

Swinburne University of Technology

The University currently employs 2010 ongoing and fixed-term, full and part-time staff. Women make up the majority of the workforce (56.2%) and are represented across all levels of the organisation. As a University focused heavily on science and technology there are continual challenges to ensure there is balance in the gender profile at Swinburne.

Being awarded the Employer of Choice is a significant achievement for Swinburne for a number of reasons. It is an opportunity to celebrate public recognition for work done to improve employment outcomes for women and gives the University a platform to continue to improve in the area of women. With the title comes responsibility and Swinburne will continue to test what has been written and continue to remove potential barriers for women through strong leadership, education and action.

A few examples of improvements in the workplace for women include:

1. Changes to Swinburne's family flexible provisions have led to excellent return from maternity leave rates for the past two years with over 90 per cent of employees returning from maternity leave rates in 2005, compared to 47 per cent in 2000. Provisions include 14 weeks on full pay with an additional 38 weeks on 0.6 pay, partner leave for same-sex couples, paid adoption and foster parent leave and unpaid child rearing leave.
2. Increase in up-take of family flexible provisions including: job share; working from home; flexible attendance arrangements and family friendly meeting times.
3. Increased flexibility, retention and support for employees.
4. Improved and sustained female representation at all levels, with a reduction in the number of female employees leaving as a result becoming parents.
5. Improved staff satisfaction captured in the Swinburne staff survey.
6. University has embraced a centralised model of the equity function to ensure that equity sits firmly on the University agenda at an operational and strategic level.

Background

Swinburne University of Technology has long been recognised for its excellence in engineering education and over the past few years has built up a reputation for its focus on and research in applied science and technology. Swinburne is Australia's most technology-focused university with more than 90 per cent of Higher Education students enrolled in business, science, engineering and technology.

As a university encompassing both TAFE and Higher Education, Swinburne provides a range of educational and research services across both sectors of the tertiary education system and currently has 30,000 full-time equivalent students.

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