Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy and Action Plan

2021-2023

FACULTY OF BUSINESS AND LAW

September 2021

Table of Contents

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Introduction

BACKGROUND

UOW recognises that it can only achieve its strategic objectives by attracting and retaining a diverse blend of talent. Our staff and students reflect the diversity of our communities. We recognise and celebrate each aspect of diversity individually and recognise their intersectionality. We aim to have an organisational culture where people can be their authentic selves and have policies and practices in place that ensure fair and equitable campuses. We welcome anyone regardless of age, race, colour, ability, gender identity, sexual orientation, gender expression, marital or relationship status, or economic background. UOW has policies and practices in place to ensure that we provide a fair workplace and campuses free from unlawful discrimination and harassment. We aim to empower all staff to achieve their full potential and remove actual or perceived barriers to participation through our inclusive values.

In 2020, UOW appointed Associate Deans (Equity, Diversity and Inclusion, EDI) in all faculties as part of this commitment. The Associate Deans are responsible for driving equity and diversity outcomes and related culture and staff development in their respective faculties. They aim to foster a culture of inclusion, ensure continuous improvement and collegiality, and champion equity initiatives across all aspects of the workplace.

FACULTY EDI GOVERNANCE STRUCTURES

In January 2021, Terms of Reference were developed for a Faculty EDI Committee and approved by the Faculty Executive Committee. The purpose of the Faculty EDI Committee is to provide recommendations and advice to the Executive Dean and the Faculty Executive Committee relating to issues of equity, diversityand inclusion across the Faculty.

In February 2021, a call for expressions of interest to join the Faculty EDI Committee was sent to all staff in the Faculty of Business and Law (BAL). Pleasingly, 14 expressions of interest were received, demonstrating the importance BAL staff place on matters of Equity, Diversity and Inclusion. The committee membership was determined in consultation with the Heads of School and to have as diverse a representation from staff members and students as possible. Members were appointed in March 2021 for a two-year term.

The BAL Faculty EDI Committee currently comprises the following members:

- Shamika Almeida (Associate Dean Equity, Diversity and Inclusion, Chair)
- Rabindra Nepal (School of Business, formerly SAEF representative)
- Alfredo Paloyo (School of Business, formerly SMM representative)
- Sheikh Solaiman (School of Law representative)
- Anna Farmery (ANCORS representative)
- Nicole Reilly (AHSRI representative)
- Sue Mathews (Professional staff representative)
- Ruby Blacka (Undergraduate student representative)
- Geraldine Hardie (Postgraduate student representative)
- Nadia Zainuddin (Additional member)
- Rob Gordon (Additional member)
- Bec Lachlan (Additional member)

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DEVELOPMENT OF THIS PLAN

To date, the Faculty EDI Committee has met three times. The inaugural meeting was held on 18th March 2021. At this meeting, the Committee agreed to develop a strategy and action plan for EDI in BAL. In developing this plan and based on the EDI-related priorities included in the existing UOW suite of strategies, the Committee agreed on six key focus areas in the first instance: gender equity, Indigenous strategy, Inclusion for persons with Altered Abilities, LGBTQI+ Inclusion, Cultural Diversity, and early and mid-career researchersupports.

The Committee appointed one member to lead each focus area and agreed these leaders would form working groups to review the relevant strategies, plans, and other structures currently in place at UOW which are relevant to their focus area, workshop ideas and propose action items that could be incorporated into this strategy and action plan. The working groups also included BAL and other staff and students who are not members of the EDI Committee but have a particular interest in the focus area, and in many cases identified with, or were members of, the relevant equity group. In developing their ideas and suggestions, the working groups were also asked to consider the following:

- Academic and professional staff, and students.

- All academic activities, including research, teaching and governance.

- Any significant days/dates that can be acknowledged/celebrated by the Faculty; and

- Considering the current challenges being faced by UOW, what strategies and actions can realisticallybe implemented in 2021, and beyond.

In addition to the suite of UOW strategic plans, the following existing strategies, plans, networks and programs were identified as relevant to the EDI strategy and considered by the working groups in developingthis plan.

