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UNIVERSITY



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**GENDER EQUALITY FUND**  
**Final Report 2021**

**Addressing Intersectionality in  
Gender 'Equity' at WSU:  
*Experiences, policies, and everyday  
practices***

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## Recommendations

1. Awareness training on intersectionality: this training needs to be compulsory and include a focus on the overlapping systems of discrimination or privilege foundational to understandings of intersectional disadvantage or advantage. This training should be led or developed in consultation with people with experiences of intersectional disadvantage and include first-hand experiences to increase awareness of how it manifests in workplaces;
2. Greater consultation with people experiencing intersectional disadvantage and with key stakeholder groups in the development of Western's policies and practices;
3. Consider gender equity beyond binary, cisgender, and race-blind gender inclusion.
4. Create more workplace opportunities for those colleagues who experience intersectional disadvantage, particularly those with disability or caring responsibilities, addressing critical areas such as secure employment of staff from marginalised identity backgrounds, career and skill development, mentoring, promotion, committee membership, and leadership, including democratic rotation of leadership opportunities;
5. Continue and extend explicit affirmative hiring and leadership practices, in particular of people of colour;
6. Value teaching more in academic promotion criteria and processes;
7. Meaningfully acknowledge how student feedback disproportionately discriminates against minoritized groups;
8. Encourage the development of peer communities of support for staff from marginalised identity backgrounds, providing opportunities to discuss issues encountered related to intersectional disadvantage and delivering an avenue for advocacy.

## Executive Summary

This research explored Western Sydney University (WSU) staff understandings, perceptions and experiences of intersectionality and intersectional disadvantage. A key aim was to contribute to the development of relevant WSU policies and practices, especially related to the WSU Gender Equality Strategy and Action Plan goals.

### Research Methodology

This multi-method research included an online survey of academic and professional staff at WSU, which included multiple choice and open-ended questions; and two focus groups, and nine interviews. The online survey had a response rate of 239 staff members, though not all respondents fully completed the survey. Forty-two per cent (42%) of survey respondents were professional staff and 58 per cent were academic staff. Ten survey respondents participated in focus group discussions.

### Key Findings

- There was a clear need to increase understandings and awareness of intersectionality, how it is manifested, and how it is experienced, especially in the workplace. Intersectionality tended to be considered through an individualistic interpretative lens related to identity, rather than as the result of overlapping systemic structures and practices that give rise to discrimination/privilege;
- A significant number of WSU staff consider that they experience intersectional disadvantage (43% i.e., 70 of 162 survey respondents completing the question). A sizeable minority of respondents (40% or 60 of 150) experienced or witnessed a colleague experiencing different or unfair treatment because of their identity;
- Fifty-three percent of respondents (83 of 156) believe staff of all identity backgrounds are treated equally in their work area; with 19% (29 of 156) believing that they are not, and a further 28% (44 of 156) unsure;
- Most respondents (60.5% or 98 of 162) believe there are workplace areas and issues for which it is particularly pertinent to consider intersectional disadvantage (e.g. STEM fields, workload, caring responsibilities, career development, promotion, recruitment, leadership, representation on committees/boards, structural bias - emphasis on research output disadvantaging many groups, and precarity of work);
- Thirty percent (36 of 162 respondents) believed WSU does not address intersectional disadvantage in an appropriate manner; with 48% (77 of 162) uncertain about this point; and
- The majority of respondents (86% i.e., 139 of 162) believed it was important for WSU policies and practices to address intersectional disadvantage, pointing out: all should feel safe and have equal opportunities; policies and practices are crucial to cultural change; WSU needs to be representative of the community it serves; and that there are social benefits to inclusion.



## Introduction

There has been an increasing focus on addressing intersectionality in institutions. Gender equity initiatives have been critiqued for not adequately addressing intersectionality or responding to the systemic and structural discrimination associated with the ways in which gender inequities are compounded by racism, heterosexism, transphobia, disability, socio-economic status, ageism and so on (Tolhurst, Leach, Price, Robinson et.al 2011; Lombardo, Meier & Verloo, 2017). Intersectionality is a complex issue, generally defying quantifiable measurement - it is difficult, if not impossible, to capture the nuances of intersecting axes of power and structural barriers through numbers. It is difficult for one to determine if or how much of the discrimination one encounters is due to sexism, or the intersections of sexism with racism, or sexism, racism, with homophobia or transphobia – all are inseparable and contribute to one's experiences and how one is treated by others. The shift from tokenism and 'add on' approaches, to addressing intersectionality in meaningful inclusive ways leading to positive outcomes has been difficult to achieve in organisations, including in higher education (Bose, 2012).

Despite the perceived difficulties and complexities in addressing intersectionality it is crucial for organisations to try and capture individuals' multiple and compounding experiences of discrimination in the workplace as a matter of social justice. Thomas, MacMillan, McKinnon, Torabi et.al. (2021: 1) point out: 'understanding and utilising an intersectional lens in organisations can increase inclusion of individuals and organisational performance'. To capture the nuances of intersectionality most effectively, it is imperative to listen to the concerns, experiences, and suggestions for intervention that those who encounter, and live intersectional disadvantage have across different locations within organisations and across time. It is a matter of turning the analytical lens of intersectionality back on organisational structures, practices, and policies to measure how well it is doing in addressing identified issues and where intervention strategies are required to enable cultural and structural changes.

This research project aimed to explore WSU professional and academic staff understandings of intersectionality, to provide some insights into how intersectional disadvantage is perceived and experienced across the WSU workplace, and to identify strategies that might best address systematic practices that are foundational to these experiences. Our initial concerns of quantifiably measuring intersectional experiences were realised, hence the focus on capturing perceptions, experiences, and strategies. With these aims in mind, an online staff survey was circulated among academic and professional staff across the university to gain a broad range of perspectives. The survey was followed by focus groups and interviews with staff to discuss institutional policies and practices, and their perspectives of and experiences related to intersectionality in a confidential manner.

Initially, this research also sought to analyse a sample of relevant WSU policies to identify the extent to which intersectional identities are currently acknowledged and addressed in policy. It was later decided that this research would be conducted as part of a new project bringing together two teams of researchers, those involved in this project – Professor Kerry Robinson, Associate Professors Corrinne Sullivan and Lucy Nicholas – and those involved in another project exploring diversity and policy

at WSU involving Professor Alpha Possamai-Inesedy, Associate Professor Kate Huppatz, and Dr Peter Bansel. The new project, Policy Inclusivity Project, led by Dr Kieryn McKay, is in the process of developing a set of tools for writing, reviewing, and assessing inclusive policy at WSU.

## Literature Review

Most of the literature on intersectionality comes from the United States, Canada, and Europe, with some Australian research emerging in more recent times. Research on university employee's experiences of intersectional exclusion and disadvantage tend to focus on academic women of colour. Thus, there appears to be an absence of literature on the experiences of professional university staff as well as on intersectional experiences outside race and gender. Moreover, many of the studies on intersectionality in organisational policy are in health, pointing to a gap in the research related to the field of higher education.

