

The University of Wollongong

Key initiatives to support women

1. **Equity Scholarships for PhD completion.** The University recognises the difficulties that staff undertaking a PhD face in balancing work, research and other aspects of life. The fellowship aims to assist staff working in an academic capacity, by providing the opportunity to attain PhD qualifications that will assist with career progression.

Seven fellowships of up to \$12,000 may be awarded to staff each year to be used for costs associated with the completion of a PhD program.

2. **Return to Work Grant (following maternity leave)**

The **Parental Leave provisions** in the Enterprise Agreement have increased the support for women, particularly with the Return to Work Grant. This is equivalent to 12 weeks of full pay and can be used for salary top up, childcare or professional development (including employing a research assistant).

This has been a very good retention strategy for women who have children. It has made those first months of returning to work a much easier transition and encouraged women back to the university.

3. **Linking Women Network**

The Linking Network has been growing for a number of years and 2007- 2008 has seen:

- The introduction of a Mother's Forum,
- Reigniting the Women in Science Enquiry Network (WISENet) program
- Negotiating with the University Recreation and Sports Centre to offer 30 minute lunch time classes for women who do not have time for one hour classes.
- A full range of social and educational programs for women across the year with something for women academic and general and at different stages of their lives.

4. **Improved representation of women**

Representation of women at level E has increased to 19% as at December 2007. This is a slight improvement from the March 2007 of 1% which equates to five female professorial positions during this period which is an excellent outcome and reflects the commitment the university has to filling the gender imbalance at senior levels.

Extract from the application which outlines the support from the VC for women at the University

- The decision to implement the return to work grant (maternity leave provision) outside of the enterprise bargaining process is a strong expression of the Vice-Chancellor's personal commitment to ensuring that UOW assists employees to achieve a balance between work and family life. This has provided many more options for staff returning to work.

- Vice-Chancellor provides funding, \$70,000 per year for the first two years, to introduce Equity Fellowships. This has continued with \$60,000 being allocated for 2007 and 2008. The reduced amount indicates fewer staff requiring funding not a reduction in commitment.
- Vice-Chancellor was supportive of plans to extend child care services in 2006. After school care for older children is growing.
- As chair of selection committees for senior leadership positions, the Vice-Chancellor personally undertakes questions to determine applicants understanding of gender equity issues.
- The Vice-Chancellor has embraced the AUQA review recommendation to address the deficiency of senior women in the organisation. He has been instrumental in seeking women in senior roles where they are competitive at interview.
- The Vice-Chancellor continues to encourage attendance by women at leadership programs.
- Vice-Chancellor champions EO for women in the workplace by
 - statement of support in Finding the Balance: information kit for a flexible workplace
 - statement of support on Linking Women website
 - welcome email to all new staff and students with equity issues prominent
 - attendance and welcome to Switched on program for academic women
 - reminders to staff regarding sexual harassment
- Vice-Chancellor is supportive of EEO issues raised on promotion applications for women and openly demonstrates this as chair of promotions for Associate Professor and Professor positions.
- Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Operations) and (Research) are active in the welcome session and in their personal contribution to development workshops for women (Switched on and Preparing for promotion).
- Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Operations) chairs the Employment Equity and Diversity Committee, a committee of the Vice-Chancellor.
- Director EED meets annually with Deans to discuss Faculty Equity Plans. Discussions in 2006 covered strategies to attract senior women in the recruitment process, EO Online completion rates, staff profiles, mentoring and leadership training, women's networks, providing an inclusive culture and targeted career development for women.
- Anti-discrimination and work and family clauses exist in all Australian Workplace Agreements for all staff at senior levels and for all staff choosing to be employed under an AWA.
- EED accountabilities are set out in duty statements for all Heads of Units
- All deans and directors are required to report annually against their strategic plans. Equity strategies are included in these plans and are therefore reported.

The Vice-Chancellor financially supports special programs for women to attend external events that benefit their career enhancement, knowledge and skills. For example leadership development programs