TABLE 1: RELEVANT EXISTING UOW PLANS, STRATEGIES AND NETWORKS

Focus area	Relevant UOW documents, networks and programs
Gender equity	• SAGE Athena Swan Action Plan • Gender equality and diversity capability statement • Parental leave and return to work survey report • BAL gender reports and metrics
Indigenous strategy	• Reconciliation Action Plan* • Jindaola* • Aboriginal Employment Enabling Strategy • Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education, Research andEngagement Enabling Strategy
Inclusion for persons with Altered Abilities	• Accessibility Action Plan
LGBTQI+ inclusion	• Ally network • Gender identity and affirmation guideline
Cultural diversity	• FUSE network
E/MCR supports	• Early Career Researcher Development Program (PODS) • Mid-Career Researcher Development Program (PODS)
EDI broadly	• UOW suite of strategic plans • Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Policy and Strategy

BAL already has committees in place to focus on the implementation of these initiatives, and so while they have been considered in the development of this plan the associated action items have not been included.

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The focus area leaders reported back to the Faculty EDI Committee at its second meeting held on 13th May 2021. The content of the working group reports has been consolidated into this draft strategy and action plan.This draft strategy and action plan was reviewed and endorsed by the Faculty EDI Committee at its third meeting held on 22nd July 2021.

Once this strategy and action plan has been reviewed and endorsed by the Faculty Executive, two additionalcolumns will be added to the action item tables. A "responsibilities" column will indicate which individual/sfrom the EDI Committee is responsible for each action item, and a "status" column will be updated regularly to enable tracking of progress towards completion of action items.

PURPOSE, OBJECTIVES AND MEASURES

PURPOSE

Considering that the EDI portfolio is still relatively new to BAL, in the first instance, the purpose of this plan is to identify and support the EDI-related initiatives currently in place at UOW. Future iterations of this plan are likely to include new initiatives that may not currently exist at UOW but have been identified as strategically important for BAL.

OBJECTIVES

The plan seeks to work towards the achievement of the following strategic objectives:

1. Promote a culture that values equity, diversity, and inclusion as central to who we areand what we do.

2. Ensure all staff understand what the principles of equity, diversity and inclusion mean and how thistranslates to their actions and behaviours at work.

3. Ensure a truly inclusive workplace, where all staff and students feel:

   o A sense of belonging

   o Respected

   o Empowered; and

   o That they have a fair chance of progressing their careers.

4. Ensure staff and students feel that diversity of opinions and views is valued and bring theirwhole selves to work.

5. Ensure the principles of equity, diversity and inclusion are considered in all decisions made, and thatthis is transparent and communicated to all staff; and

6. Ensure that principles of equity, diversity and inclusion and are embedded in our teaching andresearch practices.

Action items supporting these objectives have been developed both at a general level and based on each of the six focus areas. They are split into short-term actions (those that can commence implementation in thenext 18 months) and longer-term actions (those that could be implemented when more resources become available or in future iterations of the BAL EDI strategy and action plan).

MEASURES

Action items will be measured according to whether they are completed within the nominated timeframe. Objectives will be measured via annual surveys of staff and students. The measures that will be used and theplan for data collection will be developed as part of the initial action items associated with this plan. Targets will also be established after the initial benchmark data on the objectives has been collected.

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EDI WORKING GROUPS

Working group members – Gender Equity
Nicole Reilly
Rabindra Nepal
Cath Campbell

Working group members – Indigenous
Anna Farmery -lead
Jade Kennedy -Indigenous Lecturer and Knowledge Holder
Marlene Longbottom
Reetu Verma
Taryn McDonnell
Christina Roberts -Aboriginal Employment Strategy Officer

Working group members – Inclusion for persons with Altered Abilities
Rebecca Lachlan
Rob Gordon
Sue Mathews
Paul Ochuko

Working group members - LGBQTI+
Melanie Randle
Michael Grainger-Sydney Business School
Andy Schmulow-School of Law
Alfredo Paloyo –School of Business

Working group members - Cultural and Ethnic Diversity
Nadia Zainuddin
Alfredo Paloyo
Luis Gómez Romero
Sean Lu