## Defining intersectionality

The notion of intersectionality has a long history, and it is important to acknowledge that it is understood and used in multiple ways. However, Patricia Collins and Sirma Bilge (2016: 53) point out:

Intersectionality's core ideas of social inequality, power, relationality, social context, complexity, and social justice were formed within the context of social movements that faced the crises of their times, primarily, the challenges of colonialism, racism, sexism, militarism, and capitalist exploitation...because women of color were affected not just by one of these systems of power but by their convergence, they formed autonomous movements that put forth the core ideas of intersectionality, albeit using different vocabularies.

The specific term, 'intersectionality', was coined by the African-American civil rights advocate, critical race theorist, and legal scholar Kimberlé Crenshaw in 1989. Crenshaw was particularly concerned with how systems of oppression such as racism, sexism and economic background compounded the workplace discrimination experienced by women of colour.

There is a general acceptance that intersectionality acknowledges how experiences of discrimination are compounded by the intersections of multiple systems of oppression / relations of power impacting on how one experiences the world in everyday lives. That is, how social discrimination, or social inequalities, intersect and play out simultaneously for individuals / groups in multiple and different ways. Individuals are differently impacted by inequality associated with range of factors such as, race, cultural and linguistic background, disability, gender identity/expression, religion, sexuality, socioeconomic background, and education). For example, to understand the intersectional experiences of a woman who is culturally and linguistically diverse, from a low socioeconomic background, and living with a disability, it is important to examine how racism, sexism, disability/ableism and classism work together to create specific circumstances. We do not get a full understanding of the experiences of a person's life if race, gender, disability, and economic status are considered separately. There has been a lack of recognition of

historical, structural, and social contexts that give rise to intersectional disadvantage (Lombardo & Agustín, 2012; Verloo, 2016).

A key strength of the concept of intersectionality is its focus on structural or systemic disadvantage or discrimination. Systemic disadvantage focuses on outcome rather than intention, and goes beyond defining something as discriminatory only when it is explicitly racist, sexist, ableist and so on. It is, instead, about the 'production, control and access to material, informational and symbolic resources within a society' (Paradies 2006: 153) and the extent to which they are differentially distributed and received. This is a particularly useful way to understand much of the disadvantage described by participants in this study.

Intersectionality can also foster advantage and/or privilege, termed intersectional advantage (SWAN 2021) or 'intersectionality from above' (Mayer, Ajanovic & Sauer 2014). Both, intersectional disadvantage, or advantage, stem from what is valued/devalued socially and institutionally, across different contexts (de los Reyes 2017; McCall 2005). As such, identity is intimately connected to power and social structures (Grace 2012; SWAN 2021). As MacKinnon (2013) argues, it is the outcome of the 'dynamic intersection of multiple hierarchies' and 'not the dynamic that creates them' in the first place (p. 1023). Intersectional identities have often been viewed through a deficit lens, rather than through a lens that recognises the deep richness of multiple identities (Costino 2018).

### **Experiences of intersectional disadvantage and discrimination**

The importance of recognising intersectionality when addressing diversity and equality in higher education has been increasingly acknowledged in recent times. The Athena Swan accreditation requires reporting on how intersectionality is being addressed in higher education institutions. Within academe, privilege and marginalisation co-exist, and addressing intersectionality requires a critical examination of which groups occupy sites of privilege and those who are disadvantaged. Power is dynamic, shifting, and multiple in its manifestations so it is important to examine how experiences of oppression can change historically and contextually within different spaces and disciplines within institutions. It is crucial to understand how social, political, and economic variables impact on the opportunities available to different groups in institutional contexts (Smooth, 2016).

Research conducted by Moffit, Harris, Forbes and Berthoud (2012) in the U.S., explored the experiences of women academics of colour, highlighting how they negotiated the complex interlocking systems at play - gender, class, race, ethnicity, and nationality – impacting their experiences in the predominantly white, upper-middle class institutions in which they worked, and in which they felt isolated and marginalised. Although feeling the privilege of their professorial status generally, especially within their communities, their experiences of marginality in the academy increased when race, ethnicity, and gender intersected and they encountered structural racial, ethnic and gender exclusion. Due to the fact the discrimination and bias they experienced was directed at a number of their identities as 'other' simultaneously, they found it difficult to determine the target of the discrimination. These women spoke about 'code switching' – the adjustment that was required of them inside and outside classrooms – this necessitated communicating without

markers of “Latina-ness” and or “Africana-ness”. Many felt that ‘they were unable to exhibit their identities fully...and felt the academy was willing to accept only those aspects of their identities that the institution deemed palatable’ (Moffit, Harris, Forbes and Berthoud, 2012, p.88).

## **Intersectionality and Institutional Change: Policy and Practice**

There is generally a poor articulation of intersectionality in organisational policies and practices (Lombardo & Agustín, 2012). Policies tend to focus on single identity categories without appropriately addressing how experiences of oppression or advantage are compounded through intersecting identity categories (Hunting, 2012; Nelson & Piatak, 2019). There also tends to be a focus on sameness rather than acknowledging and addressing difference in an appropriate manner (Nelson & Piatak, 2019). As such, policies and intervention strategies can tend towards a one-size-fits-all approach to multiple disadvantage (Smooth, 2103; Verloo, 2016). Demands for inclusion are often met with symbolic gestures rather than meaningful action (Luft & Ward 2009) while the concerns and “systemically structured obstacles” of those who experience intersectional disadvantage are sidelined by a focus on separate identity categories, such as gender and race (Armstrong & Jovanovic 2017, p. 226).

Smooth (2016) notes that intersectionality is about recognising differences amongst individuals and groups. Intersectionality is ‘vested in modes of institutional change and designed to remedy the effects of inequalities produced by interlocking systems of oppression’ (Smooth 2016, p.525). Smooth argues that institutional change begins with the recognition by colleagues, departmental leaders and senior executives that some colleagues, women in particular, experience workplaces differently according to their social location and the convergence of their many intersecting identities. To move institutional change forward, ‘we must all be willing to accept the responsibilities that the unevenness of the system produces’ (2016, p.525).

## **Strategies for staff retention, inclusion, and career development**

Addressing intersectionality in all its complexities can build on and improve existing equity focused approaches (Hankivsky, 2012). The literature on addressing intersectionality in higher education suggests rethinking approaches to diversity management; addressing the inequalities that exist for women in STEM; mentorship; diversity training; building awareness and competence in intersectionality; addressing bullying and harassment; building staff inclusivity networks; creating designated equality activities for professional and support staff; and establishing allyships. With regards to addressing the underrepresentation of women, particularly minority women, in STEM, Armstrong and Jovanovic (2017) identify five key intersectional facilitators for addressing this persistent problem: (i) *Creating accountable leadership* – proactive and supportive institutional leaders sharing the responsibility; (ii) *identifying climate zones*: the presence of multiple climates potentially requiring different strategies for intervention and change – e.g. faculties, departments, labs; plus, addressing microclimates related to various forms of bias that exist; (iii) *Understanding the (N)umbers game*: building effective allies who proactively voice awareness of issues facing minority women; going beyond

numbers of minority women to addressing other retention issues they face; (iv) *Overcoming epistemological hurdles*: cross-institutional, interdisciplinary approaches to addressing structural and institutional solutions to the underrepresentation of women in STEM; and (v) *Promoting community structures*: bringing minority women together to define their own needs, and increasing their investment in institutional change.

