Gender Equity Action Plan 2026-2029

MACQUARIE UNIVERSITY
WHOLE-OF-ORGANISATION
GENDER EQUITY ACTION PLAN

MACQUARIE University
SYDNEY·AUSTRALIA



VICE CHANCELLOR'S COMMITMENT

At Macquarie University, gender equity is fundamental to our pursuit of excellence, integrity and impact, shaping how we work, learn, lead and engage with our communities.

The Macquarie University Gender Equity Action Plan 2026-2029 builds on that foundation, moving us towards a more coordinated, whole-of-institution approach that is grounded in shared accountability and consistent systems.

By advancing equitable access, representation, participation and progression for people of all genders, the GEAP will help diverse perspectives shape our organisation, and strengthen a culture where equity, respect and inclusion are embedded in everything we do.

Professor S Bruce Dowton (he/him)
Vice-Chancellor
Macquarie University



ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

Macquarie University acknowledges the Wallumattagal people of the Dharug Nation, Traditional Custodians of the land on which our Wallumattagal Campus stands and pays respect to Elders past and present.

For tens of thousands of years, Indigenous peoples have cared for and maintained connection to Country, and sovereignty was never ceded. This connection to land, waters, skies and communities continues to hold deep cultural, spiritual and educational significance.

Longstanding Indigenous traditions uphold ways of living in which women, men and gender diverse people, including Sistergirls and Brotherboys, each hold valued roles as knowledge keepers, decision-makers, carers and Custodians. These roles carry cultural, spiritual and social significance, and continue to be held and renewed in community today. The wisdom of these enduring practices holds deep significance for our work towards gender equity.

The ongoing impacts of colonisation, including the imposition of narrow ideas about gender, and the importance of truth-telling, respect and self-determination, remain central to working towards equity and justice.

This respect extends to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff and students across our Macquarie community and to all Indigenous peoples engaged with our work.

THANK YOU

The Gender Equity Action Plan has been shaped by contributions from across our diverse staff and student communities. We are grateful to everyone who shared their time, experiences and perspectives throughout the consultation process. Together, these insights have helped shape a GEAP that supports progress towards gender equity across Macquarie.

VISION

A vibrant, safe and inclusive community where gender and intersecting identities do not determine opportunity, experience or outcomes, and where everyone feels respected, supported and empowered to thrive.

WHO THE GEAP IS FOR

This Gender Equity Action Plan (GEAP) is for everyone, across all genders – including women, men, cisgender and transgender people, non-binary and genderfluid people and those who use other terms to describe their gender. Throughout this document women and men refers to both cisgender and transgender women and men.

At Macquarie, gender equity is a core expression of our commitment to diversity, inclusion and belonging as set out in the *Diversity, Inclusion and Belonging (DIB) Framework 2024–2028*. This GEAP, covering Macquarie staff and students, gives effect to that commitment through a whole-of-institution approach spanning education, research, professional services and healthcare.

The GEAP is Macquarie's first institution-wide Gender Equity Action Plan for staff and students. It applies across the University and its controlled entities. While these entities may have distinct governance, workforce, student or operational arrangements, implementation will reflect those contexts while maintaining common enterprise-wide priorities and expectations.

Throughout this GEAP, 'Macquarie' is used as an umbrella term for the Macquarie University enterprise and its controlled entities. Where a specific entity or context is relevant, it is named explicitly.

The GEAP recognises that gender equity is experienced differently across academic and professional settings, healthcare and other operational environments. Throughout this GEAP, 'gender' is used broadly to recognise gender identity, gender expression and the social, cultural and structural dimensions of gender, while recognising that these intersect with sex characteristics and other aspects of identity and experience.

> *"There is a risk that consultation becomes extractive when lived experience is not clearly reflected in outcomes." – GEAP consultation survey respondent*

STRATEGIC ALIGNMENT

The GEAP gives effect to Macquarie's commitment to diversity, inclusion and belonging and aligns with the *DIB Framework 2024–2028* and Macquarie's broader strategic direction.

The GEAP also supports *Our University: A Framing of Dynamic Futures* and the *Operating Plan 2025-2030*, contributing to the People and Organisational Culture Enabling Priority. It translates these strategic commitments into coordinated, institution-wide action across Community, Organisation and Culture – our three priority areas under this GEAP.

It complements and connects with related institutional strategies, policies and frameworks, including those addressing Indigenous strategy and self-determination, workplace flexibility, Gender-based Violence prevention and response, workplace health and safety, student safety and wellbeing, and access and participation.

Together, these frameworks provide the broader strategic, policy and regulatory context for the GEAP, while the actions focus on the specific opportunities identified through evidence, data and consultation.

