



Athena SWAN

Silver Action Plan



KEY BARRIER 1: STEM PIPELINE						
Ref	Rationale/Evidence	Actions & Outputs	Timeframe (start & end)	Person / Group responsible for implementing action	Senior Leader accountable for action delivery	Desired Outcomes and Impact
1.1	Implementation of Female Targeted Pilot was impacted by limited understanding of the process by key stakeholders (Recruiters, Panel members, Chairs).	a) Develop guidelines for identified and targeted recruitment. b) Develop training and awareness of process for Recruiters and panel members. c) Improve system or process to ensure male applicants are considered AFTER female applications.	2024	Talent Acquisition EDI AD EDIs	CPCO DVCA	Guideline developed and utilised by key stakeholders. 100% of panellists complete training. No concerns raised by panellists or candidates about process. 50% increase in number of female candidates put forward for interview.
1.2	Greater nos. of women on female targeted recruitment panels contributes to increased number of female appointments.	Commit to 50% female panel representation for all future female targeted roles.	2024 and ongoing	Talent Acquisition EDI AD EDI	CPCO DVCA PVC CESE	Minimum 50% female representation achieved for all targeted panels.
1.3	Targeted Selection Pilot demonstrated limited success in appointing a female, largely due to low numbers of women applying for targeted roles.	a) Develop an EVP for females at the University – particularly STEM. b) Develop proactive sourcing strategies for targeted and identified roles – search, new marketing campaigns international v domestic. c) Assess the perspective of females to ascertain rationale for not applying or rejecting offers.	2024 Develop 2025 - 2026 Pilot 2027 Review	Talent Acquisition EDI AD EDI CESE	CPCO DVCA PVC CESE	Achieve and maintain 40/40/20 representation in SIPS and SENG.

1.4	Greater number of roles selected for female targeted or identified recruitment required	Utilising data dashboard, develop a diversity plan for each School/Unit as part of annual planning process including determination as to which roles should be identified or targeted.	2024 and annually thereafter	Talent Acquisition HR BPs CESE – HOS CESE AD EDI	CPCO CESE PVC	50% increase in number of female targeted roles in SIPS and SENG.
1.5	Further increases in female representation required in SENG & SIPS.	Set and track shortlisting KPI's for SENG & SIPS. Retention plans for Levels B to E.	2024	HOS – SENG HOS – SIPS AD EDI CESE HR BP CESE	PVC CESE	20% increase in number of women being appointed to SENG and SIPS.
1.6	Direct appointments may be contributing to higher numbers of male staff.	Review data on the gender balance of direct appointments and grant-funded appointments where no competitive recruitment campaign has taken place.	2024	Talent Acquisition/ EDI AD/EDI	CPCO DVCA PVC CESE	Data insights provide evidence to inform potential gender strategies with direct appointments if required.
1.7	Female representation decreases the higher the level of the role.	a) Hold annual Talent Reviews to identify high potential female academic and professionals. b) Develop career development plans and succession plans. c) Review exit survey and interview data.	2024 and annually thereafter	Talent Acquisition/ CESE - HOS CESE AD EDI	CPCO CESE PVC	20% increase in female representation at level E in CESE.
1.8	Greater number of female students required to build the pipeline for STEM.	Campaign to engage and attract more female students to apply for STEM degrees through dedicated web page.	2024/2025	M&C Future Students	DVCG	10% increase in enrolments by students in STEM degrees.

1.9	Data required to better understand the experience of female and female Indigenous students in male dominated schools.	Develop survey and/or run focus groups to better understand challenges and opportunities for existing students.	2024/2025	AD EDI CEEHE	PVC CESE DIR CEEHE	10% increase in number of female students and 50% increase in female Indigenous students in SIPS and SENG.
1.10	Improve tracking of retention rates of female students in underrepresented areas.	Review retention rates for female students and develop exit survey for female students that have left.	2024/2025	SPP HOS AD EDI CESE	DIR SPP	Retention rates for female students increases by 10% in SIPS and SENG.
1.11	Retention of Indigenous students in STEM is less than non-Indigenous students in STEM.	Initiate establishment of Indigenous Students in STEM network at the University.	2024/2025	Indigenous Student Advancement Team, Wollotuka	PVC ISL Director, Wollotuka PVC CESE	Retention rates for female Indigenous students increases by 50%.
1.12	More data insights required into links between high school engagement programs with University degree choice of female students.	Scoping of potential long-term study to evaluate links between high-school engagement and University degree choices.	\$10K invested in 2023 Scoping 2024 Review 2025	SPP ASWP HunterWiSE	ASWP	Longitudinal study established for local outreach program.
1.13	Low number of female students enrol in STEM degrees.	Leverage HunterWiSE outreach program through scholarship initiatives and additional schools	\$40k invested in 2023-2024 Review impact 2025	HunterWiSE Future Students M&C	ASWP	Female enrolment in STEM degrees increases by 10%.
1.14	Numbers of underrepresented groups (e.g. women) are increasing in CESE but their experience of 'equity' differs from other groups.	Apply the recommendations from CEEHE's Equity Research Pilot Report to improve culture and review progress.	2024 – 2026	CESE – HOS AD EDI CEEHE	PVC CESE DIR CEEHE	Cultural change demonstrated through staff and student survey evaluation and retention rates.

