framed as a continuous journey rather than a one-off requirement, it becomes a powerful driver of team cohesion and innovation. Accessible training formats, real-time inclusion tools, and structured mentoring can amplify managers' strengths, helping them embed inclusive practices into everyday decisions.						
NIC:M 2.1	Some managers feel ill-equipped to lead inclusively and manage diverse teams.	NIC:M 2.1.1 Uplift manager capability by seeking to deliver accessible, engaging DEI learning in varied formats, integrated into compliance processes where	2026-2028	SAGE Team, Leadership Academy, Learning & Development, HR	SAGE Academic Director	<i>Subject to final collaborative implementation and resourcing, example outputs and outcomes could include:</i> Output Measures DEI learning modules developed and delivered through the

KEY BARRIER 5: Non-Inclusive Culture: Managers						
ID	Rationale/Evidence	Actions	Timeframe (start & end)	Person / Group Responsible for Implementing Action	Senior Leader Accountable for Action Delivery	Example Outputs, Outcomes, and Impacts
		relevant and feasible, and other processes such as Manager onboarding and the Leadership Academy, and grounded in real-world inclusion challenges, mentoring, and intersectional leadership practices. Leverage non-training-based learning, such as storytelling, peer learning/circles, Intersectionality Walks, and reverse mentoring, to build empathy and inclusion. Incorporate this into manager upskill actions in previous actions. <i>(Note: This action aligns with planned collaborative work between the HR D&I Team and the Leadership Academy, and aligns with RISE Actions 1.4 1.6 and 2.6, and Respect@Work Action 3.3)</i>	2026-2028	D&I Team, Respect@Work		Leadership Academy and onboarding, using varied formats (e.g. online, in-person, scenario-based). Compliance training reviewed to identify opportunities to embed DEI principles. Non-training-based learning approaches (e.g. storytelling, peer learning, reverse mentoring) integrated into leadership development. Outcome Measures Increased manager engagement with DEI learning and leadership development. Greater empathy and understanding of diverse experiences through peer-based learning. Impact Measures <i>Feedback via focus groups, surveys, feedback forms indicating:</i> - Increased satisfaction with managers across diverse staff cohorts. - Reduced role overload and increased confidence among managers in handling DEI issues. - Long-term embedding of DEI into leadership culture and team environments. - Supporting the University's <i>Sydney in 2032</i> strategic goals under the <i>Thriving Through Diversity</i> pillar. - Embedding the University values of <i>Excellence, Trust & Accountability</i>.
		NIC:M 2.1.2 Subject to resourcing, explore digital feasibility to provide practical, point-of-need inclusion tools as well as pathways to HR support to help managers navigate everyday DEI challenges and reduce role overload. Incorporate this into		SAGE Team, Information and Communications Technology (ICT), Learning & Development, HR D&I Team,	SAGE Program Manager, Senior Manager, HR D&I	<i>Subject to final collaborative implementation and resourcing, example outputs and outcomes could include:</i> Output Measures Digital feasibility assessment completed (e.g., platform capabilities, integration with existing systems). Curated inclusion tools (e.g., inclusive language guides, bias interrupters, checklists) embedded in digital formats.

KEY BARRIER 5: Non-Inclusive Culture: Managers						
ID	Rationale/Evidence	Actions	Timeframe (start & end)	Person / Group Responsible for Implementing Action	Senior Leader Accountable for Action Delivery	Example Outputs, Outcomes, and Impacts
		manager upskill actions in previous actions. <i>(Note: Cross-reference with P&C 3.1.1. This action aligns with Respect@Work Actions 3.3 and 6.4, and work underway as part of the Disability Confident Recruiter plan)</i>		Respect@Work Team, HR Partners		Clear HR support pathways mapped and digitised (e.g., decision trees, contact points, escalation guides). Outcome Measures Improved access to practical, real-time support for navigating inclusion challenges. Increased access to just-in-time DEI tools and support for managers. Reduced role overload on managers by streamlining where and how to get help. Improved confidence among managers in addressing DEI issues independently and appropriately. Impact Measures <i>Feedback via focus groups, surveys, feedback forms indicating</i> - Increased staff satisfaction with managers across diverse staff cohorts. - Reduced role overload and increased confidence among managers in handling DEI issues. - Supporting the University's <i>Sydney in 2032</i> strategic goals under the <i>Thriving Through Diversity</i> pillar. - Embedding the University values of <i>Excellence, Trust & Accountability</i>.
		NIC:M 2.1.3 Integrate intersectional inclusion nudges into everyday processes and ways of working, such as inclusive meeting guidelines for Chairs and participants, and event, and project planning checklists. For example, include prompts such as "Have we considered how overlapping identities may affect access or experience in this initiative?"	2026-2028	HR D&I Team, SAGE Team	SAGE Program Manager, Senior Manager HR D&I	<i>Subject to final collaborative implementation and resourcing, example outputs and outcomes could include:</i> Output Measures Everyday processes and materials reviewed and/or created to identify spots for feasible and meaningful inclusion nudges. Number of checklists/templates/processes updated to include intersectional inclusion prompts and inclusive ways of working. Outcome Measures