MESSAGE FROM EXECUTIVE SPONSORS

Gender equity is fundamental to the experience of every student and staff member at Macquarie. It shapes how people learn, work, lead and belong here, and it is central to delivering on our *DIB Framework 2024–2028.*

This Gender Equity Action Plan is our commitment to keep doing the work. It builds on the progress we have already made and sets out clear, practical steps to address the barriers that remain. Sitting alongside the broader Framework, it recognises that equity is an ongoing practice, and one that requires honesty, accountability and contribution from across Macquarie.

We want to thank the staff, students and stakeholders whose insights have shaped this GEAP. Delivering on its commitments will take all of us, and we are proud to sponsor this work. We look forward to working alongside you to turn these commitments into lasting change.

Professor Eric Knight (he/him), Deputy Vice-Chancellor (People and Operations)
Dr Katrina Sealey (she/her), Executive Director, Faculty of Science and Engineering

GOVERNANCE AND ACCOUNTABILITY

This GEAP is governed through existing DIB Framework 2024-2028 structures, ensuring it is embedded within institutional decision-making rather than operating as a standalone governance stream.

The Vice-Chancellor and executive group have committed to advancing gender equity as part of Macquarie's strategic priorities. The GEAP's executive sponsors provide strategic sponsorship and oversight, with implementation supported through designated action owners and delivery partners across the University and its controlled entities.

Action owners are accountable for progressing individual commitments within their areas of responsibility, including monitoring implementation and providing progress updates through the GEAP governance structure. Relevant senior leaders, including deans and executive directors, support implementation within their areas of responsibility. Progress is monitored through the DIB Steering Committee and reported through established institutional governance and reporting mechanisms.

While action owners are accountable for progressing individual commitments, gender equity is an enterprise-wide responsibility requiring leadership commitment, manager capability, relevant expertise, lived experience and ongoing engagement with the communities affected by the GEAP.

HOW WE DEVELOPED THE GEAP

Extensive consultation with staff, students and stakeholders across faculties, portfolios and controlled entities informed the development and refinement of the GEAP. More than 700 staff and students contributed through the consultation process, including approximately 470 staff and 240 students.

Particular effort was made to engage individuals and groups who may experience gender inequity in different ways, recognising the importance of intersectionality and the interaction between gender and other dimensions of diversity. Consultations included dedicated engagement with communities whose experiences of gender may be shaped by Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander identity, cultural, ethnic or linguistic background, disability or accessibility needs, neurodivergence, sexuality and LGBTQIA+ identity, gender diversity, carer responsibilities and career stage.

Our priorities and actions were shaped by:

- a literature review
- analysis of internal staff and student data
- August 2026 Staff Culture Survey
- consultation with Macquarie networks and communities of practice
- Macquarie's DIB Steering Committee
- staff drop-in sessions and surveys
- student surveys and consultation with student clubs, societies and representatives.

Targeted engagement also considered different workforce, student and operational contexts across Macquarie, including MU Health and U@MQ.

WHAT WE HEARD THROUGH CONSULTATION

Across the consultation process, staff and students consistently called for gender equity to be addressed through coordinated institutional action rather than isolated initiatives. Six themes emerged across enterprise-wide and targeted consultations:

- Leadership accountability: Visible commitment, role modelling and accountability were seen as essential to sustained progress.
- Systems-based change: Participants wanted gender equity embedded in systems, structures and processes rather than relying on individual goodwill.
- Gender can't be considered in isolation: Participants explicitly identified that gender needs to be considered alongside race, cultural background and different experiences, noting that homogenous groups can present their own perspectives as 'neutral' while marginalising other backgrounds and ways of thinking.
- Equitable access and progression: Recurring priorities included student progression through their studies, student experience of the classroom, clubs and societies, sports teams, student leadership, life in campus; recruitment of students and staff into the Macquarie community, career development, leadership pathways, flexibility, caring responsibilities and career mobility.
- Safe, respectful and inclusive cultures: Psychological safety, respectful behaviour, belonging and confidence in reporting and support pathways were central to people's experiences.
- Transparency and continuous improvement: Participants wanted to see consultation translated into visible action, measurable outcomes, regular reporting and ongoing engagement.

These themes directly informed the three priorities and actions in this GEAP.

IMPLEMENTATION APPROACH

The GEAP will be implemented as a whole-of-institution, systems-based program of change across Macquarie. It will be delivered through three phases:

- **FOUNDATION (2026–2027):** establish governance, data systems, baselines and core enabling structures
- **EMBED (2027–2028):** integrate gender equity into core systems, leadership practices and workforce/student processes
- **SUSTAIN (2028–2029):** optimise outcomes, close identified gaps and mature continuous improvement systems.

Implementation is underpinned by integrated accountability across executive leadership, faculties, professional portfolios and MU Health, ensuring actions are embedded within business-as-usual operations rather than delivered as standalone initiatives.

EVIDENCE AND APPROACH TO CHANGE

The GEAP is informed by evidence, institutional data and the lived experiences of our community. Its priorities were developed by bringing together sector research, Macquarie workforce and student data, and the perspectives gathered through consultation and engagement with those responsible for implementing the GEAP.

