



**Southern
Cross
University**

Southern Cross University Gender Equality Action Plan (2026–2030)

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1. Introduction

Southern Cross University is committed to fostering a safe, inclusive and respectful environment for all staff and students. This Gender Equality Action Plan (GEAP) outlines our strategic approach to advancing gender equality across the University and forms a core component of our broader Gender-based Violence Prevention and Response Plan. It reflects our belief that gender equality is essential to preventing Gender-based Violence and building a culture of dignity, safety and respect.

This GEAP will assist us to continue to progress towards sustained gender equality, ensure best-practice inclusion through our leadership and people management practices as well as through the student experience.

This GEAP will be continuously reviewed and updated in light of available data and relevant evidence about gender equality and Gender-based Violence.

The University invites all community members to actively engage and provide feedback on this GEAP to ensure a whole-of-organisation approach.

2. Objectives

- Promote gender equity in leadership, governance, staffing and student representation.
- Ensure equitable access to opportunities, resources and support for all genders.
- Embed gender equality principles in policies, practices, education and culture.
- Support compliance with the [National Higher Education Code to Prevent and Respond to Gender-based Violence 2025](#) and other related legislation.

3. Scope

This GEAP focuses on all areas of the University's operations including staff (academic and professional), students (domestic and international), and Controlled and affiliated entities (including student accommodation and partner institutions). It covers both workforce and student-focused initiatives.

4. Current Position

At Southern Cross University, our people are at the heart of everything we do. Our culture is shaped by shared values, bold ideas and a deep sense of connection and it is through our people that we make the greatest impact.

The University aims to create the conditions for every individual to thrive, staff and students alike. We are building an environment that celebrates diverse perspectives, fosters genuine belonging, and enables people to grow and contribute in meaningful ways. This means investing in great leadership, capability, wellbeing and an employee and student experience that reflects who we are and what we stand for.

This GEAP sets out a clear commitment to removing barriers, promoting diversity and ensuring equitable opportunities for staff and students of every gender identity.

Through targeted initiatives such as, the embodiment of gender equity principles in student leadership development, introduction of gender affirmation guides, continued awareness building in event activations, use of gender inclusive language in communications, and expansion of academic support and unique opportunities to women and gender-diverse individuals, we aim to weave gender equity principles in all aspects of a student's life.

Diversity, inclusion and belonging are supported through various mechanisms such as:

- Workplace support including on demand online learning tools focused on increasing understanding of a respectful and inclusive environment.
- Regular reporting to the University's senior leadership, including data in relation to gender equity insights and actions.
- Gender and sexuality support through the Ally Network for Staff and Students
- Online Gender and Sexuality Diversity training for students and staff.
- Awareness of gender inclusive language in University wide marketing and promotion avenues and materials.
- Unique scholarships and grants for women and gender-diverse students.
- Multiple accessible disclosure and formal reporting mechanisms to report on inappropriate behaviours or concerns.
- "Respect At SCU" campaigns on the prevention of Gender-based Violence, sexual violence and promotion of respectful relationships.
- Ally network activated events on LGBTIQ+ key dates (Wear It Purple Day, Pride Month).
- Annual Diversity Calendar highlights our dedication to fostering an inclusive community by recognising important days and supporting education and allyship for women and gender-diverse people.

Strategic Focus Areas and Actions

Focus Area	Action	Responsible Unit	KPI/Target	Timeline
Governance	People and Culture Committee receive biannual reporting on implementation of this GEAP	Governance Services	Report at meeting	Q2, Q4 Annually
	Establish Employee Representative Committee Group	People and Culture	Committee operational in line with WGEA targets and purpose established	Q4, 2026
Leadership Capability	Embed gender and diversity training when onboarding students to leadership positions	Student Support and Success	Provide gender and diversity training in onboarding process for student leadership roles	Q4, 2026
Communication and Awareness	Ensure training covers gender equity, bias awareness, respectful relationships and preventing discrimination	People and Culture / Student Support and Success	Training material developed, made available and delivered to relevant roles	Q4, 2026 – Q1, 2027
	Launch campus-wide gender equality awareness campaigns	People and Culture / Marketing, Digital and Communications	Communication Plan Delivered	From Q2, 2026
	Continue “Respect At SCU” campaigns to prevent Gender-based Violence, promote respectful relationships and ethical bystander interventions	Student Support and Success	Events plan delivered	Year round
	Continue implementing events marking key dates with Ally activations (Wear it purple day and other LGBTIQ+ dates)	Student Support and Success	Events plan delivered	Year round
	Ensure gender-inclusive language, visual and narratives and balanced representation of all genders in all communications and marketing/promotions	Marketing, Digital and Communications / Student Support and Success / People and Culture	Review existing and current marketing/promotions	Q1, 2026
			Creation of gender-inclusive communications to guide stakeholders to implement	Q2, 2026
Recruitment	Review recruitment and promotion policies for gender bias	People and Culture	Policy updates completed	Q3, 2026
Culture	Promote the University's commitment to equity, diversity and inclusion in job advertising	People and Culture	100% of job advertisements include a clear EDI commitment statement	Q2, 2026
	Embed equity in student leadership recruitment (i.e. ambassadors, representatives, leaders, volunteers) and student-staff positions	Student Support and Success	Review current recruitment practices for student leaders and student-staff positions and embed equity in existing practices	Q3, 2026
	Increase attraction and recruitment of underrepresented genders in key role categories	People and Culture	Year on year increase in applications from underrepresented genders in identified categories	Annually

Focus Area	Action	Responsible Unit	KPI/Target	Timeline
Leadership	Equip hiring managers with skills to mitigate unconscious bias in selection	People and Culture	Bias mitigation practices embedded in selection panel processes	From Q3, 2026
Data and Insights	Conduct gender pay gap analysis and make recommendations to the VCG on ways to reduce the gap	People and Culture / Finance	Recommendations considered by VCG	Biennial
	Submit the Workplace Gender Equality Report	People and Culture	Year on year progression to meeting the WGEA targets	Q2, Annually
Student Equity and Inclusion	Receive reporting on gender imbalances in course enrolments (e.g. STEM, nursing)	Academic Board	Outreach programmes launched	Q4, 2026
	Support for gender-diverse students (i.e. gender affirmation guides, LGBTIQ+ inclusion)	Student Support and Success / People and Culture / Business Intelligence and Quality	Develop gender affirmation guide for students/staff to support LGBTQI, transgender and gender diverse students in affirming their gender identity	Q4, 2026
	Support student parents and carers	Student Support and Success	Support services expanded	Q2, 2027
Intersectionality and Inclusion	Ensure GEAP actions are inclusive of diverse genders and backgrounds	People and Culture Committee	Annual review of inclusivity	Ongoing
	Engage with First Nations, LGBTQIA+, and disability communities	Student Support and Success / People and Culture	Consultation records and feedback	Q1, 2026
Monitoring and Evaluation	Conduct mid-term review and refresh plan as appropriate	GBV Steering Committee	Review completed and plan updated	Q2, 2028