KEY BARRIER 5: Non-Inclusive Culture: Managers						
ID	Rationale/Evidence	Actions	Timeframe (start & end)	Person / Group Responsible for Implementing Action	Senior Leader Accountable for Action Delivery	Example Outputs, Outcomes, and Impacts
		<i>(Note: This action is replicated as FoE 2.1.1 and NIC:M 2.1.3, and aligns with Respect@Work Action 3.3)</i>				Uptake of inclusive planning practices across different organisational units. Impact Measures <i>Feedback via focus groups, surveys, feedback forms indicating:</i> - Managers find the materials helpful. - Increased satisfaction with managers across diverse staff cohorts. - Increased staff feelings of belonging and inclusion. - Supporting the University's <i>Sydney in 2032</i> strategic goals under the <i>Thriving Through Diversity</i> pillar. - Embedding the University values of <i>Excellence, Trust & Accountability</i>.
		NIC:M 2.1.4 Develop an annual cohesive DEI Communication & Engagement Plan: - Map peak demand periods for academic and professional staff to inform timing of key DEI events/initiatives/capability building to reduce pressure during high-load periods. Share map with other central portfolios. - Using the map to inform timing, co-develop an annual, cohesive DEI Communication and Engagement Plan across DEI teams, identifying intersectional opportunities to collaborate and amplify, forward plan events, foster	Annually in September for the following year	SAGE Team, HR D&I Team, Faculty and University School Teams and Senior Leaders with carriage over DEI, Community & Leadership Team, MarComms, Staff Network Steering Committees, Executive Sponsors and Senior Leaders	DVC-Community & Leadership	<i>Subject to final collaborative implementation and resourcing, example outputs and outcomes could include:</i> Output Measures Annual completion of a map of peak workload periods across the University (e.g. teaching, assessment, reporting cycles). Annual completion of DEI Communication and Engagement Plan, including mapping timing against peaks and troughs of academic, professional, and DEI stakeholder workloads, and within budgetary envelopes. Forward plan leadership engagements (e.g. event participation, communications, sponsorships). Share Plan with key stakeholders, including Faculty and University School teams with carriage over DEI. Outcome Measures Improved planning and coordination between DEI and operational teams. Greater responsiveness to staff wellbeing and workload pressures.

