

GENDER EQUALITY MATTERS

Video Transcript 2017

Vice Chancellor, Professor Barney Glover

“The question of equity is fundamental to Western Sydney University. We are a ‘University for the People’, founded on the principle of equal access and participation for all, placing equity at the heart and soul of our institution.

Western Sydney University is a sector leader in gender equality:

- Over 50% of our staff and students are women;
- We have one of the highest rates of female professors in the country, and;
- We have a long-standing reputation for our commitment to gender equality in the workplace.

We have consistently been recognised as an Employer of Choice for Women by Australia’s Workplace Gender Equality Agency. This achievement demonstrates that we are ahead of the game.

However, despite these successes, we also know that we need to do much more. Women, trans and gender diverse people still experience barriers to success across the higher education sector. We know that to be a leader in teaching, research, and innovation, we must utilise the skills and capacities of all our staff. So, we need to build further upon our impressive foundations.”

DVC and VP Academic, Professor Denise Kirkpatrick

“I think it’s especially appropriate that we’re sitting here in our Gough Whitlam Reading Room. Whitlam fought for equal pay for women, established parental leave for Commonwealth employees, and was the first to appoint a dedicated government advisor on Women’s rights. This is the kind of example we’re determined to follow at Western Sydney University.

As one of the most culturally diverse universities in the country, we are inherently inclusive. We will continue to be proactive in building a culture of opportunity at Western that benefits all of our staff



and students, of all gender identities, and will continue to support the full range of identities in our communities. This is at the heart of our commitment to real gender equality.”

Vice Chancellor, Professor Barney Glover

“Improving opportunities for women, trans and gender diverse people requires challenging the status quo. We need to confront the beliefs and attitudes, the unconscious biases, and differential power relations that undermine our progress towards gender equality. We’re working hard to do that at Western Sydney University.

Our comprehensive Gender Equality Policy and our current five-year Gender Equality Strategy and Action Plan commit us to developing and retaining a gender diverse workforce that can succeed without impediment.

We’re renewing our focus on workplace flexibility, ensuring that our generous policies are effectively put into practice so that our staff can more easily balance their work and their life responsibilities. We’re striving toward equal representation for women in senior leadership positions to enable women to make a greater contribution to our organisation’s governing structure.

We’re focused on making inroads in areas of higher education that have traditionally struggled to recruit, retain and advance female staff, particularly within the Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) disciplines.

We at Western Sydney University understand that gender equality is a matter for all. Our participation in the Athena SWAN pilot program commits us further to these principles. Our goal for Athena SWAN is not only to consolidate our University's proud reputation as a sector leader in gender equality but to also institute further sustainable structural and cultural change across the whole of our university, helping to promote and embed a gender-aware and gender-responsive culture that understands gender equality as a core value. That is our commitment.”

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