

# **GRIFFITH UNIVERSITY**

## **EQUITY AND DIVERSITY PLAN**

### **2014 – 2017**

#### **1. INTRODUCTION**

This is the fourth Equity and Diversity Plan to focus on matters related to the strategic management of staff and student equity and diversity. The 2014 – 2017 Plan has been conceptualised within a framework of social inclusion, and builds on the University's impressive history of commitment to equity and diversity.

Legislatively, we operate in an environment characterised by social justice which seeks to encourage equity, that is, the provision of equality of opportunity and equality before the law. Practically, we operate in an environment characterised by diversity which means that we adjust what we do to enable difference to be embraced.

Difference is always challenging and constantly changing, and within our University framework we want to ensure that difference, in all its aspects, is embraced and acknowledged, and that its power is used to work towards outcomes that are both productive and transformative for all.

#### **2. PRINCIPLES**

- Human rights and social justice are intrinsic to all aspects of University life. The University believes that all people have inherent dignity and the right to be treated equitably. Equity, diversity and social inclusion will be expressed in teaching, research, service and community engagement at all levels.
- Staff and students, regardless of background or intrinsic characteristics, will feel that their contribution is welcomed, valued and supported, and that they have a right to a learning and working environment that is free from unlawful discrimination, harassment, and victimisation.
- Responsibility for the achievement of equity goals and targets is shared by all members of the University community, and will be promoted at all levels and across all domains of University activity.

### 3. GOALS:

- 3.1 To respond effectively to, and be progressively transformed by, increased equity and diversity in all aspects of the University's operations.<sup>1</sup>
- 3.2 To enhance the University's diversity, relevance and responsiveness to local and global communities by further developing the range and reach of Griffith's external community partnerships.
- 3.3 To consistently underline the significance and raise the visibility of the University's commitment to this Equity Plan, especially through the leadership of the Equity Champions.
- 3.4 To operationalise the principles and goals of this Plan and realise the Equity and Diversity targets of the University's Strategic Plan 2013 – 2017.

### 4. PRIORITIES

The University's Strategic Plan 2013 – 2017 identifies a number of priorities relating to staff and students (Refer **Appendix 1**). The targets to be achieved are University-wide targets, and it is expected that each element of the University will implement strategies that are relevant to their area and which work towards the overall University goals. Equity Champions in each of the University's elements will play an essential role here. (Refer **Appendix 2**)

Where relevant, statistics in relation to each priority area will be provided to elements on an annual basis to assist with planning and reporting in line with the University's normal cycle. Elements can thus set their own targets according to the base line established. Some priority areas do not have quantifiable targets, and elements will be asked to report on activities being undertaken in relation to the stated goals.

- 4.1 Improve participation and retention rates for students from disadvantaged and under-represented backgrounds including low SES students, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students and students with disabilities.
- 4.2 Attract students from around the world.
- 4.3 Improve the proportion of female staff in senior academic and administrative positions and improve the respective gender representation in academic and administrative units to achieve gender balance at all levels.

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<sup>1</sup> *Different world views brought into the institution by the diversity of its students and staff and the conscious and equitable application of these have the capacity to enhance the University's culture and strengthen the relevance and impact of its core activities of teaching, research and service.*

- 4.4 Increase the number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff in academic and general staff positions across all areas and levels.
- 4.5 Improve the representation of staff from diverse cultural/linguistic backgrounds across the University, especially to senior academic and administrative positions at all levels and in all elements.

*To be measured by an increase in representation from identified areas and levels using country of birth and NESB data in respective element.*

- 4.6 Enhance Griffith's cultural diversity through the development and maintenance of existing or new community partnerships and the strengthening of relationships, outreach activities and support for refugee and other communities in the Griffith corridor.
- 4.7 Maintain the Ally Network to support LGBTI <sup>2</sup> staff and students.
- 4.8 Griffith University will continue to encourage the recruitment and participation of suitably qualified people with disabilities or long term medical conditions at all levels of its workforce to reflect the diversity of our society
- 4.9 Griffith University will provide timely and effective responses as appropriate to the access and learning needs of students with disabilities.

## 5. IMPLEMENTATION

The goals of this plan will be achieved through a variety of means. While different Groups and elements will develop their own strategies to achieve their own targets the following broad strategies will be implemented across the University.