KEY BARRIER 2: Career Development						
Ref	Rationale/Evidence	Actions & Outputs	Timeframe (start & end)	Person / Group responsible for implementing action	Senior Leader accountable for action delivery	Desired Outcomes and Impact
2.1	Equity cohorts face additional challenges that may prevent them from achieving research metrics required for career progression.	Roll out Equity Research Fellowship Program that provides mentorship and flexible funding to support equity cohorts to achieve research metrics.	June 2024 and ongoing (18-month program)	PVC RI RA Team	DVCRI	10% increase in research outputs and/or career progression for equity cohorts (e.g. Women, Indigenous, CALD, Disability).
2.2	Career Planning critical for progression and retention of women.	a) Ongoing evaluation of PRD/APP engagement through monthly reporting of participation rates to HOS and Executive. b) Career Planning workshops held for staff and Career coaching provided for Managers.	2024 and annually thereafter	HRS/CAD HR BPs	CPCO	95% participation rate of PRD/APP by professional and academic staff. Managers equipped to have career conversations with staff and evaluated through survey data.
2.3	Key mentorship programs support women with career progression	Analysis of Academic Mentoring Program, Professional Staff Mentoring Program, Live Learn Lead and Women in Leadership with diversity lens.	2024 and annually thereafter.	HRS/CAD EDI	CPCO	Continued monitoring and evaluation of key programs to demonstrate impact on career progression.
2.4	Formal sponsorship program required to complement existing mentoring and developing programs.	Pilot GEDI Sponsorship Program for women with a focus on those from underrepresented groups.	2025	HRS EDI	CPCO DVCA	10 women participate in Pilot and if successful – implemented on annual basis.

2.5	Lack of development and advancement opportunities for Indigenous staff	Support Indigenous staff to attend the Thirri Wirri Indigenous Leadership program and evaluate impact on career progression.	2024 and annually thereafter.	OISL	PVC ISL	Minimum of 4 Indigenous staff participate annually. Career progression evident through increase in HEW or Academic level or other achievement.
2.6	University wide Succession planning that includes diversity focus	Develop Succession Planning framework that incorporates diversity factors.	2024	HRS EDI	CPCO DVCA	Framework developed to support succession planning.
2.7	Improved visibility and reporting of career advancement of women	Develop dashboard and reporting that includes # of women at each level, track movements monthly.	2024	HRS	CPCO	Improved tracking options to evaluate current female focused strategies and KPIs.

KEY BARRIER 3: Indigenous Cultural Competency						
Ref	Rationale/Evidence	Actions & Outputs	Timeframe (start & end)	Person / Group responsible for implementing action	Senior Leader accountable for action delivery	Desired Outcome and Impact
3.1	Low numbers of Indigenous applicants for Academic roles.	a) Strategic sourcing of Indigenous academic candidates b) Review recruitment practices for targeted or identified roles to ensure culturally informed candidate care. c) Ensure value proposition for Indigenous staff is promoted as part of recruitment.	2024	Talent Acquisition OISL	CPCO PVC ISL	20% increase in number of Indigenous academics applying for roles and 20% increase in Indigenous academics being appointed to roles.
3.2	To increase staff participation rates and reach population parity, Indigenous HDR Students are supported to do PhDs and retained in the University's workforce.	a) Dedicated Indigenous PhD scholarship support packages. b) Ongoing evaluation of HDR Networking Program for Indigenous students.	Annually (10 per year; plus up to \$20k top up funds) 2024 and annually thereafter	Wollotuka OISL R&I	PVC ISL DVCRI	10+ Indigenous students undertaking higher degree research per year.
3.3	To increase lack of Indigenous participation in key Research Advantage programs.	a) Create identified places for Indigenous participants. b) Tailored programs for Indigenous Academics apply for grants. c) Allocation of Indigenous Research Mentors	2024 and annually thereafter	PVC R&I RA Team Research Grants Indigenous Research Lead	DVCRI	5 Indigenous academics engaged with RA program annually.