Many of these intervention strategies discussed above were articulated by WSU colleagues in this research.

## **Methodology**

This research included conducting an online survey, nine interviews and two focus groups with professional and academic staff of WSU. The survey included multiple choice and open-ended questions (see appendix) and had a response rate of 239 staff members. Not all respondents completed all the question in the survey. Of 239 survey respondents, 42% were professional staff and 58% were academic staff. The survey included demographics allowing for possible analysis across different minoritized backgrounds, and of experiences of colleagues' who identified as structurally or systemically (intersectional) disadvantaged.

Managers of all WSU schools and larger departments or divisions were contacted about circulating the survey to academic and professional staff. A link to the survey was also posted on Yammer and circulated among casual staff via schools.

Survey respondents were invited to volunteer for an interview and/or focus group to address the issues arising from the survey findings. The interviews were conducted with the purpose of focusing on participants' perceptions and experiences of intersectional disadvantage at the school and institutional level more broadly, while the focus groups explored in particular institutional practices and strategies to address intersectionality. The first focus group had four attendees, and the second focus group had six.

The qualitative survey responses, and transcribed interview and focus group data, were analysed thematically following the approach outlined by Braun and Clarke (2006). Emerging themes were cross-checked by all researchers on the project. The coding of the data was primarily inductive in that the codes and themes were often emergent from the data. Coding was deductive in that it was also influenced by themes and concepts from academic literature. Thematic analysis was also undertaken with the following research aims in mind:

- To investigate professional and academic staff's understandings, perceptions and experiences of intersectionality and intersectional disadvantage;
- To gain insights into the in/exclusion of WSU staff from marginalised identity backgrounds in key work-related areas (e.g. recruitment, career development, promotions); in supporting diversity, and protecting from discrimination and harassment; and
- To contribute to the development of relevant WSU policies and practices, especially related to the WSU Gender Equality Strategy and Action Plan goals.

## Findings

### Understandings of intersectionality

Understandings of intersectionality varied. Respondents' comments most commonly reflected individualistic interpretations of intersectionality, focused on identity rather than on the overlapping systems that give rise to discrimination/privilege in the first instance. This interpretation of intersectionality was followed by understandings of the term as focusing on overlapping discrimination/multiple oppressions, and acknowledging both privilege and discrimination.

In response to the question, what do you understand by the term intersectionality in relation to identity, the following are examples of participants' individualistic interpretations of intersectionality:

*the multifactorial nature of our identities, and how these different aspects intersect to determine who we are and who we feel we represent*

*I understand the term to mean the point where all facets of a person come together i.e. gender, cultural, race, religion, sexuality etc*

*We have many identities that overlap which create a unique perspective and experience, particularly relating to privilege and disadvantage.*

For other participants intersectionality was more focused on discrimination /oppression:

*overlapping discrimination a person experiences because of their identity*

*the complex, cumulative way in which the effects of multiple forms of discrimination combine especially in the experiences of marginalized individuals or groups*

*It relates to the overlapping aspects of personality or social identity can form people's perceptions of you and how because of these, these may be use as a form of discrimination. Apologies, I don't understand the terminology very well.*

Some participants demonstrated considerable knowledge of intersectionality as shown in the following example:

*Intersectionality has wrongly been related to identity. It is a theory developed by Black feminists to describe the ways in which domination and attendant discrimination works on a number of axes and how various structural forms of domination - racism, sexism, queerphobia, ableism, classicism - are co-constitutive of each other. It has also been subject to critiques most significantly from scholars such as Jasbir Puar and Alexander Weheliye who prefer terms such as assemblage and articulation to more appropriately*

*describe the co-constitutive nature of domination under racialcolonial-modernity.*

## **Experiences of intersectional disadvantage**

Participants were asked if they consider themselves as someone who either experiences intersectional *disadvantage* or intersectional *advantage*. Forty-three percent of respondents (70 of 160) consider themselves as someone who experiences ***intersectional disadvantage***. Conversely, 59 per cent of respondents (94 of 160) consider themselves as someone who experiences ***intersectional advantage***.

### **(i) Access to equal participation in committees**

To gauge how participants felt about their opportunities to equally access committee memberships, they were asked to rate their response to the following statement: *I have equal access to committee membership opportunities in my area*. The response scale included: very untrue, somewhat untrue, untrue, to true, somewhat true, true, and very true. Just over twenty-two percent (22.5% or 35 of 156) of respondents indicated that this statement was *very untrue, untrue, or somewhat untrue* for them. The issues cited by participants who felt they did not have equal access to committee membership included: lack of awareness of or communication about committee membership opportunities; limited time to participate in such opportunities due to caring or other responsibilities/limitations; favouritism; and opportunities not being available to casual and professional staff. Among the comments given by participants, concerns from professional staff and casual academics were particularly noticeable. The following are typical comments:

*Given my position and family responsibilities - there isn't time or opportunity for committee. Most I believe are academic.*

*I am literally bottom of the rung, professional staff. My opinion means nothing to the University. It is only Academic staff that matter.*

*It's always the same people, there are no policies that require democratic power alternation. Always the same deans, research directors, etc.*

*Favouritism but being explained by the school leadership as something else. What do you do if the school Dean does not acknowledge it.*

Some respondents who are committee members or who had had opportunities for committee membership spoke of the burden of being on committees and feeling unsafe due to their gender or ethnicity:

*Committee membership is easy to obtain as it is seen as gendered work that male staff shy away from*

*I stop myself because I know those places aren't safe. Not because the opportunity isn't available*

*I am always invited as a token representative of women of colour*

*I have access to committees based on experience etc but end up doing more committee work because being a female in STEM there is often a shortage of women.*

At the WSU broader institutional level, most respondents (52% or 78 of 150) were *unsure* if committees had members representative of diverse backgrounds. Thirty-two percent (48 of 150) thought this to be *true*, with 16% (24 of 150) disagreeing that this was the case.

## **(ii) Access leadership opportunities**

Similarly, participants were asked about their access to leadership opportunities - *I have equal access to leadership opportunities in my area*. Just over twenty-seven percent (27.5 per cent or 43 of 156) of respondents indicated that this statement was *very untrue, untrue, or somewhat untrue* for them. Issues raised included: not being in a position to apply for leadership opportunities (e.g. in the early stages of a career, part time appointments, experiences disadvantage); opportunities not being available to casual staff; and discrimination or bias:

*I don't feel I would ever be considered for leadership roles in my current area. Particularly majority of leadership roles are filled by males.*

*Without our Indigenous DVC, I would say I would not have access to leadership opportunities.*

*The composition of current WSU senior leaders gives the impression that there is very little chance of anybody with multiple disadvantages to climb the ladder that high. There seems to be a glass ceiling, since lower levels of leadership are certainly much more diverse. The impression is: It is nice to let multiply-diverse people to hold low-rank positions but when it's time to make 'real' decisions just leave it to the homogeneous group -- that is the cisgender, white, able-bodied people.*

*As a casual who has been working 1-4 days a week for 4 years, I feel that I don't have the same opportunities as if I was permanent.*

*I do not think a woman of colour will be given equal opportunities for high-level managerial positions. We have never seen that happen in our uni.*

*There does seem to be something of a glass ceiling in place for women, particularly women who do not present as straight*

However, some respondents felt that their school/division actively recruited for diversity or that leadership opportunities were readily available to those with relevant skills and experience, regardless of identity:

*I have observed that leadership opportunities are given widely and there is an active effort to recruit diversely.*

*Our School still has disproportionately male senior personnel but is consciously seeking to redress this imbalance so as a woman if I seek opportunities for leadership, I am highly likely to be supported*

*My experience is that such roles largely go to those who will take them and have appropriate skills and experience*

*My School is encouraging of women in leadership roles, although I have not personally been successful in my attempts.*

At the WSU institutional level broadly, just under half of respondents (47% or 70 of 150) were *unsure* if there was equal access to leadership opportunities. Twenty-five percent (38 of 150) thought this was *not the case*, and 28% (42 of 150) thought it to be *true*.

