



Gender Equity Action & Research Team Terms of Reference 2023

JCU's Gender Equity Action & Research team provides thought-leadership and practical support to the university in addressing the loss of women across career pipelines and the unacceptably low numbers of women in senior academic, professional and support roles, particularly in STEM where these trends are deeply entrenched across the higher education and research sector.

In 2023, JCU is looking to refresh its approach to progressing gender equity and will prepare two submissions for SAGE Cygnet accreditation as a vehicle for documenting progress.

The areas of focus are:

- Promotion – university wide Cygnet application
- Culture and Leadership, College of Science and Engineering – college specific Cygnet application

Future Cygnets processes are envisaged in the areas of Recruitment, Flexible Work, and Leadership, post 2023.

The Cygnet process involves documenting transformational change using iterative cycles of problem identification, data collection, intervention design, evaluation/reflection, and adjustment to build an evidence base. Importantly, the Promotion Cygnet, and the Culture and Leadership Cygnet, will be built on activity currently underway in both domains. Applying a strong gender analysis to the work underway, and using this analysis to shape and document progress, forms the basis of the Cygnet. Previous analysis undertaken by GEAR in these areas also provides important context.

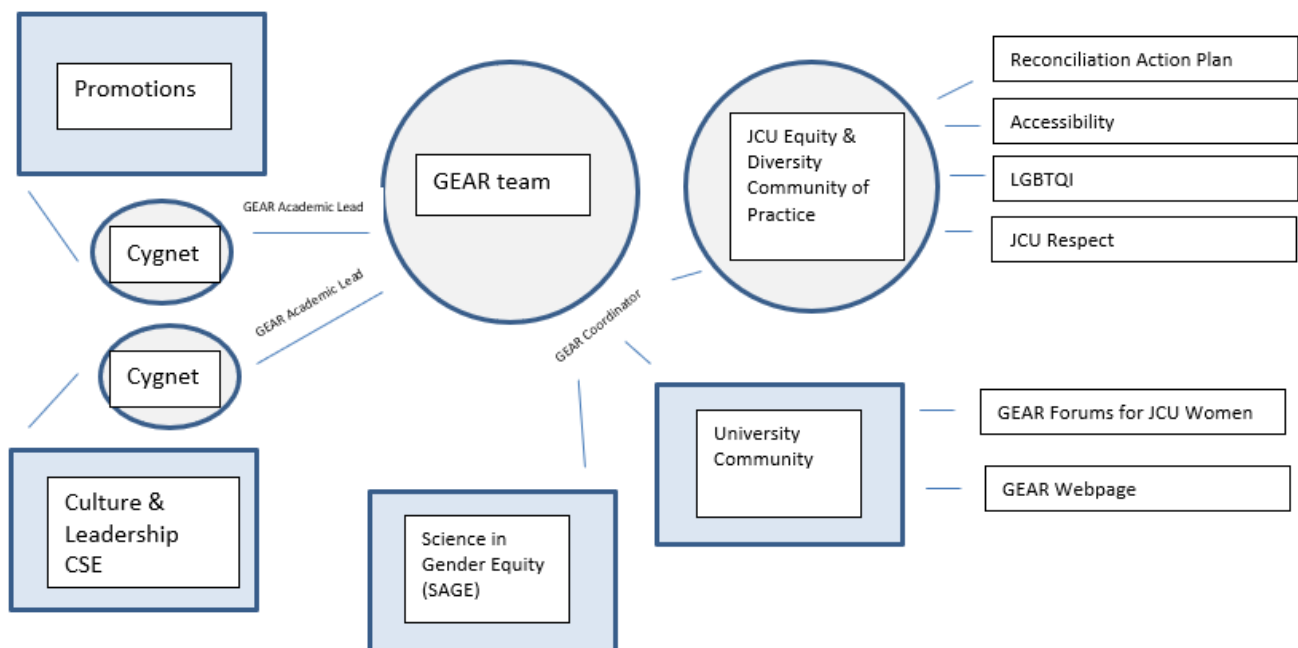
Purpose of the GEAR team

GEAR will:

- Be an advisory board, providing advice early into processes, policies and practice that sit within the body of work under the University's strategic priority of *Empowering our People*
- Appoint two academic leads from within the team to undertake the analysis and documentation required for each of the two Cygnet applications in 2023
- Communicate and engage with the University community on the progress of the Cygnet process
- Champion gender equity within JCU; and
- Collaborate with other JCU diversity groups as appropriate.

