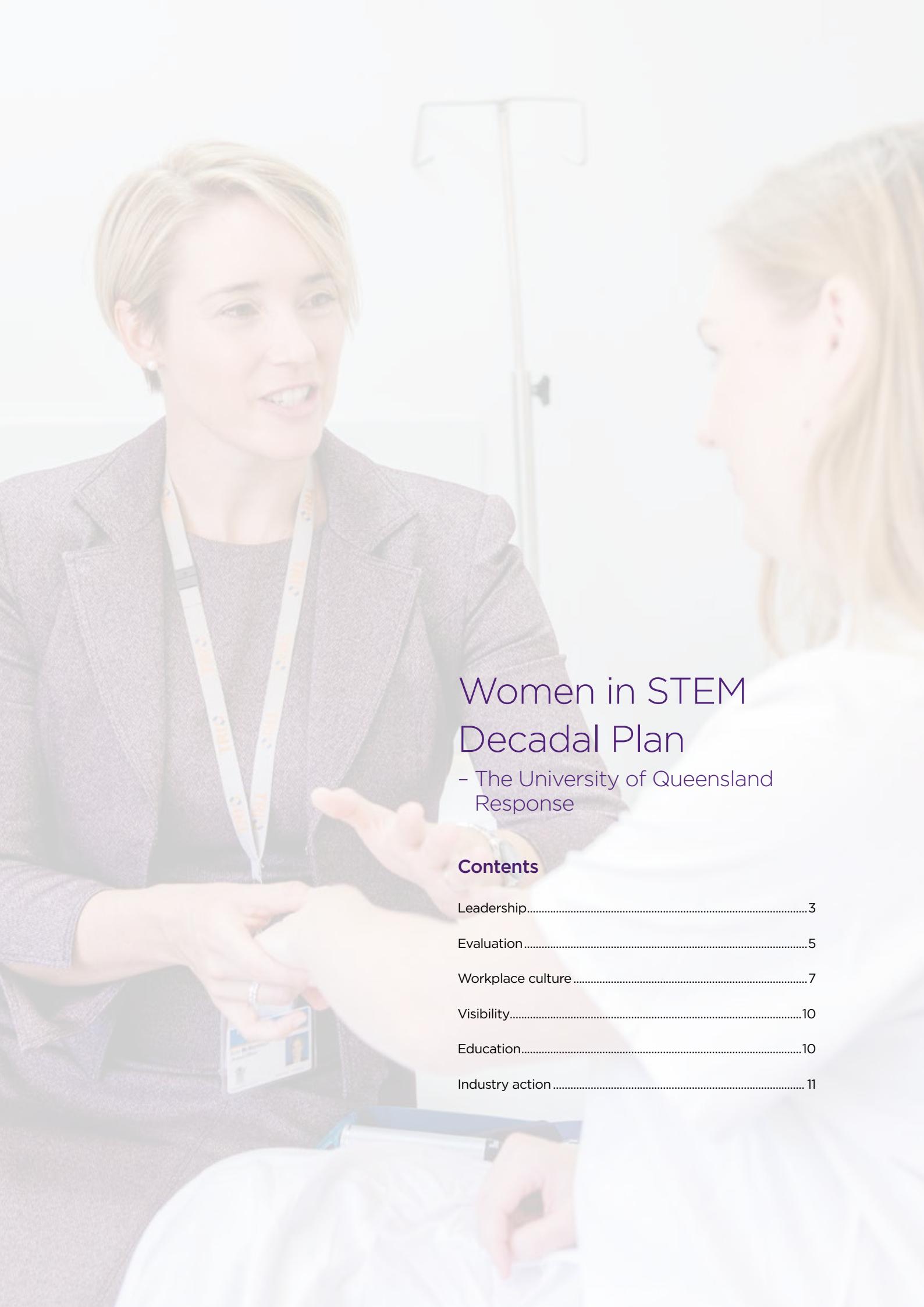


# Women in STEM Decadal Plan

## - The University of Queensland Response





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- The University of Queensland  
Response

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# Leadership



*“Creating a more inclusive workplace culture and improved pathways for women to participate in STEM are important priorities for our leadership team here at UQ. The activities and targets that we’ve outlined in this document reflect the commitments we made in UQ’s Strategic Plan 2018–2021, as well as our ongoing participation in the SAGE Athena SWAN program. I am delighted to give my support to UQ’s response to the Women in STEM Decadal Plan.”*

**- Professor Deborah Terry AO,  
Vice-Chancellor and President**

The University of Queensland (UQ) recognises that individual leadership commitment is directly related to a positive workplace culture which, in turn, drives our gender equality progress.

