



AUSTRALIAN GENDER
EQUALITY COUNCIL
working for balance

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AGEC welcomes definitive ‘How To’ report on gender equality

The Workplace Gender Equality Agency (WGEA) and the University of Queensland’s AIBE Centre for Gender Equality in the Workplace (the Centre) today issued a definitive report on how to implement gender equality within the workplace. The ground-breaking report demonstrates clearly that the strategies, policies and practices of WGEA Employer of Choice for Gender Equality (Employer of Choice) organisations are reaching gender equality faster than other Australian organisations.

The report was authored by AGECE CEO, Dr Terry Fitzsimmons, the Centre Director of University of Queensland’s AIBE Centre for Gender Equality in the Workplace and Dr Miriam Yates and Professor Victor Callan of the Centre.

The report details 12 elements of leading practice in workplace gender equality. Each of the leading WGEA Employer of Choice citation holders undertake these. Key highlights are:

1. Standalone gender equality strategy integrated with the overall strategic business direction
2. Inclusive leadership as a core competency of the CEO
3. Integration of gender equality performance indicators, with real consequences for failure, set into performance metrics
4. Reflexive mindset and approach to gender equality ensuring initiatives work in practice
5. External and internal accountability to gender equality indicators

The data on key gender equality indicators was conclusive for EOCGE citation holders with:

1. A significantly faster reduction in gender pay gap: 9.2 percentage point (pp) reduction on a total remuneration compared to 3.7pp across other reporting organisations
2. More female employees working full-time: 57% of female employees working fulltime compared to 39% in the general workforce
3. Far greater board representation: only 8.9% of EOCGEs with no female directors compared to 35.9% across other reporting organisations

The data set for the report’s findings was derived from analysis of five years of WGEA Employer of Choice applications, across the 2013-2014 to 2017-2018 time periods. WGEA Employer of Choice for Gender Equality application data and WGEA reporting data representing 4 million Australian workers provided the backdrop for the report.

AGECE CEO, Dr Fitzsimmons said “This report reinforces AGECE’s view that transparency of performance, and acknowledgement of strong performers, is a key driver of improvement. We have long believed that gender equality results when companies make multi-faceted initiatives across their own organisation and across the community more broadly; the report now confirms this unequivocally.”

AGECE Chair Victoria Weekes noted how disparate the results were between Employer of Choice organisations and those that were not. “We now have statistics to show the measurable difference to gender equality that commitment to workplace gender equality makes. I now call on the government to make reporting to WGEA mandatory for all organisations, both Government and non-government, in a bid for all areas of working Australia to reach true gender equality faster.”

The 12 elements of Leading Practice in Workplace Gender Equality are listed overleaf, while the Employer of Choice for Gender Equality report is available at www.agec.org.au. AGECE is Australia’s peak body representing not for profit non-government organisations dedicated to achieving gender equality. Donations to assist with AGECE’s research and advocacy can be done so at <http://www.agec.org.au/take-action>.

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12 Elements of Leading Practice in Workplace Gender Equality

1. Inclusive leadership as a core competency of the CEO and recruited for and/or trained at all levels of the organisational hierarchy.
2. Governance structures that support gender equality oversight at the top levels of the organisation.
3. A stand-alone gender equality strategy that is integrated with the overall organisational strategic direction.
4. Measurement, monitoring and evaluation of a broad suite of gender equality performance indicators encompassing all components of the employee life-cycle.
5. A reflexive mindset and approach to gender equality, incorporating a willingness to field-test policies, practices and initiatives to ensure they are elective and fit-for-purpose.
6. Detailed policies and practices that are well communicated and trained for and which support and promote gender equality throughout the employee lifecycle.
7. Integration of gender equality key performance indicators, with real consequences for failure, set into People Managers' performance metrics.
8. A willingness to publicly communicate and to be held accountable internally and externally on gender equality indicators.
9. A willingness to partner with others inside and outside of their industry, who may also be looking to improve gender equality within their organisations.
10. A willingness by senior leadership to advocate to peers, external stakeholders, industry bodies or government on gender equality matters.
11. True workplace flexibility is embraced with work being redesigned to contemplate timing, location and performance metrics aligned to both employee, team and organisational needs.
12. Flexible, 'Shared Care' models of parental leave are offered in ways that benefit both women and men.