- Element-appointed Equity Champions will support senior managers in the implementation of the Equity and Diversity Plan.
- Elements will report to the University Equity Committee through their nominated Equity Champion.
- Implementation of this Plan will be appropriately resourced by the University.
- High profile symposia will be held on key issues and challenges inherent in this Plan, to encourage debate and enhance understanding. (Maximum 2 per year)
- Proactivity in relation to universities affirming their commitment to equity in higher education, particularly to the development of women will occur as outlined in the *Universities Australia* Plan.

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<sup>2</sup> LGBTI – lesbian, gay, bi-sexual, transgender, intersex

## 6. REPORTING

The Constitution of the University's Equity Committee requires that it:

- Critically review and analyse plans and reports relating to equity, diversity and social inclusion from Groups and other elements, and provide constructive advice and support for these.
- Provide reports to Executive Group and senior officers as appropriate, and an annual report to Council on equity, diversity and social inclusion programs and outcomes.

Academic Groups and other major elements will be required to report against their progress towards achieving the KPIs and goals outlined in this Plan as part of the normal University reporting cycle. Statistics will be provided to elements as required to assist in the establishment of baseline data and targets and against which progress can be measured and reported.

## APPENDIX 1 – GRIFFITH UNIVERSITY EQUITY TARGETS

From University Strategic Plan 2013 – 2017:

Priority	Targets
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To improve the participation rate of low SES students</li> </ul>	Exceed national average for low socio-economic participation rate among commencing students by 2017
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To improve the participation rate of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students</li> </ul>	Continue to exceed the national average for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander student participation among commencing students
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To attract students from around the world</li> </ul>	Maintain international student load between 20 and 25%
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To improve the retention rate of low SES students</li> </ul>	Exceed the national average for low socioeconomic student retention rate by 2017
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To improve the retention rate of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students</li> </ul>	Continue to exceed the national average for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander student retention rate
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To increase the proportion of female Level D and E academic staff</li> </ul>	40% of all level D and E academic staff to be female by 2017
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To improve the proportion of female Senior Administrators (HEW Level 10 and above)</li> </ul>	50% of all University's Senior Administrators (HEW Level 10 and above) to be female by 2017
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To increase the number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff in academic and general staff positions</li> </ul>	Increase by 5% per annum the number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff in academic and general staff positions

## **APPENDIX 2 – ROLE OF EQUITY CHAMPIONS**

The purpose of identifying and appointing an Equity Champion to each element is to help Griffith fulfill its equity and diversity objectives. While considerable focus occurs around those priorities which are part of the University's strategic KPI reporting systems there are other priorities listed in the Equity and Diversity Plan 2014 – 2017 which also require attention. It is envisaged that the Equity Champion will assist in driving *cultural change* within the element to create a more inclusive environment for both staff and students, something which cannot necessarily be measured in quantitative targets.