### **(iii) Access to equal promotion opportunities**

Respondents were asked to rate their response to the following statement regarding promotion opportunities: *I have equal opportunities to be promoted in my area.*

Thirty-three per cent (30 of 92 respondents) who are academic staff indicated that this statement was *very untrue, untrue, or somewhat untrue for them*. Caring responsibilities, emphasis on research output, and discrimination or bias were listed as issues underpinning their responses. Typical comments included:

*Disability means lags in career*

*History of too much teaching to establish research track record and then when research established in non-traditional areas, it was dismissed/ignored.*

*I still think that understanding part time work for women and career breaks for primary caregiver leave are not well-understood and impact a range of areas that then impact promotions*

*Promotion requires sacrificing research time in favour of administrative commitments even as it is also expected that grants will be continually applied for (and won), which requires a strong track record. In order to be promoted, in other words, a lot of sacrifice needs to be made and this becomes extra hard when you are also trying to raise children and a manage a home.*

*I am lucky to get casual tutoring and imagine my age will go against me for a full-time or research position.*

*I believe my disability has both pros and cons in regards to student feedback and employer perception of my abilities*

*I have been promoted but the process was highly discriminatory and requires far more work and effort from women. Men were better supported in their promotions and male leadership exercised discriminatory and damaging gatekeeping and faced no consequences.*

Forty per cent of respondents (60 of 150) believed that there was equal access to promotion at WSU at the institutional level broadly. However, 39% (58 of 150) were 'unsure' about this, and only 21% (32) disagreed that this was the case.

#### **(iv) Professional staff access to equal opportunities to advance HEW levels**

Professional staff participants responded to the following statement regarding opportunities to advance HEW levels: ***I have equal opportunities to advance HEW levels in my area.***

Thirty-five per cent (23 of 66) of professional staff respondents indicated that this statement was ***very untrue, untrue, or somewhat untrue*** for them. Most respondents wrote about the lack of opportunity to progress their career as professional staff. Another issue raised by respondents was discrimination or bias.

*If I want to advance my HEW level, I have to find a new job. Professional staff do not have the same advancement opportunities as Academic staff.*

*Professional staff members are not really given the opportunity to advance. I am considerably better at my role than when I started and I perform duties much higher than my PD outlines, but there's no way to reflect this in my appointment; others in the sector performing similar roles to me are appointed at least one HEW level higher than I am, but I have been explicitly told there is no possibility for my position to be upgraded at WSU. If I want to advance to a higher HEW level I'll have to apply for a different job or a different university.*

*If you have no ability to do more or take on new roles, there is no justification for advancement in levels. I can't publish papers to increase my levels, I need to wait for a position to be available and change role or leave and find employment elsewhere.*

*I have hit the HEW 7 ceiling, and I have been at this level (or even down one level due to restructuring) for over 20 years. There are almost no HEW 8 - 10 jobs at WSU and you need to be male to get an executive level professional role.*

#### **(v) Equal access to career development**

Regarding the statement: ***I have equal access to career development opportunities in my area,*** Twenty-three per cent (36 of 156) of respondents indicated that this statement was ***very untrue, untrue, or somewhat untrue for them.*** Respondents raised discrimination or bias, lack of career development

opportunities for some marginalised groups, workload, and few development opportunities for professional staff, as the main reasons for their responses:

*I am in my 50s, I am not usually seen as a career development candidate*

*There are few development opportunities for professional staff at the University or at any university*

*It has taken a while. And it has taken some senior colleagues 'seeing' something in me to get me where I am. I have had to have dedicated 'sponsors' to get opportunities. This is typical of most people's experiences when they are members of marginalised groups. Culturally, I am not a self-promoter and so I end up being less visible, unless a kind soul notices me.*

Nearly half of respondents (49% or 73 of 150) considered there was equal access to career development opportunities at WSU broadly, with 40% (60) unsure if this was the case, and only 11% (17) disagreed.

#### **(v) Equal access to mentoring opportunities**

In relation to mentoring opportunities - ***I have equal access to formal and/or informal mentoring opportunities in my area*** - only 15.5 per cent (24 of 156) of respondents indicated that this statement was ***very untrue, untrue, or somewhat untrue*** for them. The majority or 63.5 per cent (99 of 156) of respondents indicated that this statement is ***somewhat true, true, or very true for them***, with many respondents writing about the availability of formal and informal mentoring programs and opportunities:

*I completed the mentoring program a couple of years ago. It was great. It gave me the courage to take on some casual tutoring.*

*The School provides ample mentoring programs.*

*I have a strong network of women who support me*

However, some respondents spoke about the lack of mentoring opportunities available to casual and professional staff:

*I am not aware of any. Maybe as casuals we don't see all staff emails or attend staff meetings to hear about such opportunities.*

*Not in the beginning, but my School has in the last three or so years devoted more to this. Now that I hold a leadership role, I am working on improving this for sessional staff in particular. In my view they are currently the most disadvantaged on this particular measure.*

*There are no mentoring programs for professional staff.*

Nearly half of respondents (47.33% or 71 of 150) considered there was equal access to formal and/or informal mentoring opportunities at WSU broadly with 45.33 per cent (68 of 150) being 'unsure' about this and only 7.33 per cent (11 of 150) disagreeing.

## Experiences of unfair treatment, discrimination, and harassment

### (i) Unfair treatment

A sizeable **minority** of survey respondents (40% or 60 of 150) have experienced or witnessed a colleague experiencing different or unfair treatment perceived to be because of their identity. Just over half of respondents (52% or 78 of 150) have not experienced or witnessed a colleague experiencing such treatment because of their identity, while a further 8 per cent of respondents (12 of 150) were unsure. Respondents shared experiences and stories of unfair treatment by colleagues and supervisors and managers due to ethnicity, cultural identity, gender, caring responsibilities, sexuality, and disability.