Taken together, this evidence and consultation consistently identified three areas requiring sustained action: equitable access, representation and progression; structural barriers within organisational systems; and the influence of culture, safety and lived experience on participation and belonging. These areas underpin the three priorities of this GEAP: Community, Organisation and Culture.

The combined evidence also shows that gender equity cannot be achieved through representation or individual initiatives alone. Gender can interact with many aspects of identity, circumstance and experience, including Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander identity; cultural, ethnic or linguistic background; disability and accessibility needs; neurodivergence; sexuality; gender diversity; caring responsibilities; and career stage, to shape access, experience and outcomes. Sustainable change therefore requires coordinated action across access, recruitment and progression; organisational systems and decision-making; workplace, learning and on-campus cultures; leadership accountability; safety and prevention; and the conditions that shape people's everyday experiences (Mousa et al., 2021; Crimmins et al., 2024; Gander and Sharafizad, 2025).

The GEAP is underpinned by a theory of change in which coordinated action across Community, Organisation and Culture contributes to sustained gender equity outcomes. The three priorities are mutually reinforcing:

- **COMMUNITY** expands access to opportunity, representation, participation and leadership
- **ORGANISATION** embeds gender equity into systems, structures, policies, data, governance and decision-making
- **CULTURE** shapes everyday experiences of inclusion, safety, respect and belonging.

Together, they shift the focus from isolated initiatives to sustained organisational change, supported by leadership accountability, evidence, lived experience, measurement and continuous improvement (Rogers, 2008).

We recognise that current data does not yet capture the full complexity of intersectional experiences across our community. Strengthening the quality and use of intersectional data is therefore both an important enabler of this GEAP and part of the work ahead.

MONITORING, EVALUATION AND REPORTING

Progress against the GEAP will be monitored through a combination of implementation measures, outcome indicators, institutional data and qualitative evidence, recognising that meaningful gender equity change cannot be captured through a single measure.

Action owners will track progress against their commitments. They will provide quarterly updates on progress and a formal report annually through the GEAP governance structure. Progress will be reviewed through the DIB Steering Committee and reported through established institutional reporting mechanisms.

Measures will draw on relevant workforce and student data, including gender and intersectional measures where data quality, privacy and cohort size permits and is available, alongside staff and student listening, lived experience and other qualitative evidence. This will enable Macquarie to assess not only whether actions have been delivered, but whether they are contributing to meaningful and sustained change. Where appropriate, baseline measures and targets will be established for priority indicators, enabling progress to be assessed over the life of the GEAP and informing adjustments where progress is not being achieved. The monitoring approach will be reviewed throughout the life of the GEAP to respond to emerging evidence, changing organisational circumstances and community experience.

PRIORITY 1: COMMUNITY

We will advance equitable access, representation, participation and progression for people of all genders, ensuring diverse perspectives shape our community.

What success looks like

- Improved representation across genders, including women and gender diverse people, across recruitment, workforce composition and leadership roles
- More equitable recruitment, progression and career development processes, with reduced structural barriers and improved access to opportunities
- Women and gender diverse staff and students have meaningful opportunities to participate in decision making, with their input embedded in institutional priorities through clear feedback loops
- Improved retention and career continuity outcomes for women and gender diverse staff, supported by inclusive recruitment, progression and development pathways

Workplace Gender Equality Agency (WGEA) Indicators: 1, 2, 4, 5

COHORT	ACTION		ACTIVITIES	OWNER
STAFF	1.1	Strengthen equitable recruitment and representation	1. Review and identify structural and procedural barriers within recruitment and selection processes, including where bias may be introduced.	Action owners: • Chief People Officer (CPO) • Head of Talent Acquisition (TA) Delivery partners: • Head of Human Resources Business Partnering (HRBP) • Faculties/portfolios/entities executive directors/deans • Information Technology (IT) Architecture
			2. Strengthen and address identified barriers by embedding inclusive recruitment practices, including but not limited to unconscious bias training for hiring managers, use of inclusive language in job advertisements, and requirements for selection panels with diverse gender representation.	
			3. Monitor recruitment and workforce representation outcomes through an intersectional lens to inform continuous improvement and accountability, including across different workforce cohorts and organisational contexts.	
			4. Strengthen equitable attraction, recruitment and representation in areas of persistent underrepresentation by applying targeted inclusive recruitment strategies and monitoring outcomes across applicant, shortlist and offer stages.	
	1.2	Strengthen inclusive progression, leadership and career development pathways	1. Expand mentoring, sponsorship, networking and inclusive leadership development opportunities for underrepresented groups, including structured talent and leadership pipelines.	Action owners: • CPO • Head, HRBP Delivery partners: • Head, TA • Head of Capability, Culture and Inclusion (CCI) • Faculties/portfolios/entities executive directors/deans • IT Architecture
			2. Review promotion processes, career pathways and succession planning practices (e.g. promotion criteria, performance review processes, academic promotion framework and professional staff progression processes) to identify and address barriers to equitable progression.	
			3. Strengthen career continuity through flexible work, carer support, parental leave and return-to-work re-entry pathways that support career progression continuity, recognising different workforce, work patterns and operational contexts.	
			4. Clarify and embed recognition of contributions that advance gender equity and inclusion within relevant existing systems, including academic workload allocation models, academic promotions and development processes (including Development, Performance and Review), to ensure this work is appropriately valued in career progression considerations.	
	1.3		1. Consult and, where appropriate, co-design with DIB Committees, staff networks, lived experience groups and other representative forums across different workforce cohorts and	Action owners:

