

Terms of Reference

UNE SAGE Athena Swan Self-Assessment Team (SAT)

Section 1 - Overview

Establishment

(1) The Self-Assessment Team (SAT) is established to coordinate UNE's self-assessment process for the SAGE Athena Swan Bronze Award application and to steer and monitor implementation of the action plan.

Objectives

(2) The SAT is to conduct a holistic self-assessment of gender equity, diversity and inclusion across the University to identify structural, systemic and cultural barriers. In doing so, the SAT will:

- a. Collect and analyse quantitative and qualitative data on gender equity, diversity and inclusion in the University, and
- b. Assess how University's policies, processes and practices affect gender equity for staff and students.
- c. Identify five key barriers to attraction, retention and progression.
- d. Develop a robust and measurable action plan addressing the five key barriers.
- e. Lead communications and consultation with staff and students to promote SAGE Athena Swan Program.
- f. Complete the final SAGE Athena Swan Award application.
- g. Steer and monitor implementation of the action plan.

Section 2 - Team membership

(3) The members of the SAT are as follows:

- a. Academic Lead, Athena Swan (Chair)
- b. Director, People and Culture (or nominee)
- c. Senior Manager, Organisational Development and Strategy
- d. Academic Representative from the Faculty of Health & Medicine
- e. Academic Representative from the Faculty of Humanities, Arts, Social Sciences and Education (HASSE)
- f. Academic Representative from the Faculty of Science, Agriculture, Business and Law (SABL)
- g. Up to three (3) additional staff and/or student members, to ensure broad and diverse representation across the University community.

Skills Required

(4) The SAT is expected to have members with expertise in wide-ranging areas, such as:

- a. Equity, diversity and inclusion in the higher education and research sector
- b. Human resources
- c. Communication and engagement
- d. Organisational change and change management
- e. Quantitative and qualitative data management

- f. Cross-disciplinary work
- g. Organisational leadership and decision-making

Diversity and Representation

- (5) The SAT is expected to include representatives from:
- a. A cross-section of Academic disciplines and professional work areas
 - b. A range of career stages (early-career, mid-career, senior)
 - c. Diverse backgrounds (e.g., Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander staff, people with disability, LGBTQ+ staff)
 - d. Varying work patterns and caring responsibilities
 - e. Staff at all levels and from all areas of the university, as well as students
- (6) The SAT will strive for gender balance and diversity in its membership to ensure a wide range of perspectives and lived experiences are represented in efforts to advance gender equity, diversity and inclusion. We particularly encourage expressions of interest from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, as their perspectives are vital to this work.

Term of Membership

- (7) Membership of the SAT will be for a two-year period, aligning with the anticipated timeline for developing and submitting the Bronze Award application and the initial phase of action plan implementation. This aligns with the Academic Lead's term, with the possibility of extension if required to ensure continuity in leadership and project oversight.
- (8) Where a member is unable to continue for the full term, the Steering Group will facilitate a replacement nomination to ensure continuity.

Secretariat

- (9) The Project Officer, Athena Swan, provides secretariat support to the SAT.

Co-opted members

- (10) The SAT may co-opt members from time to time for a specified period and purpose.

Chair

- (11) The Academic Lead will act as Chair. In their absence, the Deputy Chair will assume the role. If both are unavailable, the SAT will elect a temporary Chair by simple majority.
- (12) The Deputy Chair will be determined during the SAT Orientation, with nominations encouraged from within the group. The preferred candidate will have a strong understanding of the logistics of the SAT's operations and the Athena Swan process.

Appointment Procedure

- (13) SAT members will be nominated by the Athena Swan Steering Group, informed by a Call for Expressions of Interest open to all staff and students across the University. The EOI process will close on Monday 11 May at 11:59pm, with members confirmed shortly thereafter.

Gender representative objectives

- (14) Gender representation shall accord with the [Gender Representation on Decision Making and Advisory Committees Policy](#).

Section 3 - Functions

(15) The functions of the SAT are to:

- a. Coordinate the collection of quantitative and qualitative data as required by and with guidance by SAGE.
- b. Lead consultation with stakeholders (staff and students) to understand barriers, enablers, and lived experiences of gender equality.
- c. Synthesise findings to identify the five key barriers to attraction, retention and progression.
- d. Develop the action plan. Create SMART (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, Time-Bound) actions addressing identified barriers.
- e. Apply an intersectional lens, ensuring recommendations address compounded inequities across gender and other identities.
- f. Communicate and promote the Athena Swan Project across the University.
- g. Monitor implementation. Track progress and report on outcomes and impact.
- h. Ensure alignment with SAGE Athena Swan framework and University governance.

Section 4 - Governance and Reporting

Reporting

(16) The Chair will provide regular progress report to the Steering Group, and the Steering Group will then report to the Vice-Chancellor as Executive Sponsor.

Meetings

(17) The SAT will meet on a monthly basis, consistent with the Call for Expressions of Interest. Some flexibility in meeting frequency may be required at various stages of the project. Urgent matters may be attended to via email and a shared Teams group.

(18) Reasonable notice is to be given for requests.

Quorum

(19) A quorum shall consist of a simple majority of the members of the SAT at the time the meeting is held.

Decision-Making

(20) Decisions may be made through formal meetings or “flying minutes” (email-based approval by majority).

(21) Meeting notes will be prepared, kept to a minimum and circulated promptly following the meeting.

Review

(22) The SAT will conduct an annual review of its governance, practices, and procedures during one meeting each 12-month period.

Section 5 - Project Planning and Scope

(23) The Athena Swan Project Officer will maintain:

- a. A detailed project plan with clear milestones and timelines.
- b. Transparent allocation of responsibilities.
- c. Regular monitoring and progress tracking.
- d. Plans for succession and transition post-submission.

Section 6 - Consultation and Engagement

(24) The SAT will:

- a. Engage with staff and students to understand barriers and lived experiences.
- b. Work with employee-led diversity groups to ensure representation of underrepresented communities.
- c. Seek input from external experts where appropriate.
- d. Communicate clearly about the purpose of data collection and how information will be used.

Section 7 - Workload and Recognition

(25) All SAT members' time commitment will be:

- a. Recognised in performance appraisals.
- b. Counted as service time for academic staff.

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