



Gender Equality Action Plan *2025–2030*



Acknowledgment of Country

UTS acknowledges the Gadigal people of the Eora Nation, the Boorooberongal people of the Dharug Nation, the Bidiagal people and the Gamaygal people upon whose ancestral lands our university stands. We would also like to pay respect to the Elders both past and present, acknowledging them as the traditional custodians of knowledge for these lands.

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Introduction

At UTS we understand that everyone is impacted by gender roles in different ways and to different degrees. We also acknowledge that the impacts and experiences of gender inequality do not only impact on men and women but on people of all gender identities. Gender equality is for everyone, and we all have a role to play.

As a public purpose institution committed to driving social change within and beyond our campus, our social impact and inclusion agenda focuses research, education and practice from across the university to benefit people and communities.

We believe that universities are uniquely placed to tackle gender inequality and to educate, train and develop a future workforce that understands the limitations that gender stereotyping and segregation impose on individuals, society, culture and the economy. We are strongly committed to supporting women and gender diverse staff and students to join our university community, participate and thrive, and move into the careers of their choice.

At UTS we aim to go beyond regulatory compliance and sector requirements to be leaders in integrated, innovative and impactful gender equity practice, creating a culture where inclusion is central to all that we do.

Gender equality indicators

Over our university's almost 40-year history, UTS has had a strong focus on gender equity and was first recognised as a Workplace Gender Equality Agency (WGEA) Employer of Choice in 2002. Our organisation monitors our workforce gender equality via annual assessment for WGEA's 6 gender equality indicators and reports this information to the UTS Council. We also share our public reports transparently on our website.

The indicators we report on are:

1. **gender composition of our workforce:** the participation rates of women, men and non-binary employees in our workforce including rates of full-time, part-time and casual work, and the proportion of each gender in leadership, as well as the rates of resignations, promotions and appointments by gender.
2. **gender composition of our governing body:** which measures the gender composition of the University Council including the Chancellor and other members, the consideration of gender in the selection of Council members and actions taken to drive change such as time limits, targets and policies.
3. **equal remuneration between women and men:** the difference between the average and median remuneration of women and men and the actions we are taking to reduce the gender pay gap.
4. **availability and utility of flexible working arrangements:** providing support for employees with family or caring responsibilities including parental, carers and family violence leave.
5. **how, when and how often we consult:** through all-staff and targeted group surveys on issues concerning gender equality in the workplace.
6. **sexual harassment, harassment on the ground of sex and/or discrimination:** how our policies, strategies and actions prevent and respond to sexual harassment, harassment on the ground of sex and/or discrimination in the workplace.

In 2025, amendments to [Workplace Gender Equality Act 2012](#) were introduced via the [Workplace Gender Equality \(Gender Equality Targets\) Instrument 2025](#) that require UTS to select and commit to achieve or demonstrate improvement against 3 (of 19 specified) gender equality targets from the WGEA Targets Menu, within 3 years. These can be action targets (i.e., new entitlements that the employer's policies or processes did not provide for in the baseline) or numeric targets (in which employers nominate a percentage point improvement they commit to meet). The targets must be nominated when UTS lodges our Gender Equality Report in 2026 and are currently under consideration as part of examining our baseline data from 2024–25.

Priority areas

UTS's most recent Gender Equality Action Plan was developed as part of our Bronze accreditation (2018–2022) through the SAGE Athena Swan program. That plan contained almost 70 actions relating to: recruitment; retention; promotion; workplace and culture; diversity and inclusion; and governance. Building on themes identified through this process, our subsequent Cygnet Award reports as part of the Athena Swan program (2 awarded in 2024, and 2 in 2025–2026) and other initiatives, this Gender Equality Action Plan identifies 5 priority areas:

1. Safety and respect

UTS understands that gender inequality is a key driver of gender-based violence. In a society in which men are valued more than women, and have more resources and opportunities in public life, our legal and political systems, workplaces, the community, in homes, and in relationships, men will continue to hold the majority of power and influence.

We also acknowledge that some groups of people are disproportionately affected by gender-based violence including women, First Nations people, culturally and linguistically diverse communities, people with disability and people of diverse sexual orientation and gender identity. To effectively tackle gender-based violence we must listen and learn from the lived experience of victim-survivors and work with the diverse communities that are most impacted.

UTS is committed to fostering inclusive educational and workplace cultures in which gender-based violence is unacceptable and that supports physical and psychological safety for everyone in our community. We are determined to uphold these standards by taking action that effectively responds to gender-based violence when it occurs and ensuring respectful conduct is a basic expectation.

Our [UTS Gender-based Violence Prevention and Response Action Plan 2026](#) details our actions and approach to the designing, developing, implementing and evaluating of initiatives that prevent and respond to gender-based violence. Our approach is:

- person-centric – ensuring staff and student agency, empowerment and choice
- intersectionality aware – applying an intersectional lens to ensure sensitive and inclusive approaches to prevention and response
- trauma informed – to ensure that we minimise the risk of re-traumatisation for victim-survivors and maximise recovery and healing
- whole-of-community – extending beyond our campus to the workplaces where students develop their professional practice, the partners we work with in our academic endeavours, and other people who work alongside us at UTS
- focused on making a positive impact – making a real contribution to ending gender-based violence, discrimination in all its forms and marginalisation in the wider society.

2. Intersectional gender inequality

At UTS we understand that gender inequality is often most felt by individuals and groups of people who experience intersecting identities that marginalise them. As a result, considering intersectionality is key in our approach to mitigating gender inequality.