KEY BARRIER 5: Non-Inclusive Culture: Managers						
ID	Rationale/Evidence	Actions	Timeframe (start & end)	Person / Group Responsible for Implementing Action	Senior Leader Accountable for Action Delivery	Example Outputs, Outcomes, and Impacts
		organisational visibility and senior leadership engagement, and opportunities to deepen visibility of Staff Networks and their connection with leaders. 3. Share Plan with Faculty and University School teams with carriage over DEI to assist with localised planning and amplify engagement. <i>(Note: This action is replicated as L&A 3.1.1 and NIC:M 2.1.4)</i>				Increased staff engagement with DEI initiatives due to better timing and reduced competing demands. Intersectional and/or cross-functional collaboration opportunities identified and actioned. Increased visibility of DEI work in organisational communications and leadership messaging. Increased visibility of Executive and Senior Leaders in DEI, Community & Culture activities. Increased collaboration between Staff Networks and leadership teams. Increased leadership attendance and active participation in DEI events. Impact Measures <i>Feedback via focus groups, surveys, feedback forms indicating:</i> • Reduced burnout and improved perceived ability to participate in DEI events, capability building, and other initiatives. • Strengthened integration of DEI into University culture without adding undue pressure. • Improved staff perception of leadership commitment to DEI. • Improved connections between Staff Networks and Senior Leaders. • Increased sense of connection and engagement from Faculty and University School DEI teams. • Supporting the University's <i>Sydney in 2032</i> strategic goals under the <i>Thriving Through Diversity</i> pillar. • Embedding the University values of <i>Excellence, Trust & Accountability</i>.
		NIC:M 2.1.5 Seek opportunities to improve the discoverability and utility of support pathways,	2026-2028	SAGE Team, HR D&I Team, MarComms	SAGE Program Manager, Senior Manager HR D&I	<i>Subject to final collaborative implementation and resourcing, example outputs and outcomes could include:</i> Output Measures

KEY BARRIER 5: Non-Inclusive Culture: Managers						
ID	Rationale/Evidence	Actions	Timeframe (start & end)	Person / Group Responsible for Implementing Action	Senior Leader Accountable for Action Delivery	Example Outputs, Outcomes, and Impacts
		teams, and resources for managers navigating diverse teams or non-inclusive managers themselves. E.g. Create a centralised, searchable DEI support hub for managers, with clear categories (e.g. psychological safety, inclusive leadership, conflict resolution). Map and publish a visual guide to internal support teams (e.g. HR, Safety & Wellbeing, DEI, Legal, RiskWare), showing when and how to engage each. Embed support links and contacts into commonly used platforms (e.g. Workday, intranet, AP&D forms, meeting templates). Establish feedback loops where managers can suggest improvements to support systems and receive updates on changes made. <i>(Note: This action aligns with Respect@Work Action 3.3)</i>				Subject to resourcing and implementation plan, example outputs could include: Centralised DEI support hub for managers created and published. Visual guide to internal support teams developed and distributed. Number of platforms integrated with support links (e.g. Workday, intranet, AP&D forms). Number of feedback loops established (e.g. surveys, suggestion forms, manager forums). Outcome Measures Increase in usage of DEI support resources and services by managers. Reduction in time taken to locate and access appropriate support. Impact Measures <i>Feedback via focus groups, surveys, feedback forms indicating:</i> • Increase in manager awareness of available support pathways. • Increase in manager-reported confidence in navigating team diversity and addressing non-inclusive behaviours. • Improved psychological safety and inclusion scores in staff surveys across faculties and portfolios. • Supporting the University's <i>Sydney in 2032</i> strategic goals under the <i>Thriving Through Diversity</i> pillar. • Embedding the University values of <i>Excellence, Trust & Accountability</i>.
		NIC:M 2.1.6 Pilot embedding short, digestible content focused on intersectionality into existing communication channels like	2026-2028	SAGE Team, HR D&I Team, Marcomms	Head of Internal Communications	<i>Subject to final collaborative implementation and resourcing, example outputs and outcomes could include:</i> Output Measures Type of content created. Engagement metrics (e.g. video views, click-through rates, downloads).

KEY BARRIER 5: Non-Inclusive Culture: Managers						
ID	Rationale/Evidence	Actions	Timeframe (start & end)	Person / Group Responsible for Implementing Action	Senior Leader Accountable for Action Delivery	Example Outputs, Outcomes, and Impacts
		newsletters or manager newsletters.				Outcome Measures Increase in application of inclusive practices discussed in content (measured via pulse surveys or feedback forms). Impact Measures <i>Feedback via focus groups, surveys, feedback forms indicating:</i> • Increase in manager-reported understanding of intersectionality and its relevance to team dynamics. • Positive feedback on content relevance, clarity, and usefulness. • Improved psychological safety and inclusion scores in staff surveys across faculties and portfolios. • Supporting the University's <i>Sydney in 2032</i> strategic goals under the <i>Thriving Through Diversity</i> pillar. • Embedding the University values of <i>Excellence, Trust & Accountability</i>.