*My Muslim friends often seem like they get treated differently. One did not get a secondment or a position she was qualified for and the person who was chosen for the role was her junior (level B academic in the middle of her PhD).*

*In an informal environment (after work drinks), my boss asked me if my partner was the only person I had slept with. I know for a fact he wouldn't have asked any of our male colleagues this.*

*I frequently (at least once a month) witness women (especially women of colour) and queer staff talked over and interrupted in meetings, have their experiences of discrimination dismissed, pressured to undertake a disproportionate amount of administrative labour and 'care' labour, jokes made at their expense by senior leaders, spoken to and about demeaning and condescendingly, and 'tokenised' (i.e. asked to serve/contribute to things for 'optics')*

*maybe - I am currently being micromanaged but I don't know if it is because I told them of my autism diagnosis or if it's just their management style*

*staff members with disabilities dismissed (as irrelevant, troublemaker; lazy); until COVID-19 the challenges faced by women who are mothers of young children largely ignored in practice while being acknowledged verbally and in policy; academic woman of colour being ordered around by more senior male academic of colour.*

*I experienced unfair treatment from a colleague because I am Aboriginal and they perceived me as receiving special treatment*

### (ii) Experiences of discrimination or harassment

Participants were asked to indicate from an extensive list (see survey in appendix) if they had experienced any of the behaviours listed in their current workplace. All

forms of discrimination or harassment listed had been experienced by one or more respondents in their current workplace, with the following forms of discrimination or harassment experienced most by respondents:

- Spoken over when talking (13.15% or 53 of 403 experiences of discrimination or harassment)
- Being stereotyped (10.42% or 42 of 403)
- Being patronised, spoken to slowly, or talked down to (9.68% or 39 of 403)
- Not given the space to be heard / listened to (8.19% or 33 of 403)
- Being made to feel unwelcome (7.44% or 30 of 403)

It is important to point out that respondents who believed that they experience **intersectional disadvantage**, were more likely to have experienced forms of discrimination or harassment listed at this question.

### Perceptions and awareness of WSU policy and practice

Nearly half of respondents (48% or 77 of 162) were **unsure** whether WSU addresses intersectional disadvantage in an appropriate manner. Moreover, more respondents (30% or 49 of 162) disagreed with the statement that WSU addresses intersectionality appropriately than those who agreed with it (22% or 36 of 162).

Respondents acknowledged the important measures that WSU has taken to address intersectional disadvantage. However, they also wrote about such measures as addressing certain areas of identity at the exclusion of others, and being focused on single identity issues rather than addressing intersectional disadvantage per se, and being “tokenistic” at best.

There was a view that WSU values diversity but there is room for improvement:

*I think the university is a leader in this field - but much more to do. I am aware of the Office of Equity and Diversity and its various projects and working parties. We are revising and building curriculum within my School to better assure our commitment to equity and diversity.*

*I think WSU has some wonderful policies and procedures that looks at addressing intersectional disadvantage. However, I am always of the view that more can be done and should be done.*

*For students, AIPs do a good job if there is a disability in the mix. For staff, WSU pays lip service to addressing disadvantage, but actions are piecemeal, at best. An effort is being made to address disadvantage in First Nations people, for women who have experienced a career interruption. I can't think of anything that addressed intersectional disadvantage per se.*

*I am not sure. I see/read/hear that WSU supports differing 'sections' like women, people with disabilities, people with different cultural backgrounds and LBQTI. I don't know how these overlap and how policies may affect people being involved in multiple sections.*

*I know that the university is working hard toward minimising disadvantage but there are certain systemic structures that promote inherent biases. These may be difficult to identify or manage, particularly as most will occur at a school level.*

*I see lots and lots of Gender equity stuff coming through now, and lots of work being done to boost women etc, which is fantastic. I do find myself thinking about the lack of gender diversity in those conversations. I also wonder to myself how non-binary/gender non-conforming/trans people fit into all this Gender equity hype.*

*Yes, getting better but I would say the WSU needs to pay what they consider to be the more 'traditional' professional fields attracting mostly those identifying as women more money and value their contributions more. I speak from my experience only and cannot comment on others and their experiences. There is a unisex toilet marked on the campus map at Hawkesbury for anyone who may feel they like they would like to use it. I've tried to find the uni sex toilet on campus and cannot. Security also did not know where the uni sex toilet was. Also, the queer spaces on some campuses are being used by prayer groups instead of being spaces for those who feel like they would like to use the room being able to.*

*WSU 'talks the talk' but does not 'walk the walk'. There is no overt effort at management levels to address the outcomes of intersectionality.*

Most respondents (86% or 139 of 162) believed that it is important for WSU policies and practices to address intersectional disadvantage. Respondents argued that everyone should feel safe and have equal opportunities; that policies and practices are crucial to cultural change; that WSU needs to be representative of the community it serves; and that there are social benefits to inclusion. It was generally pointed out that everyone should feel safe and have equal opportunities.

*Without policies that address and support intersectional disadvantage, the disparity between the disadvantaged and advantaged will continue to grow.*

*Everyone should be given every opportunity to succeed and feel a part of the WSU community. Some people will need more avenues of support than others and they should be provided.*

Developing appropriate policies and practices addressing intersectionality was considered crucial to cultural change at WSU.

*The only way for things to get better, for people to become aware and shift their behaviours and understandings is to provide overarching guidance, training, education and other resources to address the overlapping categories.*

*Unconscious bias is a fact of life and a lot of people don't understand their own unconscious bias. Providing more structured support and training to*

*address this would improve the ability for leaders/managers/selection panels to address these issues in an appropriate manner*

It was also pointed out that WSU needs to be representative of the community it serves:

*Absolutely vital for wellbeing and retention. Vital to ensuring our curriculum is fit and proper support for the future of work and is reflective of the society in which our university and community subsists.*

*Yes of course it is important. WSU is situated in one of the most diverse regions, it needs to be alive to that.*

Some pointed out the social benefits to inclusion:

*I believe that with a greater understanding of intersectionality it is possible to also challenge the homogenisation of peoples and work towards a society that sees and values the beauty, strength and agency of difference rather than assigning labels and assumptions that victimise, underestimate or exclude one another. This sounds a bit like a pipe dream, but I believe it is one worth fighting for.*

### **Familiarity with any existing School, Institute, Department or WSU policies that address intersectionality and/or intersectional disadvantage**

Over half of respondents (52.5% or 85 of 162) are unfamiliar, and a further 17.5 per cent (28 of 162) are unsure of whether they are familiar, with existing policies that address intersectionality. Nevertheless, a sizeable minority of respondents (49% or 79 of 162) indicated that they actively apply policies in their role that address intersectional disadvantage. However, many of these respondents wrote about applying principles of equality and fairness in their work with staff and students, rather than policies that address intersectional disadvantage:

*I am very conscious of the intersectional disadvantages that lots of our students experience and try to not only bring intersectional discussions into the classroom but also be mindful of these disadvantages when supporting students*

*I introduce intersectionality in learning and teaching to discuss inequality and integrate the work indigenous and women scholars into my unit content; when I was on Workload committee I ensured that women with children and staff with disabilities were not disadvantaged. I actively support women from CALD backgrounds in their career progression.*

### **Specific disciplines and areas requiring review in relation to intersectionality**

Most respondents (60.5% or 98 of 162) believe that there are workplace areas and issues for which it is particularly pertinent to consider intersectional disadvantage. STEM fields were specifically identified as an area requiring greater review regarding

gender and intersectional disadvantage. Specific issues mentioned included: workload, caring responsibilities, career development, promotion, recruitment, leadership, power of management, representation among those in leadership/on boards, structural bias (e.g. emphasis on research output disadvantages many groups), and precarity of work.