3.4	Lack of Indigenous Research Lead to support PVC-IS&L.	Recruitment of Indigenous Research Lead	2024 – 2025	OISL R&I	PVC ISL DVCRI	Appointment of Indigenous Research Lead
3.5	Indigenous Knowledges and Practices need to be recognised and valued for career progression and promotion.	Training in recognition of Non-Traditional Research Outputs for Indigenous academic staff; use in APP and promotion.	2024 and annually thereafter	OISL R&I	PVC ISL DVCRI DVCA	10% increase in number of Indigenous NTROs recognised annually.
3.6	Capability building opportunities required for Indigenous staff that balance time away with cultural responsibilities.	Pilot Academic and Professional Staff Exchange scheme.	2025	HRS IS&L	CPCO PVC ISL	Pilot is successful and rolled out as annual exchange scheme leading to career development for Indigenous staff.
3.7	Lack of resources that Colleges can access to support Indigenisation of curriculum.	a) Create and finalise resource platform with Library for access by Colleges. b) Develop Framework for Indigenisation of Curriculum.	2024 2025	Library OISL	PVC ISL DVCA	Resource platform built and available for use through Library. 50 new resources added to the platform.
3.8	Aboriginal people have not had sufficient say on who, what and where research is conducted, how it is used and how it is stored.	Implement Aboriginal Health Research Strategy 'Research our Way' for the Hunter & New England Areas.	2024 - 2028	OISL R&I UON HMRI HNELHD Awabakal	PVC ISL DVCRI	Greater outcomes for Indigenous communities. Increase in cultural capability of non-Indigenous researchers
3.9	Need for consultative structure for Colleges to access advice (non research) from local Indigenous people.	Pilot consultative structure with CHSF to access advice from local Indigenous people.	2024	OISL CHSF	PVC ISL PVC HSF	Consultative structure for CHSF piloted and reviewed.

KEY BARRIER 4: Support for Carers						
Ref	Rationale/Evidence	Actions & Outputs	Timeframe (start & end)	Person / Group responsible for implementing action	Senior Leader accountable for action delivery	Desired Outcome and Impact
4.1	Insufficient childcare spaces (0-2 age gap) on campus, impacting on parents returning to work.	Provision of University land (Callaghan Campus) for a developer/operator to build and run a new childcare centre for an extended period of time.	2025 and ongoing	IFS	COO	10% increase in 0-2 spaces for childcare allowing staff to return to work post parental leave.
4.2	Low uptake of men (compared to women) taking Parental Leave and formal Flexible Work Arrangements (FWA).	Improve culture by encouraging men and non-binary staff to take parental leave and FWAs through local and centralised communication tools.	2024 and ongoing	HR EDI AD EDIs	CPCO DVCA College PVCs	20% increase in men utilising FWAs and 100% increase in men taking parental leave.
4.3a	Enhanced Keep in Touch Process required to allow staff on parental leave to feel connected and reengage with workforce.	Implement Keep in Touch online platform if six month pilot proves successful.	2024 and ongoing	HR EDI	CPCO DVCA	Maintain strong parental leave return rates and increased staff experience/satisfaction.
4.3b	Staff balance work responsibilities with caring responsibilities and require flexibility.	Promote resources for carers on quarterly basis	2024 and ongoing	HR EDI	CPCO DVCA	Increased awareness by staff with carer responsibilities of resources and supports.
4.3c	Best practice facilities are required for breastfeeding mothers returning from parental leave – including well equipped rooms and rooms part of all new build designs.	Maintain Breastfeeding Friendly Workplace Accreditation	2024 and Ongoing	EDI IFS	DVCA COO	BFW Accreditation achieved and breastfeeding mothers are supported on campus.