		Empower diverse voices to shape and influence our community	organisational contexts on Macquarie-wide strategies, policies, processes and action plans to ensure diverse input is embedded at the system and governance level. 2. Support participation in gender equity initiatives and foster opportunities for peer connection, networking and knowledge sharing across the Macquarie community. 3. Embed staff and student voice into initiatives across people, culture and organisation by demonstrating how feedback has informed decisions and continuous improvement, including through mechanisms that enable staff across different workforce cohorts, work patterns and organisational contexts to raise concerns and contribute lived experience.	• CPO • Head, CCI Delivery partners: • DIB Committee chairs • Staff network chairs • Faculties/portfolios/entities executive directors/deans
STUDENTS	1.4	Strengthen accessible and inclusive support for students who are parents and carers	1. Develop and maintain a central student parents and carers hub that consolidates relevant resources for all students (including international students and graduate research students) into a single, easily accessible location to reduce information fragmentation. Consider merging this with the existing hub for staff with carer responsibilities. 2. Review and update the Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Policy and Special Consideration Policy to better support vulnerable students who are parents with caregiving responsibilities, and the Enrolment Policy or Timetabling Policy to expand eligibility for priority class registration. 3. Deliver targeted communication and awareness campaigns to promote available supports and facilities for students who are parents and/or carers, embedding the hub across key student channels to ensure timely access to support options and on-campus facilities. 4. Understand students who are parents' childcare needs and explore opportunities to use existing Macquarie facilities and/or other resources to better support those who need care for under-school-age children while attending classes, exams and other study-related activities.	Action owner: • PVC(PVC) (Dean of Students) Delivery partners: • Head, Student Wellbeing • Head, Student Life • Manager, Accessibility • Campus Life
	1.5	Strengthen equitable student access, progression, retention and completion through an intersectional gender lens	1. Use institutional equity analytics to disaggregate completion, success and attrition data by gender, socioeconomic status, Indigenous identity, regional/remote status, international student status and any other relevant intersecting demographics to help target support effectively. 2. Regularly review attrition and re-engagement trends to identify early warning indicators and use these insights to inform evidence-based interventions, scholarships and gender equity education and engagement strategies. 3. Embed gender-disaggregated equity metrics into reporting and decision-making cycles, ensuring accountability for closing gaps and demonstrating the impact of support initiatives.	Action owners: • PVC (Education) • PVC (Dean of Students) • PVC (Indigenous) Delivery partners: • Head, Access and Widening Participation • Head, Student Life • Director, Walanga Muru
	1.6	Strengthen the experience, progression and completion of graduate research students through an intersectional gender equity approach	1. Use institutional graduate research equity analytics to disaggregate progression, completion and attrition data by gender, parent/carer status, international student status and culturally and linguistically diverse background to target candidate support effectively. 2. Embed equity-disaggregated graduate research student metrics into regular reporting and decision-making cycles, with transparent accountability for closing identified gaps and demonstrating the impact of candidate support. 3. Strengthen connections between graduate research student support pathways and the broader Student Parents and Carers Hub, ensuring candidate support is culturally responsive and affirms diverse family and caring contexts.	Action owner: • PVC (Graduate Research) Delivery partners: • Manager, Student Safety and Culture • Business Intelligence and Reporting (BIR) • Head, Student Life

			4. Enhance capability and culture in graduate research student communities; equip graduate research students and supervisors with consistent guidance and training to promote respectful communities and inclusion.	

"I want to see more visible pathways into leadership and progression opportunities for women and gender-diverse staff. There are roles where people can feel stuck for years without a clear next step." – GEAP consultation survey respondent



PRIORITY 2: ORGANISATION

We will embed gender equity into systems, structures and decision making underpinned by transparent standards, inclusive design and clear accountability.

