



Terms of Reference

Background

Women are under-represented in senior positions across the higher education sector and at JCU.

In December 2015, the Vice Chancellor's Advisory Committee (VCAC) resolved to take definitive action to address the 'gender gap' in senior recruitment, retention, career progression and induction. It was determined that an action plan detailing an organization-wide response would be developed, and be the basis for an application for the Science and Gender Equity (SAGE) Athena SWAN Charter Bronze medal. This application was submitted in April 2019 and, after further revision, was resubmitted in September 2020, resulting in a Bronze Award being conferred in December 2020.

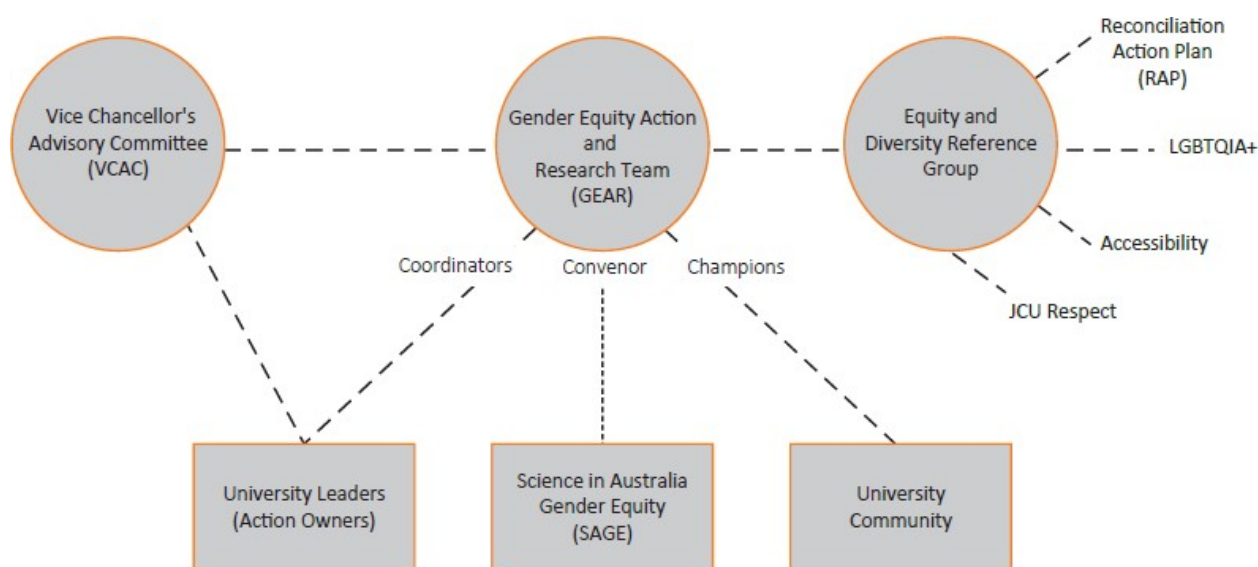
The gender equity action plan was developed on behalf of VCAC by a Self-Assessment Team (SAT) which operated from May 2016 until September 2020. The action plan was approved by the Vice Chancellor with the unanimous support of the VCAC. From September 2020, a Gender Equity Action Research (GEAR) team was established with a focus on supporting the implementation of the action plan.

GEAR's role is to provide guidance and support to JCU managers who hold responsibility for delivery of action plan outcomes. The team supports managers to achieve transformational change towards gender equity through their use of iterative processes of problem identification, data collection, intervention design, evaluation/reflection, and adjustment to build an evidence base for successful change. This work is the basis for potential external awards.

Purpose

GEAR will:

- Provide guidance and support to JCU managers responsible for implementing actions, including having input into policy and practice;
- Communicate and engage with the university community on the progress and outcomes of the action plan;
- Champion gender equity within JCU;
- Plan ahead to enable future Athena Swan or WGEA awards; and
- Collaborate with other JCU diversity groups as appropriate.



Timelines and Reporting

GEAR will report to VCAC after each GEAR Meeting.

Membership

Membership of the GEAR will comprise:

- Vice Chancellor (Chair)
- GEAR Coordinator/s (appointed by Chair)
- PPA Data Analyst Representative (appointed by PPA)
- HR Representative (appointed by Human Resources)

Additionally between 8-12 GEAR members, with consideration given to broad representation:

- No more than two-thirds of membership either male or female
- Australian Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander representation
- Attention to diversity (sexuality, dis/ability, culture, ethnicity, languages spoken, etc)
- Representation from across Australian Tropical Campuses
- Representation of STEMM and HASS members
- Representation from each Academic Division
- Representation from different contract types: fixed-term, casual, continuing, part-time, full-time
- Representation from different academic levels; A/B, C, D/E
- Representation from students
- Representation from professional/technical roles

Membership is self-nominated via an Expression of Interest (EoI) process, with targeted recruitment to follow where required representation is not met. EoIs should indicate which of the criteria above the staff member meets, along with the reason for their interest, and any relevant expertise or experience. Each member will be appointed for a period of 2 years with the option of renewal, endorsed by Chair. Continuity of knowledge will be maintained by ensuring membership expiry dates are staggered.

Meetings

GEAR members can expect to commit up to 10 hours annually to meetings, and need the support of their managers to participate. Casual staff members who participate in the GEAR will be remunerated for their time.

GEAR meetings will occur in March and September to review the action plan. In addition, one or two forum-style meetings, without formal reporting, that could occur mid-year or end-of-year to enable focussed discussion of priority areas.

Additional meetings can be called when required. The GEAR team may establish working groups and/or sub-groups as required.

Roles and Responsibilities

Chair

Vice Chancellor (or nominee)

Provides oversight for the progress of the GEAR team; the quality and effectiveness of the action plan and the implementation of strategic initiatives. Provides high-level advocacy for the strategic importance and resourcing of the project. Manages high-level communication, briefings, and consultations. The Chair presents the GEAR report to VCAC.

Coordinators of GEAR

Position/s appointed by the Chair for 12 months, with dedicated hours allocated for initiatives related to the action plan (totalling .6FTE). Responsibilities include:

- Co-ordinating the GEAR team's support and input for action plan implementation;
- Co-ordinating the Action Plan updates used by VCAC and GEAR to track action plan implementation progress;
- Liaising with Managers who have responsibility for operationalising particular actions;
- Providing and coordinating high-level advice to Managers and VCAC, review/analysis of policy, procedures, training and communications;
- Facilitating the GEAR team's forums, and communication.
- Point of contact with SAGE, NHMRC and ARC regarding compliance and responsible for the dissemination of best practice information and the management of consultation mechanisms.

PPA Data Analyst - Representative

Planning, Performance and Analytics – Business/Data Analyst

The PPA Business/Data Analyst provides information, reporting and data analysis support to Action Owners and GEAR. This involves drawing on the input of the HR Systems Team around data collection, access and use.

HR Representative

Equity and Diversity Portfolio

Provides link between GEAR and HR policy, procedures and systems implementation.

GEAR Team Members/Change Champions

Representative positions

Commit to participating for a two year period, with possible extension. At meetings, GEAR members review action plan progress, and provide feedback for Managers/VCAC on policy and practice. GEAR members are responsible for championing the strategic importance of the action plan to their broader academic and professional communities. GEAR members may represent JCU at training and network meetings as required by SAGE. GEAR members may also take the lead on particular areas of interest to the GEAR team.