In our equity, diversity and inclusion work, UTS is aiming to recognise the multiplicity of an individual's identity but undertake actions and initiatives that speak to and can impact a wide range of cohorts. This is imperative in a university community that each year is made up of approximately 50,000 students and over 11,000 staff. However, educational, professional and social experiences are all influenced by factors including socio-economic status, Indigeneity, gender, cultural background, age, disability, neurodiversity, gender-identity, sexual orientation, caring responsibility and/or English proficiency. As an institution we recognise that this is not just something that impacts individuals, but that our own systems and processes can compound and perpetuate disadvantages or privileges experienced by different cohorts and individuals.

Priority initiatives currently underway that address intersectional gender inequality include:

- UTS Pathways Plan 2025–2027.
- SAGE Athena Swan program.
- The Indigenous Education and Research Strategy 2025–30.
- The Anti Deadnaming, Anti Misgendering project.
- The Cultural Diversity and Anti-Racism Action Plan 2025–30.
- The UTS Access and Inclusion Plan 2025–2030.

Ensuring that the opportunities and benefits of leadership are available and accessible to all people at UTS is another key area of work. Both Australian and international evidence indicates that diversity in organisational leadership results in better decision making and problem solving, leads to increased innovation and creativity, improves organisational reputation and stakeholder relationships and enhances understanding of relevant markets.

UTS has been making steady progress at increasing gender equity in our senior leadership over recent years. Currently our University Leadership Team consists of 5 men and 9 women, and in 2024–25, 57% of CEO/KMP roles were held by women, along with 54% of other management roles.

However there remains a notable lack of other representation at an executive level, particularly in relation to people from culturally or racially marginalised backgrounds and people living with disability. Increasing the intersectional gender diversity within UTS leadership will be an important priority in upcoming years.

3. Building gender equality in disciplines and occupations where women are under-represented

In 2025, our workforce consisted of 56.4% women and 43.6% men. UTS is committed to achieving and maintaining workforce gender balance at 45:45:10 i.e., 45% women and men and up to 10% of any gender in our workforce. This aims to recognise that people in our workforce also identify with other genders identities and allows for fluctuations in our workforce.

However, UTS continues to experience gender disparity in some fields and disciplinary areas, reflecting broader occupational gender segregation across the community. Improving gender equality in non-traditional areas of study is primarily undertaken through our UTS Pathways Plan which includes a work stream focused on outreach plans for girls and women in STEM disciplines (Faculties of Engineering and IT, and Science).

UTS joined the SAGE Athena Swan pilot in 2015 and, in 2018, was among the first Australian universities to be awarded Bronze accreditation. Since joining the program, UTS has focused on strengthening the recruitment, retention and advancement of women in STEM disciplines, with particular emphasis on inclusive leadership, flexible work practices and equitable career progression.

Accreditation through the SAGE Athena Swan framework remains a core component of UTS's ongoing commitment to gender equity. In progressing towards a Silver Award application, UTS will build on the 5 Athena Swan Cygnet Action Plans, which are aligned with the Gender Equity Action Plan priorities through a coordinated, whole of university approach to systemic change.

4. Gender pay equity

Gender equality and the gender pay gap are closely interconnected. Close attention on UTS's gender pay gap has seen pleasing decreases over recent years and in 2024–2025 our average total remuneration gender pay gap was 7% (median 4.4%), with an average base salary gender pay gap of 6.1% (median 7.3%). This means that on average, men at UTS are paid 6–7% more than women.

In 2024, UTS committed to a gender pay gap target of +/-5% by 2030 (with a 1.5% improvement year-on-year from 2025). As part of this work, we are working with faculty and divisional leaders from across UTS to drill down into the drivers of gender pay inequity in different areas and ensure that local areas change plans contribute to continuing to drive down the university's gender pay gap.

5. Supporting parents and carers

Caregiving responsibilities – including for young children, family members with disability and older people – disproportionately impact women. Time use data from the Australian Bureau of Statistics indicates 61.5% of total time spent on unpaid work care is carried out by women, with significant consequences for women’s workforce participation, financial independence and life-long economic security.

UTS’s *Enterprise Agreement* and *Staff and Students with Carer Responsibilities Policy* set out the variety of ways in which we support carers and parents. Implementing flexible work and study arrangements, and equitable parental leave provisions are essential to gender equity in the workplace enabling career progression and retention of women.

Students who are parents and carers at UTS are supported to attend university through assistance with flexible study loads, access to subsidised childcare, access to health, financial and counselling services.

UTS supports our staff of all genders who are parents and carers in a variety of ways including by:

- providing paid parental leave for non-casual staff regardless of gender and phased return to work following parental leave; provisions are included for adoption, fostering, surrogacy and stillbirth or infant death
- recognising variations in family structures in our leave provisions
- allowing staff to purchase 2–4 weeks of additional leave
- maintaining accreditation as a Breastfeeding Friendly Workplace and access to parenting rooms across campus – annual re-accreditation with the Australian Breastfeeding Association ensures an ongoing commitment to the equal and full participation in the workforce of pregnant and breastfeeding employees and students.
- providing special funding for researchers whose career opportunities have been impacted by life circumstances through the Research Equity and Access Career Help Grants Scheme and the Jenny Edwards Fellowship
- considering Contribution Relative to Opportunity for more equitable evaluation of academic promotion applications
- maintaining accreditation through the Carers + Employers program of Carers NSW
- providing a wide range of flexible work options.