UQ’s senior executive leaders, including the Vice-Chancellor and Provost, provide strong advocacy, resources and personal sponsorship of key activities to improve gender equity at UQ. This is demonstrated through a range of tangible interventions, which include (but are not limited to):

- The establishment of clear gender targets in UQ’s Strategic Plan 2018–2021, which focus on increasing the proportion of women in senior positions (both academic and professional).
- Increasing women’s representation in key leadership roles; in the past few years, women have become Executive Deans of three of UQ’s six Faculties, including the Faculty of Science and Faculty of Engineering, Architecture and Information Technology.
- The former Vice-Chancellor and Provost’s direct involvement as Male Champions of Change (MCC) in STEM, which involved championing and supporting a range of activities to enhance women’s participation and outcomes in STEM fields.



- UQ's participation in and successful accreditation through Australia's SAGE Athena SWAN Bronze Accreditation process, which requires an ongoing commitment to the process of improving women's outcomes in STEM. Involvement in this program resulted in a number of positive outcomes for UQ and demonstrates the strong commitment of UQ senior leaders as follows:
  - The University of Queensland's most senior STEM woman, the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research), Professor Bronwyn Harch, leads our Gender Steering Committee (GSC) and SAGE Athena SWAN Action Plan implementation.
  - The Provost, Professor Aidan Byrne, is also an active member of the GSC and is a strong and vocal advocate for gender equity via his involvement in Male Champions of Change.
  - Having two Vice Chancellor Committee-level members and an Executive Dean as active and engaged members of the GSC is enormously helpful to facilitating strategic support, in terms of both commitment and resources to ongoing implementation of strategic gender equality plans.
  - Enhanced diversity and inclusion outcomes, targets and achievement timeframes in strategic planning documents, are supported by improved data collection, reporting and governance frameworks.
  - Additional funding to support Athena SWAN activities and current/planned initiatives to attract, retain and support STEM women.
  - GSC membership, which encompasses a truly representative cross-section of UQ staff, involves active participation from STEM Executive Deans and Institute Directors. The implementation of a number of new faculty, institute and school-level diversity and inclusion committees is also progressing diversity outcomes across the University.

We recently surveyed our faculties and institutes and findings from the study affirm the critical role leaders play in establishing inclusive cultures.

## Future plans

The UQ Athena SWAN Action Plan represents UQ's strategic commitment to progressing gender equity in STEM. Through the Action Plan UQ has committed to:

- strategic targets (also included in UQ's Strategic Plan 2018–2021)
  - 50 per cent of HEW 10 positions and above held by women by 2021
  - 25 per cent of Level E and above academic positions held by women by 2021
  - 38 per cent of Level D academic positions held by women by 2021
- annual gender reporting
- KPIs for senior leaders
- annual gender pay reporting and developing a pay equity tool for staff and managers
- revised mechanisms for academic performance reporting
- career support initiatives for women including:
  - Career guidance for women
  - Fellowships to assist early to mid-career researcher women be competitive for promotion.

# Evaluation

Clear metrics, measures and oversight of key performance indicators are an integral part of The University of Queensland's efforts in achieving gender equity.

Every two years, The University of Queensland conducts staff engagement surveys. The data from these surveys are considered from a gender perspective to highlight areas that require the attention of senior leadership. As a part of the SAGE Athena SWAN process, a further and more detailed Athena SWAN staff engagement survey was developed to gauge staff perceptions regarding aspects of UQ culture and fill multiple identified gaps in UQ's data around gender equality across the University. The results were used to inform UQ's Athena SWAN Action Plan.

## Key performance indicators

UQ is working to develop a diversity dashboard and annual reporting process to monitor progress. Key indicators in the dashboard will include:

- gender pay equity
- women's representation in STEM fields
- women's representation in senior academic and leadership positions
- representation by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander academics
- expectations regarding annual performance appraisal completion rates
- minimum standards for the completion of annual equity mandatory training.

Furthermore, UQ is committed to the incorporation of leadership KPIs into annual appraisal, recognition and reward processes, as well as the incorporation of gender considerations into Academic Board's rolling audit and assessment cycle for faculties, institutes and schools.

## Targets

Clear and measurable targets for progressing gender equity are included in UQ's Strategic Plan 2018–2021.