### **Identification of WSU successes at addressing workplace inclusion**

Most respondents were 'unsure' (45% or 68 of 150) or could not (21% or 31) describe any initiatives at WSU that have succeeded in improving workplace experiences and opportunities for and inclusion of people from diverse identity backgrounds. However, a sizeable minority of respondents (34% or 51 of 150) could describe such initiatives and many examples were mentioned by these respondents. Examples of successful initiatives given included: closed captioning in Vice Chancellor's all staff webinars; greater prominence of Indigenous issues; growth in employment of Indigenous academics; the ALLY network; Gender Equity initiatives; and workshops on diversity in the workplace.

One respondent wrote:

*Michelle Trudgett's team are doing amazing work -- her review of how Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander identity is formally recognised for staff and students at the University is critical to improving involvement for First Nations staff, and her various Indigenous Staff networks are also incredibly important to building connection, community, and support; our Gender Equity initiatives have actively improved opportunity for female staff (e.g., Women's Fellowships, Career Interruption grants, targets for female shortlisting and mandates for committee representation, etc), and I think gender equity is becoming core to how the university thinks (though it needs to be more inclusive); the VC Gender Equity Fund is starting to gain real traction and recommendations are taken seriously; the VC Gender Equity Committee has actively intervened into inequitable practices in various contexts; SAGE are raising awareness and holding leadership to account for lack of progress; Rainbow Western is starting to build an important voice for our queer staff community and they are being brought in as stakeholders in various contexts; there are a vast number of supports for parents and carers that make a practical difference in everyday work life; there are many concrete examples I could offer relating to individual staff experiences but also broader strategic efforts that I do think are starting to make an impact on the university's culture with immeasurable benefits to workplace experience for staff. Overall, I think Western is better at and more genuinely committed to equity and diversity work than any University I know of.*

### **Awareness of workplace services or initiatives at WSU for staff experiencing discrimination / disadvantage**

Forty per cent of respondents (60 of 150) **are aware** of workplace services or initiatives at WSU where staff from diverse identity backgrounds who are experiencing discrimination and or disadvantage can go to get support related to their concerns. A further 37% of respondents (56 of 150) were **not aware** of the

existence of such services or initiatives, while 23% (34 of 150) were **unsure**. In the comments respondents named the following workplace services and initiatives: EAP, Rainbow Western, CRU, Campus Safety and Security, DVC (Indigenous Leadership), Office of Equity and Diversity, WHS, and Office of People. The Counselling service and the Office of Equity and Diversity were mentioned most by respondents.

### **Perceptions of diversity in WSU's organisational culture**

Over half, or 55% of respondents (86 of 156) agreed that diverse identity backgrounds are reflected in the staff in the area in which they work, while a sizeable minority disagreed with this statement (24% or 37 of 156 respondents). Those people who disagreed with this statement wrote about overall diversity among staff but pointed out that there was less representation of those from diverse identity backgrounds in more senior roles, essentially observing a 'glass ceiling' effect:

*In a leadership role I have come to recognise the lack of diversity at executive levels – male, pale and stale is what I see. More work is needed on gender, race, and age on this front.*

*There are definitely diverse identities within the area I work, however not within the management and executive teams directly related to my area of work.*

Respondents also wrote about varying levels of representation of groups from diverse identity backgrounds:

*I am optimistic gender diversity will be achieved within a few years; I am less sure about how we are faring on other sorts of diversity.*

*Diverse identity backgrounds are reflected in terms of gender, but less so in terms of ethnicity. This is a legacy issue more than something we can work to change as we do not have funding to staff new positions. Of the five appointments that were carried out two years ago (before I joined), one person is from a working class/disadvantaged background and another is culturally and linguistically diverse.*

Just over half of respondents (53% or 83 of 156) agreed that staff of all identities are treated equally in their work area, with 19% (29 of 156) disagreeing with this, and 28% (44 of 156) were 'unsure'. Some wrote about experiencing discrimination or witnessing their colleagues' experiences of discrimination:

*I have had discussions with staff from diverse cultural backgrounds who feel that they do not get opportunities or are treated differently because of their race.*

*I know brilliant staff members who are not that vocal because English is their second language. They are always falling behind the others.*

*There are often snide remarks made amongst team members about people's sexuality or identity.*

*I am aware of cases of racial discrimination that have not been addressed properly leading to the termination of the victimised staff member.*

## **Perceptions of being treated equally at WSU**

Most respondents answered *unsure* (42% or 63 of 150) or *true* (37% or 56 of 150) to the statement that people from all diverse backgrounds are treated equally at WSU. However, a sizeable minority (21% or 31) considered this to be a false statement. In the comments, respondents wrote about the lack of diversity in senior positions as suggestive of a lack of equal treatment of staff of all identities while some wrote of personal experiences of unequal treatment or of their colleagues' unequal treatment. The predominance of white staff in what one respondent called 'a *predominantly Black and Brown university*', was a concern for some. Some considered it to be important to have more people of colour in professional roles. There were concerns also raised in terms of the bullying of older women academics by powerful men in management, and issues facing staff with mental health issues. As one respondent commented:

*Professional staff are a lower caste. Female professional staff are lower still in terms of promotion. LGBTIQ+ professional staff are few and far between in the areas I have worked over the past 30 years. Staff who openly admit to mental health issues are disadvantaged and excluded.*

## **Strategies for addressing intersectional disadvantage**

**There were a range of strategies for addressing intersectional disadvantage by respondents:**

- raising awareness of intersectional disadvantage,
- training of staff,
- listening to peoples' experiences/consulting with key stakeholder groups in developing policies and practices,
- creating opportunities to provide feedback on supervisors,
- more benefits and security for casual staff,
- more career development opportunities,
- hiring more people from marginalised identity backgrounds,
- creating more communities of support for staff from marginalised identity backgrounds, and

- cultural change.

These strategies were reflected in the following comments:

*Positively advantage people that are from diverse or marginalised identity backgrounds in hiring processes.*

*Take the culture of inclusion seriously—move beyond silos and have an integrated approach that reaches from the top of the university throughout.*

*Set staffing targets for non-Whites (beyond those for Indigenous Australians), those from Greater Western Sydney.*

*We need to engage with affirmative hiring practices. Sexism, racism and misogyny nerds callin out. We need cultural competency training....I think the issues are worse in sciences, I have been treated with disrespect by male colleagues in computer science.*

*More discussion if needed about how disadvantage and social exclusion can be layered. Increased awareness that not all experiences of inequality are the same and that some inequalities are hidden - neurodiversity, mental health issues and issues around trauma including DV.*

*Promote the policies that they have in place, encourage that they be utilised in practice, and change the culture so that staff who take advantage of those polices are not bullied and marginalised.*

*Remove the cultural barriers between professional and academic staff and have equitable staffing and HR policies (and practices) across both staff categories, and break down the "us and them" culture. Promote the recruitment of younger and more diverse professional staff.*

*Talking to those who are affected by intersectional disadvantage, surveying, collecting experiences and then implementing policies and practices to address*

*Firstly, raise awareness. Start the discussion. Train leaders/managers. Update policies whilst consulting key stakeholder groups. Check that these policies are working by following up to see how these play out in practice.*

## **Conclusion**

This report demonstrates that, while WSU is a sector leader in many forms of workplace diversity and inclusion, there is always work to be done. We do well in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander senior leadership, representation, affirmative hiring, and support. We also do well at gender equity. Intersectionality is a complex and not easily quantifiable concept, and a tricky one to approach materially. However, by

paying attention to all forms of disadvantage and not reducing staff members to one axis of identity, progress can be made to change the culture and structures that inadvertently disadvantage those whose minoritized status is compounded in current social contexts. As argued by Thomas et.al (2021:12).