What success looks like

- Gender equity is embedded in governance, planning, policy and decision making across Macquarie
- Equity data informs organisational priorities, resource allocation and organisational decision-making
- Promotion, pay, workload and flexible work practices are transparent, consistent and fair, with staff experiencing these processes as equitable and accessible
- Leaders are accountable for gender equity outcomes through clear governance and performance mechanisms
- Gender equity progress is regularly measured, reported and used to drive continuous improvement

WGEA Indicators: 1, 2, 3, 4, 6

COHORT	ACTION		ACTIVITIES	OWNER
STAFF	2.1	Strengthen governance and accountability for gender equity	1. Establish GEAP governance, implementation and reporting structures with clear ownership, decision-making authority, and accountability and progress tracking across the institution, including Macquarie University, faculties, portfolios and controlled entities.	Action owners: • CPO • GEAP executive sponsors Delivery partners: • Head, CCI • Faculties/portfolios/entities executive directors/deans
			2. Embed gender equity and inclusion expectations into institutional policies and processes, including the academic promotions process, staff performance and development processes, and relevant University-wide planning and operational frameworks (including Gender Impact Assessment for Gender-based Violence).	
			3. Integrate equity accountability measures and progress against relevant GEAP commitments into executive and senior leadership roles, including alignment with the Macquarie Capability Framework and related leadership capability expectations.	
			4. Continue to meet external reporting, accreditation and compliance standards, including WGEA, Science in Australia Gender Equity (SAGE) Athena Swan, and the Australian Workplace Equality Index (AWEI), and use these frameworks to drive continuous improvement.	
			5. Embed institutional self-reflection into gender equity planning and decision making, examining how institutional norms, assumptions and practices may shape experiences, participation and outcomes, and using this insight to inform ongoing improvement.	
	2.2	Strengthen gender equity data, systems, evaluation and transparency	1. Implement a Gender Equity Action Plan monitoring and evaluation framework with measures, indicators and a scorecard to track implementation, outcomes and impact, including intersectional measures where data is available (Risse, 2024)	Action owners: • CPO • Chief Data Officer (CDO) Delivery partners: • HR Applications Services Manager • BIR • IT Architecture • Head, CCI
			2. Improve the collection and quality of gender and intersectional workforce data across recruitment, progression, retention and attrition, including across different workforce cohorts and organisational contexts.	
			3. Develop diversity and inclusion dashboards for the executive group to support better understanding of workforce diversity data and use for reporting and decision-making.	
			4. Use data to identify structural inequities, including pay gaps and gendered drivers of inequality (including gender-based violence insights) to inform actions.	

			5. Use employee listening mechanisms, including culture, pulse and employee lifecycle surveys, to inform continuous improvement of gender equity outcomes across different workforce cohorts and organisational contexts. 6. Review and enhance systems, forms and processes across staff, health and other service contexts to create more gender-affirming experiences, including consistent recognition of affirmed names, pronouns, gender identity and other personal details.	• Head, HRBP • Faculties/portfolios/entities executive directors/deans
	2.3	Strengthen pay, promotion, workload and flexibility practices	1. Regularly audit pay, promotion, workload and flexibility policies, frameworks and related processes for gender inequities across different workforce and operational contexts. 2. Strengthen pay equity through annual gender pay gap analysis and ongoing review of pay-setting processes, with targeted actions to address identified gaps and improve parity outcomes. 3. Strengthen promotion frameworks and related processes to identify and remove gendered barriers to progression, supported by improved collection and analysis of gender and intersectional workforce data across recruitment, progression, retention and attrition, including equitable access to progression and mobility opportunities across different workforce and organisational contexts. 4. Improve consistent implementation of the Flexible Work Policy across Macquarie, recognising that flexibility may differ across roles, work patterns and operational contexts while ensuring equitable access for all staff.	Action owners: • CPO • Head, HRBP Delivery partners: • Remuneration Manager • BIR • IT Architecture • Head, TA • Head, CCI • Faculties/portfolios/entities executive directors/deans
STUDENTS	2.4	Improve student-facing systems to support gender-affirming experiences and reduce deadnaming and misgendering	1. Conduct a comprehensive institutional audit of student-facing digital systems and data pipelines, collaborating with a focus group of gender-diverse students to help map real-world friction points and system leakage. Identify opportunities and prioritised actions that are feasible within the GEAP timeframe to improve recognition of affirmed names, pronouns and gender identity, including where systems or processes are governed by external requirements. 2. Re-engineer internal data architecture and user interfaces using iterative feedback from the gender-diverse student focus group to improve intuitive, consistent and automated recognition of gender diversity. 3. Where structural change is not possible, develop system or process improvements to minimise harm, in consultation with gender diverse students.	Action owner: • Chief Information and Digital Officer (CIDO) Delivery partners: • Head, Student Life • Campus Life

"Most forms only allow 'male' or 'female', so I'm forced to pick something that doesn't reflect who I am. It feels like the system doesn't recognise non-binary identities at all." - GEAP consultation survey respondent

"Workload expectations still assume an ideal worker without caring, health or accessibility constraints." - GEAP consultation survey respondent

PRIORITY 3: CULTURE

We will foster safe, respectful and inclusive environments, free from harmful behaviours, where people of all genders feel valued, supported and empowered to succeed.