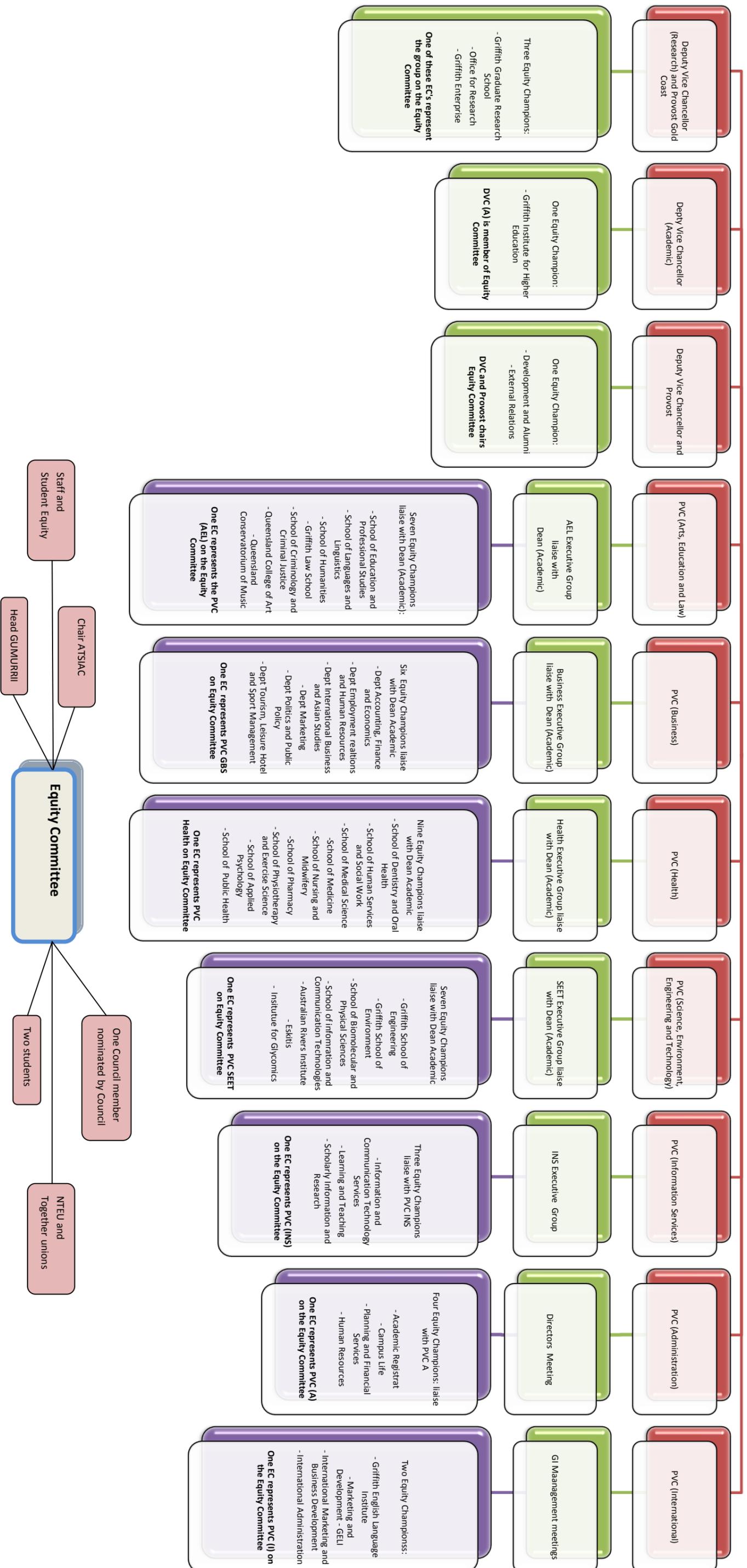
The primary objectives of the role of Equity Champions are to:

- Be informed about the broad policy positions and issues relating to equity and diversity at Griffith and in higher education more widely
- Use their position and influence to create greater awareness amongst staff, including decision-makers
- Inform and enthuse others about equity and diversity

It is anticipated that they will accomplish this by making sure equity and diversity is a consideration at the highest level of element decision making processes, for example by having standing agenda items at meetings and by providing reports to the University Equity Committee. Champions will also raise awareness of the issues that need to be addressed in their element at all appropriate opportunities.

### **Responsibilities of Champions**

1. To participate in an initial “induction” workshop for Equity Champions and in regular forums of Champions.
2. To meet with the relevant Deans or PVC at least once a semester to discuss the most current issues and developments.
3. To represent the interests of equity and diversity at decision making levels and influence policy and strategy by ensuring equity is a fixed agenda item or is woven into other agenda items where possible.
4. To visibly promote equity and diversity by adding their names to newsletter articles, web pages and other communication materials and to attend relevant Griffith events.
5. To encourage colleagues to place a high value on issues relating to equity and diversity and to challenge colleagues to look at new ways of overcoming obstacles.
6. To engage directly with staff and students in the element by, for example, holding a forum each year.
7. To report to the PVC once a year on the progress being made in equity and diversity in their element.



## APPENDIX 3 - RESOURCES

### Policies and Procedures

- [Harassment Bullying and Discrimination Policy](#)
- [Procedures for Resolution of Staff and Student Complaints of Harassment, Bullying & Discrimination](#)
- [A guide to handling complaints of Harassment, Bullying and Discrimination](#)
- [Inclusive Practices for People with Disabilities Policy](#)
- [Assessment Policy](#)
- [Alternative Assessment for Students with Disabilities](#)
- [Equal Employment Opportunity Policy](#)
- [Staff Counselling Services Policy](#)
- [Code of Conduct](#)
- [Student Charter](#)
- [Student Grievances and Appeals Policy](#)

### Training and Development

- [Women in Leadership program](#)
- [Vice Chancellor's Academic Staff Development Scheme](#)
- Short Courses Program
- Element specific training as requested

### Websites

- Equity website <http://www.griffith.edu.au/equity>
- Student Equity Services <http://www.griffith.edu.au/student-equity-services>
- Scholarships <http://www.griffith.edu.au/scholarships>

There are numerous external websites with a wealth of specific and general information related to all aspects of equity and diversity.