By 2021, women will comprise at least:

- 38 per cent of Level D academic positions (34.6 per cent in 2019)
- 25 per cent of Level E academic positions (24.4 per cent in 2019)
- 50 per cent of HEW 10 and above positions (49.4 per cent in 2019)

Achievement of these targets is monitored through annual reporting and Group of Eight (Go8) benchmarking.

## Oversight

UQ has taken a whole-of-organisation approach to evaluation and oversight of gender equality. As shown in the figure on the opposite page, the Gender Steering Committee (GSC) sits at the centre of our Evaluation and Oversight model and reports directly into the senior executive team.

The GSC:

- leads the implementation of UQ's SAGE Athena SWAN Bronze Action Plan.
- reports to the senior executive team on strategic issues, initiatives, and achievements relating to implementing the action plan at UQ.
- provides oversight and advice on matters related to UQ's SAGE Athena SWAN Action Plan.
- Applies the principles of the Athena SWAN Charter in all aspects of implementing the action plan and leads the University in adopting these principles.
- consults and engages with staff and students across the organisation, and keeps all stakeholders informed of the progress and achievements of implementing the action plan.
- coordinates and oversees all future UQ participation in the SAGE Athena SWAN program.

The GSC, which currently comprises of 23 UQ staff, was purposefully selected to ensure:

- gender equity
- seniority balance
- student representation;
- diversity of employment type (fixed-term, casual, etc.)
- diverse representation of demographics, diversity areas of focus and different faculties/institutes.

The meeting schedule and workload allocations of the GSC are managed to ensure that all of these diverse voices are actively included and contributing to GSC outcomes.



## Gender Steering Committee (GSC)

Operational Accountability  
– University Senior Management Group (USMG)  
Regular updates and consultation

Strategic Management and Accountability  
– Senior Executive Team  
Regular updates and reporting

Strategic Diversity Governance – UQ Senate  
Sub-Committee for Equity, Diversity and Inclusion  
Standing item on every meeting agenda (quarterly)

Strategic Governance – UQ Senate  
Regular updates and reporting



# Workplace culture

An overarching diversity and inclusion (D&I) strategy, with clear leadership accountabilities and key performance indicators (KPIs), acts to align UQ's current efforts to increase women's representation in STEM disciplines. Since establishing the Workplace Diversity and Inclusion (WD&I) team in late 2016, UQ's staff D&I efforts have

gained momentum, enabled by a strong leadership commitment, generous resourcing and robust governance, planning and reporting frameworks. UQ will build on these strong foundations as we step towards our 2022 vision.

## 2020

Strong strategic intent but disconnected approaches and duplication of effort

No overarching D&I strategy and dated policy

Reliance on 'experts' to investigate and deliver programs/activities

Growing consideration of data to inform D&I strategy and plans

Most staff D&I activities are focused on attracting/recruiting diverse staff

Some areas of staff D&I strength, but notable portfolio gaps; 'stove-piped' approaches

Increased community engagement and D&I partnerships

## 2021

New mechanisms for cross-community collaboration and sharing/leveraging best-practice

Robust strategy, policy, guides and resources to support D&I outcomes

New mechanisms, tools, guides and support to enhance D&I knowledge and capability

Improved access to reliable and current D&I data and evaluation frameworks

Focus on building inclusive culture and supporting/developing diverse staff

Enhanced focus on intersectionality and known portfolio gaps

New activities to engage, connect and forge partnerships within and external to the UQ community

## 2022

A collaborative and consistent 'One-UQ' approach to D&I

UQ's strategy and policy reflects international best practice

Staff feel confident and empowered to deliver outcomes within established D&I frameworks

All D&I efforts are data-driven, evidence-based and rigorously evaluated

An inclusive and supportive workplace culture enabled by 'whole-of-career' strategies and programs

A genuinely intersectional approach across all areas of focus

Deep engagement across the whole University with strong connections within and external to the UQ community



Associate Professor Irina Vetter in the lab at the Institute for Molecular Bioscience.

## UQ recognises that to change culture we need to act across every aspect of the employee life-cycle:

### Recruitment and selection

UQ is working towards upgrading and implementing attraction, recruitment and induction policies, tools and programs which focus on increasing STEM women's representation at all stages of recruitment and selection process.

Recruitment at UQ has been centralised to ensure consistent processes that reflect best practice. We are developing renewed gender and diversity-focused recruiting and selection policies and procedures, which will include:

- senior executive team agreed targets and KPIs for recruitment and selection activities
- leadership/and recruiting staff accountabilities
- best-practice gender-focused recruiting and selection programs, activities and tools
- guidance regarding the use of targeted/identified positions
- improved and targeted training for recruitment and selection panel members.