Working group members - (E/MCA)
Jenny Wang
Victoria Colvin
Sarah Ailwood
Rabindra Nepal

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GENERAL INITIATIVES

Actions	Timeline

Develop a Faculty EDI webpage that includes:
 	
• Main page
  → Summary of BAL's EDI philosophy and link to strategy and action plan
  → Faculty ED Committee membership and link to EDI Committee terms of reference
  → Key statistics related to the EDI staff and student profile in BAL
  → List of staff with expertise and who conduct research to EDI broadly
  → Links to sub-pages for each of the focus areas
  → Links to other relevant UOW documents and action plans
• Focus area sub-pages
  → Key BAL initiatives related to the focus area
  → List of staff who conduct research in the focus area, and links to relevant publications
  → Contact details for key UOW areas staff related to the focus area
 	
→ Links to other UOW documents and action plans relevant to thatfocus area
	Dec 2021

Develop diversity guidelines for Faculty panel and committee memberships	Dec 2021
Promote inclusive teaching practices by developing resources on EDI that can be used by all lecturers in week one lectures (along with Acknowledgement of Country)	Ongoing
Collate a list of all significant dates and events for each focus area and promote these to BAL staff and students	Oct 2021
Establish a quarterly EDI e-newsletter that includes updates on the progress of key initiatives, seminars/lectures related to EDI topics, new publicationsrelated to the EDI focus areas and key dates and events that can be promoted to all staff	Ongoing
Establish and promote clear processes for raising issues related to EDI in BAL prior to escalating to the Human Resources Division	Ongoing
Establish safe spaces where staff and students can discuss EDI-related matters or raise issues in a confidential and supportive manner (similar tothe Women in Business and Law network and the ECR network)	Ongoing
Provide a mechanism by which EDI-related matters can be anonymously raised with the AD(EDI) (e.g. link to an anonymous survey)	Dec 2021
Identify what key EDI metrics the Faculty would like to track and monitor on a regular basis	Ongoing

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Develop and implement a mechanism to measure these metrics on a regular basis, and report the results to the Faculty Executive and staff more broadly	Ongoing
Develop, deliver and promote attendance at EDI related workshops for all staff	Ongoing
Encourage staff to interact and collaborate more with student societies to improve engagement between diverse student groups and staff	Ongoing
Encourage staff to consider embedding the range of EDI issues into curriculum, e.g. diversity of guest speakers, assessment topics, discussionquestions, exam questions	Ongoing

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FOCUS AREA 1: GENDER EQUITY

Action	Timing
Achieve greater gender balance at senior levels within the Faculty, by identifying female academic and professional services staff who are at or are approaching the top of their level and develop plans for promotion/progression	Ongoing
Consult with Faculty leadership and Heads of School regarding ways the CDI process could be better aligned with performance frameworks and progression/promotion criteria	July 2022
Establish a mentoring program for professional staff development	Jul 2022
Promote the use of a pre-parental leave checklist, and invite all staff taking parental leave to meet with the AD(EDI) to discuss their return to work (including options for the return-to-work grant)	Ongoing
Remind all staff about the range of leave entitlements, particularly those available for Carers	Ongoing
Explore options for offering targeted staff development programs facilitated by external consultants (e.g. I Think Well, Parents at Work)	2023
Develop Faculty culture to support flexible work as the norm for all staff	Ongoing
When recruitment commences again, targeted recruitment of female academics to disciplines and areas where there is currently an underrepresentation of female staff	Ongoing

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FOCUS AREA 2: INDIGENOUS STRATEGY

Action	Timing
Work closely with the Director of Indigenous Strategy and RAP Implementation Manager to ensure BAL strategies and actions areculturally appropriate and align with UOW's Indigenous Strategy	Ongoing
Explore opportunities to provide Aboriginal cultural awareness training to all staff and promote opportunities when available	Ongoing
Ensure BAL submits at least one nomination for the VC's Reconciliation Award each year	Ongoing
Explore options to have more local Indigenous artwork displayed in BALbuildings	Jul 2022