‘An individual’s increase in awareness, and understanding of intersectionality, empathy for others, and the acknowledgement of one’s own role in promoting intersectional practice, lead to positive changes in redressing institutional structural barriers, systems, and cultures. In order to achieve structural change, inclusion is key; however, this requires education and strategies with an intersectional lens to be employed in all aspects of the organisation

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## Appendix I: Survey

### SECTION 2: PERSONAL DEMOGRAPHICS

Q2. What was your sex recorded at birth?

- Male (1)
  - Female (2)
  - Non-binary sex (3)
  - Prefer not to say (4)
- 

Q7 Q3. How do you describe your gender?

*Gender refers to current gender, which may be different to sex recorded at birth and may be different to what is indicated on legal documents.*

- Woman or female (1)
  - Man or male (2)
  - Non-binary (3)
  - I use a different term (please specify) (4)
- 
- Prefer not to say (5)
- 

Q8 Q4. Do you identify as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander?

- Yes (1)
  - No (2)
  - Prefer not to say (3)
-

Q9 Q5. Do you identify as a person who is culturally and/or linguistically diverse (CALD)?

*Culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) may refer to people who have been born overseas, people of refugee and asylum seeker status, people with overseas parental or ancestral backgrounds, or people temporarily living in Australia including people on*

*temporary visas and students from overseas. CALD people may identify solely as Australian, identify solely as another culture, or identify with multiple cultural identities.*

- Yes (1)
- No (2)
- Prefer not to say (3)

Q10 Q6. What best describes your family background? (Select all that apply)

- Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander (1)
- Australian or New Zealander (2)
- Caribbean (3)
- Central American (4)
- Central Asian (5)
- Chinese (6)
- Eastern European (7)
- Indian (8)
- Japanese (9)
- Korean (10)
- Middle Eastern (11)
- North African (12)
- North American (13)
- Northern European (14)
- Oceania (Melanesian, Micronesian, Polynesian) (15)

- Pacific Islander (16)
  - South East Asian (17)
  - South American (18)
  - Sub Saharan African (19)
  - United Kingdom/Ireland (20)
  - Western European (21)
  - Any others? (please specify) (22)
  - Prefer not to say (23)
-

Q11 Q7. What is your age?

- 18-25 years (1)
- 26-35 years (2)
- 36-45 years (3)
- 46-55 years (4)
- 56-65 years (5)
- 66-75 years (6)
- 76 years + (7)

Q12 Q.8 What is your sexuality? (Select all that apply)

- Straight (heterosexual) (1)
  - Gay (2)
  - Lesbian (3)
  - Bisexual (4)
  - Pansexual (5)
  - Asexual (6)
  - Queer (7)
  - I use a different term (please specify) (8)
- 
- Don't know / questioning (9)
  - Prefer not to answer (10)
-

Q13 Q9. Do you have a disability?

- Yes (1)
- No (2)
- Prefer not to say (3)

**Q14 SECTION 3: WORK DEMOGRAPHICS**

Q10. In which area of Western Sydney University (WSU) is your work primarily located?

- Science, Technology, Engineering & Mathematics (STEM) Cluster (1)
  - Health & Medicine Cluster (2)
  - Humanities, Arts and Social Sciences (HASS) Cluster (3)
  - Divisions (4)
  - Other (please specify) (5)
- 

Q15 Q11. Are you:

- Professional Staff (1)
  - Academic staff (2)
- 

Q16 Q12. Is your primary employment contract:

- Permanent (1)
  - Fixed-Term (2)
  - Sessional/Casual (3)
-

Q17 Q13. Are you in a management or leadership role?

- Yes (1)
- No (2)

**Q18 SECTION 4: INTERSECTIONALITY OVERVIEW**

Q14. What do you understand by the term ‘intersectionality’ in relation to identity?

---

Q2

**Intersectionality**

‘Intersectionality’ acknowledges that a range of factors shape a person’s identity – (e.g. age, being Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander, ethnicity, disability status, gender identity/expression, religion, sexuality, and socioeconomic background). These intersecting /overlapping aspects of identity constitute individuals’ lived experiences, ways of being and seeing the world, and their networks. Intersectionality can be viewed from multiple perspectives, including offering deep rich perspectives and experiences.

However, intersectionality is most commonly used to describe how various aspects of a person’s identity intersect, potentially compounding disadvantage and inequalities. If individuals come from multiple marginalised backgrounds, they can experience multiple points of disadvantage – known as ‘intersectional disadvantage’. For example, a woman from a lower socio-economic background living with a disability may experience discrimination/disadvantage based on her being a woman, her class status and having a disability. This can be further compounded by her age.

Intersectionality can also foster advantage and/or privilege.

---

Q20 Q15. Do you consider yourself as someone who experiences intersectional **disadvantage**? Please explain your answer in the text box provided.

- Yes (1) \_\_\_\_\_
- No (2) \_\_\_\_\_
- Unsure (3) \_\_\_\_\_

---

Q52 Q16. Do you consider yourself as someone who experiences intersectional **advantage**? Please explain your answer in the text box provided.

- Yes (1) \_\_\_\_\_
  - No (2) \_\_\_\_\_
  - Unsure (3) \_\_\_\_\_
- 

Q21 Q 17. Do you think WSU addresses intersectional **disadvantage** in an appropriate manner? Please explain your answer in the text box provided.

- Yes (1) \_\_\_\_\_
  - No (2) \_\_\_\_\_
  - Unsure (3) \_\_\_\_\_
- 

Q22 Q18. Do you think it is important for WSU policies and practices to address intersectional disadvantage? Please explain your answer in the text box provided.

- Yes (1) \_\_\_\_\_
  - No (2) \_\_\_\_\_
  - Unsure (3) \_\_\_\_\_
- 

Q23 Q19. Are you familiar with any existing School, Institute, Department or WSU policies that address intersectionality and/or intersectional disadvantage?

- Yes (please specify) (1)  
\_\_\_\_\_
  - No (2)
  - Unsure (3)
-

Q24 Q20. Do you actively apply policies in your role that address intersectional disadvantage in your working practices at WSU?

Yes (please explain how) (1)

\_\_\_\_\_

No (2)

-----

Q25 Q21. Are there particular workplace areas and issues for which you think it is particularly pertinent to consider intersectional disadvantage? Please explain your answer in the text box provided.

Yes (1) \_\_\_\_\_

No (2) \_\_\_\_\_

Unsure (3) \_\_\_\_\_

-----

### Q27 SECTION 5: STAFF EXPERIENCES

In relation to your experience at WSU please select the most suitable option in the following questions:

Q22. I have equal access to **committee membership opportunities** in my area.