### Induction/orientation

Based on feedback from staff during preparation of our Bronze Athena SWAN submission, UQ has redesigned its induction and orientation processes, specifically we have:

- reviewed and updated the diversity and inclusion aspects of UQ induction processes
- reviewed current online equity training modules and are developing new training packages
- introduced a consistent best-practice approach to induction processes, with consistent delivery UQ-wide

- implemented measures and monitoring/audit processes to increase the uptake of mandatory equity training for all staff and supervisors.

### Promotion

UQ actively supports women's promotion via a number of staff development opportunities including UQ's Career Progression for Women Program (aimed at Levels C-D) and Career Advancement for Senior Academic Women Program (aimed at D-E promotions). UQ is currently developing targeted interventions directed towards STEM women from Level B, to improve retention, promotion and progression outcomes for this cohort, which has been identified as most at risk of exiting the University.

UQ's 'Promoting Women Fellowship' (PWF) Program aims to improve the promotion prospects of early career women by offering \$12,500 direct-promotion-support grants, with STEM disciplines being prioritised since 2017.

The introduction of the new People, Planning, Performance project (P3) enables a transparent and consistent approach to performance assessment. P3 delivers an integrated experience for academic colleagues when preparing for their academic appraisal and profiling their performance and provides valuable information to promotion committees.

### Flexible working arrangements

UQ is committed to ensuring as many staff as possible have access to flexible working arrangements to enable all staff to balance their work and life activities. UQ offers a range of flexible working arrangements (FWAs) to academic and professional staff, including:

- 9-day fortnight
- 19-day month
- Flexi-time
- voluntary banked time
- Variable start and finish times
- Compressed working hours
- Telecommuting and work from home



Photographs of UQ's new Margaret Cribb Childcare Centre, which was reopened in 2018. Close to staff parking and with double the capacity, the centre helps accommodate the high demand for on-site childcare centres at UQ.

- Purchased leave (up to 4 weeks-per annum)
- Formal job sharing
- Part-time work.

## Childcare

UQ recognises the impact that caring responsibilities can have upon career progression and has a generous childcare offering with multiple on-site care options (four at St Lucia and one at Gatton campus). Each offer varied philosophical approaches that appeal to different parents. Two St Lucia centres are close to parking facilities, with dedicated parking for individual staff members (irrespective of arrival times).

UQ leadership has prioritised access to care and invested heavily to improve UQ's childcare proposition. The capacity of one centre doubled in 2018 reducing waiting lists considerably and another centre increased its capacity from 72 to 106 places in 2019.

UQ leadership has responded directly to feedback from the 2017 Childcare Survey (CCS) by committing to:

- funding several places for emergency care
- delivering before/after-school care for local primary school children (with bus service)
- offering inexpensive on-site vacation care option.

## Parental leave

UQ is constantly examining how parental leave provisions can be improved to assist families. UQ offers additional leave available for antenatal, medical and adoption appointments.

UQ offers:

- up to 26 weeks paid leave for staff with >12 months tenure
- option for additional 12 months unpaid leave
- 10 paid 'keeping in touch' days
- parental leave accessible to both men and women
- additional leave for antenatal, medical and adoption appointments.

UQ is currently researching ways to provide leave that reduce the career impact of parental/carer's leave and career breaks on STEM women's career trajectory. Additionally, we are investigating strategies to maintain/boost women's international profile during periods of caring, such as:

- hosting international conferences and workshops in Australia
- financial support for international engagement, collaboration and conference activities
- funding made available to visit existing and new collaborators
- in-home support for school-aged children.

## UQ Amplify and UQ AWARE

UQ Amplify is a new approach to attracting, retaining and developing externally-funded Fellows who are based at The University of Queensland. It provides for:

- a fixed-term contract at the University following conclusion of their externally-funded Fellowship, and
- access to the University's teaching program through an agreed teaching portfolio.

UQ Amplify is available for eligible Australian Research Council, National Health and Medical Research Council or Advance Queensland Fellowship holders for schemes with funding commencing in 2019 or prior. A key component of the UQ Amplify strategy is to enhance the career development and pathways of Fellows through an appropriately-scaled teaching commitment, providing the opportunity to build, grow and refine the individuals' experience in academic teaching and training.