What success looks like

- Staff and students experience respectful, safe and inclusive environments, with improved belonging and reduced gender-based harm, discrimination and exclusion
- Leaders, managers and staff consistently demonstrate inclusive, respectful and psychologically safe behaviours
- Increased trust and confidence in reporting, support and response pathways through timely, consistent and trauma-informed responses
- Staff listening, lived experience and institutional data inform continuous improvement of gender equity, inclusion and safety across Macquarie

WGEA Indicators: 1, 4, 5, 6

COHORT	ACTION		ACTIVITIES	OWNER
STAFF	3.1	Strengthen prevention, safety and response to Gender-based Violence (GBV)	1. Implement the Gender-based Violence Prevention and Response Plan to deliver targeted prevention initiatives, education and awareness activities across Macquarie and its diverse workforce and operational environments. 2. Promote awareness of, and accessibility to, the GBV Response Team and the pathways for disclosure, referral and support to strengthen confidence in disclosure, reporting and seeking assistance. 3. Implement the Gender-based Violence Policy and Investigation Procedure by embedding trauma-informed, person-centred approaches across reporting, investigation and support processes. 4. Strengthen institutional capability to prevent and respond to GBV through dedicated governance, specialist support and response, targeted GBV working groups and continuous improvement across different organisational and operational contexts. 5. Strengthen confidence in reporting through consistent, transparent and timely responses to disclosures and reports, supported by continuous monitoring and improvement across different organisational and operational contexts.	Action owners: • CPO • Co-chairs of GBV Cross Governance Group • PVC (Education) Delivery partners: • Head, Employee Relations (ER) • Head, HRBP • Head, CCI • Senior GBV case worker • GBV Education and Training Group • GBV Safety and Risk Group • Head, Macquarie Academy • Faculties/portfolios/entities executive directors/deans
	3.2	Build inclusive leadership capability and everyday behaviours	1. Build capability for gender inclusive, respectful and psychologically safe everyday behaviours across staff and leaders through the organisational values, Capability Framework and targeted development programs with approaches that recognise different workforce and operational contexts. 2. Equip staff, leaders and managers with training, tools and resources to identify, address, challenge and prevent gender-based exclusionary, disrespectful and harmful behaviours. 3. Embed expectations for inclusive everyday behaviours into organisational processes, including leadership and people management expectations, performance development processes and workplace standards. 4. Require leaders to role-model inclusive behaviours, including supporting flexible work, caring responsibilities and respectful team practices, and reinforce these expectations within their teams and organisational contexts.	Action owners: • CPO • Head, CCI • PVC (Education) Delivery partners: • Head, HRBP • Head, Macquarie Academy • Student Safety and Culture • Faculties/portfolios/entities executive directors/deans

	3.3	Foster belonging, respect and inclusive environments	1. Develop and embed gender-inclusive communication and language expectations across institutional communications, supported by clear guidance, standards of practice and consistent application across different organisational and operational contexts. 2. Improve visibility and representation of diverse genders and lived experiences across Macquarie communications, leadership profiles and institutional storytelling. 3. Understand experiences of belonging, inclusion and psychological safety across different workforce cohorts and organisational contexts through staff listening initiatives, pulse surveys and engagement with relevant staff networks and communities. Consider the experiences of people of different genders and intersecting identities, including the lived experiences of transgender, gender diverse and intersex people. 4. Implement targeted initiatives to address identified barriers to belonging, inclusion and equitable participation for people of all genders, informed by staff feedback, lived experience and institutional data, including where barriers arise from different workplace, operational or physical environments.	Action owners: • CPO • Head, CCI Delivery partners: • Director of Communications • CIDO • HR Applications Services Manager • Faculties/portfolios/entities executive directors/deans
STUDENTS	3.4	Strengthen prevention, accountability and response to GBV for students	1. Deliver Macquarie's Gender-based Violence Plan and Framework as a whole-of-institution priority, establishing clear governance, resourcing and accountability mechanisms to ensure timely and effective implementation. 2. Publish regular public reporting on progress, outcomes and impact, providing transparency to the Macquarie community and demonstrating accountability for closing identified gaps. 3. Partner with students, staff and external GBV experts in the design, monitoring and evaluation of GBV initiatives, ensuring lived experience and specialist expertise shape effective prevention and response. 4. Champion GBV prevention and response visibly and consistently through University leadership, and embed it across Macquarie's culture, systems and decision-making. 5. Deliver and strengthen the accessibility and timeliness of Macquarie's GBV Response Service to ensure trauma-informed, person-centred support for all members of the Macquarie community.	Action owner: • PVC (Dean of Students) Delivery partners: • Head, Student Life • Head, Student Wellbeing • Manager, Student Safety and Culture • Senior GBV Case Worker • GBV Education and Training Group • GBV Safety and Risk Group • GBV Data and Reporting Group
	3.5	Strengthen gender equity participation and pathways through widening participation initiatives, including in STEMM.	1. Continue and strengthen outreach, immersive experiences and mentoring through widening participation initiatives that strengthen identity, aspiration and pathways for school students, with a focus on cohorts experiencing gender and other participation barriers, including gender diverse students, those from low socioeconomic backgrounds, Indigenous Peoples, regional/remote and culturally and linguistically diverse students. This includes maintaining flagship initiatives such as Girls to Graduates (G2G) and other programs in STEMM. 2. Maintain equitable access mechanisms, tailored entry pathways, scholarships and targeted financial support to address participation, financial and structural barriers across the student lifecycle. 3. Sustain career readiness, leadership and industry engagement opportunities that build networks and pathways into STEMM careers and higher degree research.	Action owner: • PVC (Education) • PVC (Indigenous) • Head, Access and Widening Participation Delivery partners: • Head, Macquarie Academy • Head, Access and Widening Participation • Director, Graduate Futures • Campus Life • Director, Walanga Muru

