

Gender Inclusive Membership of University Committees Policy

Section 1 - Introduction

(1) This policy reflects the University of Newcastle's (University) commitment to the values of equity, diversity and inclusion. The University welcomes the participation of all genders including non-binary staff and students, on its committees.

(2) Gender inclusiveness in representation on the University's committees provides for decision-making that is informed and enriched by a diversity of the decision-makers.

(3) The University will rely on the staff or student member 'self-reporting' their gender. If a person identifies as non-binary, they will not be recorded as either female or male in the calculation of gender balance for the purposes of committee membership.

Section 2 - Scope

(4) This Policy applies to all decision making and advisory committees including Executive Leadership Team and its standing committees; working parties, recruitment panels, promotion committees, "local" (i.e. College, School and Division) committees, sub-committees and review committees, from hereon in referred to as committees.

Section 3 - Definitions

(5) In the context of this document:

- a. "gender" is a social construct of how people identify themselves. Gender includes identity, expression and experience. Gender can change over time and within this policy we recognise and include trans and non-binary genders;
- b. "non-binary" refers to a person who may sit within, across or outside of the female or male gender binary; and
- c. "trans and gender diverse" refers to a person whose gender is different to what was prescribed to them at birth.

Section 4 - Policy

(6) University committees shall have a membership that is gender inclusive.

(7) The membership of all committees must not be comprised of more than 60% of a single gender, with the exception of 3 person committees. For example:

- a. a 4 person committee should not have more than 2 people of the same gender;
- b. a 5 person committee should not have more than 3 people of the same gender.

(8) In the circumstance of a 3 person committee, the committee must not be comprised of more than 66% of a single gender.

(9) It is the responsibility of the Chair to ensure appropriate gender inclusiveness. Where gender inclusiveness is not achievable in the first instance due to members being elected or appointed ex-officio, the Chair may seek to adopt one of the strategies listed in clause 10.

(10) Strategies to achieve appropriate gender inclusiveness may include, but are not limited to:

- a. the appointment of a Deputy Chair who is a gender different to the Chair;
- b. providing for ex-officio members to be represented by a nominee who is a member of the minority gender group;
- c. appointing or co-opting additional member(s) of a minority gender;
- d. appointing or co-opting suitably qualified member(s) of a minority gender from outside the University;
- e. appointment member(s) of a minority gender to balance ex officio appointments; or
- f. where membership is by election, electors may be requested to encourage nominations from a minority gender or persons, including those who identify as trans, gender diverse or non-binary, however, not interfere with the election process. If the result of elections leads to a non inclusive membership, the Chair may elect to appoint additional members where appropriate.

Section 5 - Monitoring

(11) The Senior Manager Equity, Diversity and Inclusion will record any exceptions to the required gender representation on a committee, including the exploration of strategies undertaken to achieve the required gender representation by the Chair.

(12) The Senior Manager Equity, Diversity and Inclusion will collate an annual report to the Equity Diversity and Inclusion Committee that outlines each instance where the required gender representation has not been achieved on a committee to which this Policy applies, and the strategies undertaken to achieve it.

(13) The Equity Diversity and Inclusion Committee will monitor annual trends when required, and work with Convenors, Chairs of committees and decision making bodies to support them to meet the University's requirements.

Status and Details

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Unit Head	Nathan Towney Deputy Vice-Chancellor Engagement and Equity +61 2 4055 3001
Author	Rachel Fowell Manager Equity, Diversity and Inclusion 02 49 215248
Enquiries Contact	Rachel Fowell Senior Manager Equity, Diversity and Inclusion 02 49 215248 <hr/> Equity Diversity and Inclusion