UQ AWARE (UQ Amplify Women's Academic Research Equity) is intended to lessen the impact of periods of parental leave on UQ researchers who have been successful in obtaining an externally-funded research Fellowship and for whom a career interruption would be a significant setback at a critical point in their career trajectory.

Each UQ AWARE research support package provides \$50,000 for up to one year to support research activities while a researcher is on parental leave and/or on their return to work from parental leave.



One of many women-in-STEM-focused profiles developed as part of the helping to promote the visibility of women in STEM.

UQ continues to monitor progress on increasing the visibility of women in STEM. We are introducing monitoring and reporting requirements for media/social media metrics associated with women in STEM as part of our Athena SWAN Action Plan.

## Visibility

The University of Queensland's participation in the SAGE Athena SWAN process has involved notable efforts to improve STEM women's representation through campaigns, such as #UQwomentreatechange.

Our faculties and institutes have demonstrated active consideration of women's visibility during different activities/events:

- monitoring speakers and presenters to ensure gender balance of presenters at UQ events
- offering financial support for gender-specific events, programs and industry engagements
- running programs, events and seminars that are aimed at addressing gender diversity
- not speaking or financially supporting panels or seminars where there is not balanced gender representation
- ensuring that faculty and institute websites have dedicated gender diversity information either on their main page and/or in separate sections.

## Education

STEM career decisions are made early in life and UQ's outreach activities are mainly aimed towards primary and high-school aged children. To tackle gender stereotypes around STEM, our programs are delivered by a gender-balanced group of mostly younger STEM graduates into schools. UQ also provides various university-entry schemes to facilitate access to education in STEM fields for women who might not otherwise have the opportunity.

### Outreach programs

UQ hosts the Wonder of Science program, which reached over 20,000 people including students, teachers, parents and community members in 2019. The program works with approximately 5,000 students each year through a robust multi-faceted delivery model that includes investigative science projects, visits to schools by University students serving as Young Science Ambassadors, and support for teachers.

SPARQ-ed (Students Performing Advanced Research Queensland) is a unique educational facility established as a collaboration between the Department of Education and The University of Queensland. SPARQ-ed aims to promote excellence and innovation in biological and biomedical education by delivering specialist programs to Queensland school students and their teachers. These programs are based on a model that brings together personnel and expertise from the education and scientific research communities. The SPARQ-ed facility is located in the Translational Research Institute (TRI) in Woolloongabba, Brisbane. It features a biomedical teaching laboratory and online learning area on the ground floor of the TRI building where participants can work alongside scientists from TRI's partner institutes, in either research immersion programs or workshops.



Dr Joan Norton with two final-year Veterinary Science students and her horse Cartouche USA at the UQ VETS Equine Specialist Hospital at UQ Gatton.



Professor Shazia Sadiq in UQ's Data Science lab

## Industry action

Progress towards workplace gender equality is widely characterised as glacial. Over the past 20 years, the gender pay gap has reduced only a few percentage points, and executive leadership roles are predicted to approach gender parity only sometime vaguely in the future of the 21st century. Industry, both small, medium and large organisations are confronted with an issue that they often do not understand and if they do, are still confounded when steps taken to address gender inequality fail to deliver results.

UQ recently partnered with the Workplace Gender Equality Agency to develop a guide for best practice workplace gender equality interventions, based upon 5 years of reporting by 120 of Australia's WGEA Employer of Choice for Gender Equality Citation holders.

The guide, titled *Employer of Choice for Gender Equality Leading Practices in Strategy, Policy and Implementation* is aimed at all organisations that have yet to work towards gender equality, or are facing difficulty progressing towards it. The guide details policies and practices for small, medium and large organisations. The guide provides practical and detailed tools to address gender inequality in the areas of:

- strategy formulation and oversight
- gender equality policies
- leadership, accountability and focus
- learning and development
- recruitment, selection and progression
- gender pay and equality metrics
- flexible working arrangements
- initiatives aimed at supporting people with caring responsibilities
- employee consultation
- preventing sex-based harassment
- targets and quotas as a mechanism for improving gender equality outcomes
- industry advocacy for gender equality
- vendor, contractor and tenderer policy alignment.



THE UNIVERSITY  
OF QUEENSLAND  
AUSTRALIA

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CREATE CHANGE

### Contact details

Workplace Diversity and Inclusion

[ideals@uq.edu.au](mailto:ideals@uq.edu.au)

[uq.edu.au](http://uq.edu.au)

CRICOS Provider Number 00025B