			4. Reflect annually on the program's contribution to addressing gender equity obstacles and drivers, drawing on participant outcomes, experiences and intersectional data to refine design and report progress.	
	3.6	Foster wellbeing, belonging and positive peer cultures among male-identifying students	1. Create multiple engagement pathways: Establish a small suite of men's wellbeing and connection offerings delivered through high-engagement settings (for example sport, music/creative, STEMM/maker activities, and cohort challenges) so students can connect in ways that feel natural and low-barrier. 2. Build capability and culture in student communities: Equip student leaders, club executives, team captains, mentors and peer facilitators with consistent guidance and training to promote respectful communities, inclusion and early help-seeking, with clear escalation and referral pathways. 3. Activate alumni and ambassadors to model positive wellbeing, belonging and cultural leadership: Engage high-profile, highly credible University alumni as champions (for example through shoulder-to-shoulder activities, workshops, mentoring touchpoints or campaign participation) valuing positive connection and wellbeing, strength-based leadership, and the role of these attributes in achievement across sport, creative industries, and STEM/tech. 4. Provide visible access points and warm pathways to support, with evaluation: Develop simple, recognisable entry points (online hub and on-campus touchpoints) that connect men to supports quickly and discreetly, and establish governance and evaluation to monitor reach, student experience, inclusion and safety indicators, and to iterate improvements over time.	Action owners: • PVC (Education) • PVC (Dean of Students) • CEO, U@MQ Delivery partners: • Head, Student Life • Head, Student Wellbeing • Student Safety and Culture • Campus Life • Head, Access and Widening Participation • Head of Alumni/Senior Development Manager, Philanthropy • Manager, Student Safety and Culture
	3.7	Foster wellbeing, belonging and positive peer cultures among gender diverse students	1. Create multiple engagement opportunities to establish a small suite of gender diverse wellbeing and connection opportunities, delivered through existing high-engagement pathways so students can connect in ways that feel safe, affirming and low-barrier. This includes exploring partnership opportunities with other universities to broaden networks, share good practice, and offer joint events where beneficial. 2. Continue to build capability and culture in student communities: Equip student leaders, club executives, team captains, mentors and peer facilitators with clear guidance and training to actively include gender diverse students; use respectful language and practices; prevent and respond to misgendering; and support early help-seeking, with explicit escalation and referral pathways. 3. Activate alumni and ambassadors to model positive wellbeing, belonging and cultural leadership: Engage gender diverse University alumni and trusted allies as visible champions through side-by-side activities, workshops, mentoring touchpoints, or campaign participation to normalise inclusion, affirm peer culture and strength-based leadership, and highlight the link between belonging, wellbeing and achievement across disciplines and communities.	Action owners: • PVC (Education) • PVC (Dean of Students) • CEO, U@MQ Delivery partners: • Head, Student Life • Head, Student Wellbeing • Student Safety and Culture • Campus Life • Head, Access and Widening Participation • Head of Alumni/Senior Development Manager, Philanthropy • Manager, Student Safety and Culture

"Staff and students still do not feel they can trust their issues are going to be resolved, as usually they end up being re-traumatised and penalised for reporting anything in the first place." - GEAP consultation survey respondent

"Without leadership accountability, everything else is symbolic."
- GEAP consultation survey respondent

GLOSSARY

The GEAP uses language that reflects the diversity of gender identities and experiences across our community. The definitions below clarify how key terms are used in this GEAP. Language continues to evolve and terminology may vary across communities and contexts, and people's own descriptions of their identity should always be respected.

The definitions have been informed by Macquarie's policies, frameworks and guidance, including the DIB Framework 2024-2028, Gender-based Violence Prevention and Response Policy, and Student Gender Affirmation Guide. Where a term does not have a formal Macquarie definition, the definition provided is a working definition for the purposes of this GEAP.

BROTHERBOY
A term used by some Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to describe trans people who have a masculine spirit and take on men's roles within their community.