4.4a	Understanding by Manager of flexibility requirements for staff with caring responsibilities varies across the organisation.	Training resources developed for all Managers to better support staff with carer responsibilities.	2024/2025	HR EDI AD EDIs	CPCO DVCA College PVCs	Training resources utilised by Managers. Evaluation of capability achieved through Staff Engagement survey data.
4.4b	Scheduling of meeting times in core hours varies across the University as no centralised policy exists.	Consider development of Institutional Policy once outcome of trial in CHMW is known.	2024/2025	HR EDI ADEDI CHMW	CPCO DVCA PVC HM&W	Insights from Pilot inform future Policy development.
4.5	Academics with carer responsibilities are allocated teaching at non-core times.	Review process of equity considerations for timetabling requests.	2024	EDI Timetabling	DVCA	Insights from review inform potential updates to strategy to assist genuine caring needs.
4.6	Challenges for women on fixed term contracts to access carer support. Greater number of women occupy fixed term contracts.	Review support programs such as conference grants (centralised and localised) to ensure fixed-term status is not an impediment to eligibility.	2024-2025	AD EDIs	College PVCs	Women on fixed term contracts accessing key support at College level.
4.7	Lack of support for female academic staff on parental leave to ensure research progresses in their absence and remains current.	Pilot Research Assistant support for academic in CHM&W.	2024-2025	AD EDI CHMW	PVC HMW	Research outputs maintained while on extended parental leave. If Pilot successful, roll out in CHMW with potential consideration by CESE & CHSF.
4.8	Flexible accommodations and policies that accommodate the needs of women carers with disabilities, such as disability-specific workstations and flexible workloads.	Flexible work arrangements such as telecommuting, flexible scheduling, and part-time options, will be provided to accommodate the diverse needs and schedules of women with disabilities who are carers, allowing them to balance their work and caregiving responsibilities effectively.	2024 and ongoing	HRS EDI	CPCO DVCA	Women with disabilities who are carers will experience a balanced workload management approach that accommodates their dual roles, leading to improved work-life balance, job satisfaction, and overall well-being.

KEY BARRIER 5: Inequities in Academic Work Allocation						
Ref	Rationale/Evidence	Actions & Outputs	Timeframe (start & end)	Person / Group responsible for implementing action	Senior Leader accountable for action delivery	Desired Outcome and Impact
5.1	Further evaluation required with a large sample of academic staff to determine impact at each academic level and to access consistency of application across schools.	Survey all academic staff on AWAM's using Work allocation Principles Matrix-based questions to supplement current qualitative data.	June/July 2024	EDI SPP HR Academic Excellence	PVCAE	Comprehensive data sets that highlight results across different academic levels (by gender) and patterns across Schools.
5.2	Ensuring key principles are maintained in the ongoing use of AWAMs through the consistent application of work allocation expectations across all areas of the University	Further embed AWAM in Schools with a focus on equity considerations. Review of work allocations occurs regularly. Review of allocation and rotation of leadership role allocations. Transparency is further increased through enhanced reporting.	Dec 2025	Heads of Schools EDI Assistant Deans EDI ASWP AWAM governance panel	College PVCs & DVCA	Data demonstrates work allocation principles are being adhered to. Work allocation equity is normalised and reinforced across all areas of the University. 20% increase in staff satisfaction in relation to fairness of workload allocation – particularly by women.
5.3	Communication channel between academic staff member and Head of School required to link career goals with work allocation.	Promote Academic Planning and Performance process as opportunity to link career goals with workload allocation.	Dec 2024	HR HoS	HR CPCO	Academic career goals align to the strengths and interests of individuals, as well as the University's needs.

5.4	Immature workforce planning practices informed by limited work allocation data review.	Review of allocations identifies skills gap. Equitable distribution of resources occurs to optimisation workforce.	Dec 2027	HoS HR	CPCO College PVCs and DVCA	Regular review of work allocations occurs and informs strategic workforce planning to provide institutional sustainability and growth.
5.5	Staff attitudes and organisational culture towards a unified work allocation model continues to be mixed.	Reinforce positive impacts of unified work allocation model through the development and communication of case studies that promote the equitable, transparent and fair outcomes achieved. Continue to seek feedback and insights from staff to establish practices of continuous improvement to the allocation of academic work.	Jun 2025	OAE College SMEs SEOs HOS	PVC AE	20% increased staff satisfaction in relation to distribution of academic work. A positive culture of continuous improvement in relation to academic work allocation is established.