Timelines and Reporting

Minutes and Agendas from GEAR meetings are shared with VCAG/VCOG.



Membership and Meetings

GEAR meetings to be held in March, June and September, with GEAR Forums for Women in July and October.

Membership of the GEAR will comprise:

- Vice Chancellor (Chair)
- GEAR Coordinator (appointed by Chair)
- Cygnet Academic Leads x 2 (appointed by Chair)
- Data Analyst Representative (appointed by Financial and Business Services)
- People and Culture Representative (appointed by People and Culture)

An additional six (6) GEAR members with consideration given to broad representation:

- No more than two-thirds of membership either male or female
- Australian Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander representation
- Attention to diversity (sexuality, dis/ability, culture, ethnicity, languages spoken, etc)
- Representation from across Australian Tropical Campuses
- Representation of STEMM and HASS members
- Representation from different contract types: fixed-term, casual, continuing, part-time, full-time
- Representation from different academic levels; A/B, C, D/E
- Representation from students
- Representation from professional/technical roles

Membership is self-nominated via an Expression of Interest (EOI) process, with targeted recruitment if required. The EOI will set out the reasons for the candidate's interest in participating, and any relevant expertise or experience in qualitative/quantitative research and equity work. Each member will be appointed for a period of two (2) years with the option of renewal, endorsed by Chair. Continuity of knowledge will be maintained by ensuring membership expiry dates are staggered.

Candidates need the support of their managers to participate in the GEAR team, with approximately 10 hours per annum for meetings. Casual staff members who participate in the GEAR will be remunerated for their time. Academic Lead roles are allocated 40 hours to prepare the Cygnet application.

Roles and Responsibilities

Chair

Vice Chancellor (or nominee)

- Chairs the GEAR team and provides high-level institutional advocacy for the strategic importance and resourcing of the project. The Chair represents the GEAR team to VCOG/VCAG.

GEAR Coordinator

- Supports the Chair and coordinates the GEAR team's agendas and minutes.
- Liaises with GEAR Academic Leads who prepare the Cygnet applications, providing editorial support.
- Coordinates GEAR Forums for women and the webpage, and acts as point of contact for SAGE.

Data Analyst

- Provides institutional data analysis support to GEAR Academic Leads and the GEAR team.

People and Culture Representative

- Provides information to GEAR on work plans under the *Empowering Our People* Corporate Goals and Business Objectives, and relevant intersections with the GEAR focus areas of Promotion, Culture and Leadership, Recruitment and Flexible Work, the Reconciliation Action Plan and Indigenous Workforce Strategy.
- Seeks advice from GEAR to inform the operationalising of the *Empowering Our People* Corporate Goals and Business Objectives, to enable a gender lens to be applied to work at early stages of development.

GEAR Academic Leads

- Prepare the Cygnet applications on behalf of JCU.
- Work with colleagues (and existing teams) who hold operational responsibility for the *Empowering our People* Corporate Goals and Business Objectives relevant to Promotion, and Culture and Leadership Cygnet applications.
- Seek to document iterative cycles of problem identification, data collection, intervention design, evaluation/reflection, and adjustment to build an evidence base of progress towards gender equity that can be recognised through the Cygnet Award.

GEAR Team Members

- Champion the strategic importance of gender equity to their broader academic and professional communities and raise awareness on JCU's Cygnet processes.
- At meetings, GEAR members provide advice relevant to the *Empowering our People* Corporate Goals and Business Objectives, as well as on the Cygnet applications. GEAR members may also work directly with GEAR Academic Leads on research and evaluation activities necessary for the applications.

Background

Women are under-represented in senior positions across the higher education sector and at JCU.

In December 2015, JCU resolved to address the gap between men and women in senior recruitment, retention, career progression and induction. An action plan was developed and formed the basis for an application for an Athena SWAN Bronze medal that was submitted in April 2019 and, after further revision, was resubmitted in September 2020, with a Bronze Award conferred in December 2020.

The Action Plan was developed by Self-Assessment Team (SAT) which operated from May 2016 until September 2020. In September 2020 a Gender Equity Action Research (GEAR) team was established to support the implementation of the action plan. The focus of GEAR from March 2023 will turn to supporting a Promotion Cygnet (university wide), and a Culture and Leadership Cygnet (CSE college specific).