CISGENDER
A term used to describe a person whose gender aligns with the sex they were assigned or presumed at birth.

GENDER
A social and cultural concept relating to roles, behaviours, expectations, expressions and identities associated with gender. Gender includes, but is not limited to, women, men and gender-diverse identities.

GENDER AFFIRMATION
The process through which a person lives and expresses their gender in ways that feel right for them. This may involve social, medical or legal changes, or none of these. Each person's experience and choices are different.

GENDER DIVERSE
An umbrella term for people whose gender does not align exclusively with the traditional binary categories of woman and man. It may include people who identify as non-binary, genderfluid, agender, genderqueer, trans or in other ways.

GENDER EQUITY
The process that is used to achieve gender equality by providing fair, tailored support that meets each gender's unique needs and addresses bias or disadvantage arising from gender roles, norms or differences.

GENDER EQUALITY
The principle that realises all people have equal rights, opportunities, resources and respect across all areas of life regardless of gender.

GENDER IDENTITY
A person's internal understanding or sense of their own gender. A person may identify as a woman, man, non-binary, genderfluid, agender or in other ways.

GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE (GBV)
Any form of physical or non-physical violence, harassment, abuse or threats based on gender that results in, or is likely to result in, harm, coercion, control, fear or deprivation of liberty or autonomy. It may include sex-based harassment, workplace sexual harassment, stalking, cyber abuse, family and domestic violence and conduct that creates a hostile, intimidating or humiliating environment on the basis of sex, gender or sexuality.

INCLUSIVE DESIGN
Designing systems, services, processes and environments from the outset to be usable and accessible to people with diverse needs, identities and circumstances, rather than relying on adjustments after they have been designed.

INTERSEX
A term for people born with sex characteristics that do not fit typical medical definitions of female or male bodies. Intersex relates to sex characteristics and is distinct from gender identity and sexual orientation.

INTERSECTIONALITY
An approach that recognises that different aspects of a person's identity and circumstances — such as gender, Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander identity, culture, ethnicity or language, disability or accessibility needs, neurodivergence, sexuality, gender diversity, age, socioeconomic circumstances, caring responsibilities or career stage — can interact to shape experiences of opportunity, disadvantage, discrimination and inclusion.

LIVED EXPERIENCE
Knowledge and insight gained through a person's own experiences of identity, systems, policies, practices or circumstances. In this GEAP, lived experience is recognised as an important source of evidence alongside institutional data, research and other forms of expertise.

MISGENDERING
Referring to someone using gendered language, including names or pronouns, that does not reflect their gender identity, whether intentionally or unintentionally.

NON-BINARY
A term used by people whose gender is not exclusively woman or man. Non-binary is an umbrella term that can include a range of gender identities.

PRONOUNS
Words used to refer to a person in place of their name, such as she/her, he/him, they/them or other pronouns a person may use. Using a person's pronouns and chosen name is part of respectful and inclusive practice.

PSYCHOLOGICAL SAFETY
An environment in which people feel able to speak up, ask questions, raise concerns, contribute ideas and participate without fear of humiliation, punishment or other negative consequences.

SEX CHARACTERISTICS
Physical characteristics related to sex, including chromosomes, hormones, reproductive anatomy, genitals and secondary sex characteristics.

SISTERGIRL
A term used by some Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to describe trans people who have a female spirit and take on women's roles within their community.

TRANSGENDER/TRANS
An umbrella term for people whose gender differs from the sex they were assigned or presumed at birth. Not everyone whose gender differs from their assigned sex uses the term transgender or trans.

MACQUARIE STRATEGIES, POLICIES AND FRAMEWORKS

Macquarie University ***Diversity, Inclusion and Belonging Framework 2024–2028.***

Macquarie University ***Indigenous Strategy 2026–2030.***

Macquarie University ***Gender-based Violence Prevention and Response Plan and Outcomes Framework 2026–2030.***

Macquarie University ***Gender-based Violence Prevention and Response Policy.***

Macquarie University ***Student Gender Affirmation Guide.***

Macquarie University ***Pronouns 101. Fostering an inclusive environment: names and pronouns.***

Macquarie University ***Flexible Work Policy.***

LEGISLATION AND REGULATORY CONTEXT

Workplace Gender Equality Agency (WGEA) Gender Equality Scorecard 2024–25.

Workplace Gender Equality Act 2012 (Cth)

Sex Discrimination Act 1984 (Cth)

Fair Work Act 2009 (Cth)

National Higher Education Code to Prevent and Respond to Gender-based Violence 2025

Australian Human Rights Commission. Respect@Work: National Inquiry into Sexual Harassment in Australian Workplaces

Higher Education Standards Framework (Threshold Standards)

Science in Australia Gender Equity (SAGE) / Athena Swan Expectations Framework: Bronze to Gold Award Pathway

Australian Workplace Equality Index (AWEI)

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