Action	Timing
Targeted recruitment of Aboriginal staff to academic roles in the Schoolof Business and the School of Law (when recruitment resumes)	2023
Identify opportunities for internships for Indigenous BAL students	Ongoing
Identify opportunities for scholarships and sponsorships for Indigenous BAL students	Ongoing
Review Faculty student awards and identify opportunities for additionalawards for Indigenous students	2023

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AUSTRALIA

FOCUS AREA 3: INCLUSION OF PERSONS WITH ALTERED ABILITIES

Action	Timing
Explore opportunities to improve the Faculty webpages using the principles of universal design and enhance the digital accessibility	July 2022
Provide relevant resources (sourced through UOW HR services and through Athena Swan) to help staff understand the use of inclusive language and use the principles of universal design in documentation and communications with students (e.g. subject outlines, lecture slides and recordings) to enhance the digital accessibility	Ongoing
Collaborate with UOW central HR services to identify opportunities and facilitate workplace adjustments that may require changes to a work process, practice, procedure or environment that enables staff with altered abilities to perform their job in the most effective way (e.g., adjustments to communication styles, workstation accommodation, flexible working hours, ergonomic equipment, job design)	Ongoing
Liaise with the Human Resources Division regarding plans to develop the next iteration of the Accessibility Action Plan, and request that BAL have a representative on that committee	Dec 2021
Develop a new definition of "disability" that will be adopted by BAL and used on the Faculty EDI website	Dec 2021
Liaise with the Human Resources Division about the possibility of having aconsolidated and comprehensive website (and app if appropriate) that provides all information related to accessibility for UOW (e.g. accessible parking, liftlocations, accessible toilets, etc.)	2023

FOCUS AREA 4: GENDER, SEX AND SEXUALITY DIVERSITY

Action	Timing
Increase the number of Allies in BAL by encouraging all staff to undertakethe 15-minute Ally training and become Allies	Ongoing
Encourage all Allies to display the Ally poster on their office door or workstation	Ongoing
Encourage all staff to attend the annual half-day online Ally training workshop	Annually
Encourage Allies to wear their Ally badges when interacting with media or external stakeholders	Ongoing

FOCUS AREA 5: CULTURAL DIVERSITY

Action	Timing
Liaise with the UOW Scholars Advisory Group regarding the possibility of having audio files of names pronunciation or including phonetic spelling of names and gender pronouns next to names on UOW Scholars webpages	Dec 2021
Liaise with the Human Resources Division regarding the possibility of having audio files of names pronunciation or including phonetic spelling of names and gender pronouns next tonames on the UOW staff directory	July 2022
Emphasise the importance of pronouncing names correctly,including checking with the individual themselves if they are unsure	Ongoing
Encourage greater collaboration between Wollongong-based staff and staff at non-Wollongong locations, including South West Sydney, SydneyCBD, regional campuses and offshore campuses	Ongoing

Ensure catering of Faculty events consider dietary requirements based on cultural or religious affiliations	Ongoing
Implement training workshops for staff teaching in offshore campuses or involved with QA work for offshore campuses to help them understand cultural differences and better engage with offshore students and colleagues	2023
Provide financial and other supports to facilitate greater collaboration between Wollongong-based staff and staff at non-Wollongong locations,including South West Sydney, Sydney CBD, regional campuses and offshore campuses	2023

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OF WOLLONGONG
AUSTRALIA

FOCUS AREA 6: E/MCA SUPPORTS

Action	Timing
Promote the E/MCR development programs run by PODS to BAL staff and encourage them to submit expressions of interest when they open each year.	Ongoing
Proactively identify E/MCRs who may benefit from the PODS programs and discuss with them potentially applying a part of their career development plan	Ongoing
Establish a Faculty mentoring scheme for mid-career academics	Jul 2022
Run regular review workshops for staff facing probation, to ensure BAL is providing them with appropriate supports to enable them to pass successfully	Twice per year
Investigate the possibility of including an E/MCR representative on the Faculty workload committee	Dec 2021

Considerations of workload issues for ECR	Ongoing
Consider the establishment of a BAL awards scheme with awards specifically to recognise achievements of E/MCAs	2023

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