Very untrue for me (1)

Untrue for me (2)

Somewhat untrue for me (3)

Neutral (4)

Somewhat true for me (5)

True for me (6)

Very True for me (7)

-----

Q34 Q23. Please explain your answer in the text box provided (optional).

---

Q28 Q24. I have equal access to **leadership** opportunities in my area.

- Very untrue for me (1)
- Untrue for me (2)
- Somewhat untrue for me (3)
- Neutral (4)
- Somewhat true for me (5)
- True for me (6)
- Very True for me (7)

---

Q35 Q25. Please explain your answer in the text box provided (optional).

---

*Display This Question:*

*If Q11. Are you: = Academic staff*

Q29 Q26. I have equal opportunities to be **promoted** in my area.

- Very untrue for me (1)
- Untrue for me (2)
- Somewhat untrue for me (3)
- Neutral (4)
- Somewhat true for me (5)
- True for me (6)
- Very True for me (7)

---

*Display This Question:*

*If Q11. Are you: = Academic staff*

Q36 Q27. Please explain your answer in the text box provided (optional).

---

---

*Display This Question:*

*If Q11. Are you: = Professional Staff*

Q28 Q28. I have equal opportunities to **advance HEW levels** in my area.

- Very untrue for me (1)
- Untrue for me (2)
- Somewhat untrue for me (3)
- Neutral (4)
- Somewhat true for me (5)
- True for me (6)
- Very True for me (7)

---

*Display This Question:*

*If Q11. Are you: = Professional Staff*

Q37 Q29. Please explain your answer in the text box provided (optional).

---

Q29 Q30. I have equal access to **career development opportunities** in my area.

- Very untrue for me (1)
  - Untrue for me (2)
  - Somewhat untrue for me (3)
  - Neutral (4)
  - Somewhat true for me (5)
  - True for me (6)
  - Very True for me (7)
- 

Q38 Q31. Please explain your answer in the text box provided (optional).

---

Q30 Q32. I have equal access to formal and/or informal **mentoring opportunities** in my area.

- Very untrue for me (1)
  - Untrue for me (2)
  - Somewhat untrue for me (3)
  - Neutral (4)
  - Somewhat true for me (5)
  - True for me (6)
  - Very True for me (7)
- 

Q39 Q33. Please explain your answer in the text box provided (optional).

---

---

Q31 Q34. Diverse identity backgrounds are reflected in the staff (academic/professional) in the area in which I work. Please explain your answer in the text box provided (optional).

- True (1) \_\_\_\_\_
- False (2) \_\_\_\_\_
- Unsure (3) \_\_\_\_\_

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Q32 Q35. Staff of all identities are treated equally in my work area. Please explain your answer in the text box provided (optional).

- True (1) \_\_\_\_\_
- False (2) \_\_\_\_\_
- Unsure (3) \_\_\_\_\_

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### Q33 SECTION 6: STAFF PERCEPTIONS

In relation to your perceptions of the University's organisational culture, please select the most suitable option in the following questions:

Q36. People from diverse identity backgrounds are **represented on committees** at WSU. Please explain your answer in the text box provided (optional).

- True (1) \_\_\_\_\_
  - False (2) \_\_\_\_\_
  - Unsure (3) \_\_\_\_\_
- 

Q40 Q37. People from diverse identity backgrounds have equal access to **leadership opportunities** at WSU. Please explain your answer in the text box provided (optional).

- True (1) \_\_\_\_\_
  - False (2) \_\_\_\_\_
  - Unsure (3) \_\_\_\_\_
- 

Q41 Q38. People from diverse identity backgrounds have equal access to **promotion** at WSU. Please explain your answer in the text box provided (optional).

- True (1) \_\_\_\_\_
  - False (2) \_\_\_\_\_
  - Unsure (3) \_\_\_\_\_
-

Q42 Q39. People from diverse identity backgrounds have equal access to **career development opportunities** at WSU. Please explain your answer in the text box provided (optional).

- True (1) \_\_\_\_\_
  - False (2) \_\_\_\_\_
  - Unsure (3) \_\_\_\_\_
- 

Q43 Q40. People from diverse identity backgrounds have equal access to formal and/or informal **mentoring opportunities** at WSU. Please explain your answer in the text box provided (optional).

- True (1) \_\_\_\_\_
  - False (2) \_\_\_\_\_
  - Unsure (3) \_\_\_\_\_
- 

Q44 Q41. Staff of all identities are treated equally at WSU. Please explain your answer in the text box provided (optional).

- True (1) \_\_\_\_\_
  - False (2) \_\_\_\_\_
  - Unsure (3) \_\_\_\_\_
- 

Q45 Q42. Can you describe any initiatives at WSU that have succeeded in improving workplace experiences and opportunities for and inclusion of people from diverse identity backgrounds? Please explain your answer in the text box provided (optional).

- Yes (1) \_\_\_\_\_
- No (2) \_\_\_\_\_
- Unsure (3) \_\_\_\_\_

Q46 SECTION 7: UNFAIR TREATMENT, DISCRIMINATION AND HARASSMENT

Q43. Have you experienced or witnessed a colleague experiencing different or unfair treatment because of your/their identity?

*Note: if you are referring to a witnessed incident, please be careful not to disclose personal or identifying information about the colleague(s) to whom you are referring.*

Yes (please explain your answer) (1)

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No (2)

Unsure (3)

Q47 Q44. Have you experienced any of these forms of discrimination or harassment in your current workplace? (Select all that apply)

- Being called names and slurs (1)
- Being stereotyped (2)
- Being subject to jokes about your identity (3)
- Being tokenised, or described as a token (4)
- Being patronised, spoken to slowly, or talked down on (5)
- Being paid less than people who are different from you (6)
- Being given worse/less desirable work than people who are different from you (7)
- Hearing discriminatory or offensive remarks from your boss (8)
- Hearing discriminatory or offensive remarks from co-workers (9)
- Seeing discriminatory or offensive conduct from your boss (10)
- Seeing discriminatory or offensive conduct from co-workers (11)
- Being made to feel unwelcome (12)
- Not being trusted with complex tasks (13)
- Not being trusted with money (14)
- Being physically intimidated, harassed or assaulted (15)
- Being excluded from social circles or informal work gatherings (16)
- Being expected to take lower-paid work (17)
- Being sexually harassed or assaulted (18)

- Not given the space to be heard / listened to (19)
  - Spoken over when talking (20)
  - Other (please specify) (21)
  - Prefer not to say (22)
- 

Q48 Q45. Are you aware of any workplace services or initiatives at WSU where staff from diverse identity backgrounds who are experiencing discrimination / disadvantage can go to get support related to their concerns?

Yes (please specify) (1)

\_\_\_\_\_

No (2)

Unsure (3)

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## Q50 SECTION 8: RECOMMENDATIONS

Q46. What do you think your work area and/or WSU more generally needs to do (if anything) to improve workplace experiences and opportunities for and inclusion of people from diverse or marginalised identity backgrounds who may experience intersectional disadvantage?

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Q51 Q47. Please provide any other comments you would like to make about addressing intersectionality at WSU.

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End of Block: Default Question Block

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