

NTEU National Office



**Submission to the Senate Finance and Public Administration
References Committee**

**Inquiry into Gender segregation in the workplace and its
impact on women's economic equality**

The National Tertiary Education Union (NTEU) directly represents the Industrial and professional of 28,000 staff working in higher education, including staff in Australia's universities and research institutes and in other tertiary sector organisations. Our membership includes a diverse range of occupations, including academics, of whom we have exclusive coverage. We represent world leading experts in their field, academics across all disciplines, researchers, professional, technical and administrative staff.

At 57% of our total membership and as a similar proportion in the sector, NTEU has always had a significant interest in issues affecting women workers and has devoted specific resources to pursuing these issues. Indeed we view and review all our work through the 'gender lens'. We welcome the opportunity, on behalf of our members, to make a submission to the *Senate Standing Committee on Gender segregation in the workplace and its impact on women's economic equality*.

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The growth and gender bias of precarious employment in Higher Education

The NTEU has long held concerns around the gender pay gap and the impact on women, but today the big issues for women working in higher education are both insecure employment and underemployment. Insecure employment is a growing trend in higher education, with the largely unfettered use of casual, contract and agency employment arrangements. Underemployment is less obvious – and it often applies to part time workers who would prefer full time hours, but it also incorporates those who are skilled but confined to lower paid positions.

Research has consistently shown that both insecure and under employment in tertiary education is gendered, with women over represented in all categories of casual and contract work (be this as academic, research, general or professional and technical staff), in part time roles and, most persistently, in the lower levels of both academic, general/professional and technical classifications. Women in higher education are also less likely to be successful in academic promotion rounds, where many find themselves discriminated against for seeking to balance family and carer obligations with their career. It should be noted that for many women working in higher education, these issues are intersectional – for example, insecure and underemployment can be one and the same for casual academics, or a senior researcher with an impressive publications record may be passed over for promotions due to having taking time off for maternity leave, but could also be dealing with a precarious working life that goes from one research contract to the next.

The NTEU's submission will highlight these issues and their impact on women who work in higher education.

***Women, careers and universities: Where to from here? Report* and the NTEU's research on gender bias in precarious employment**

In 2011, an Australian Research Council Linkage Grant (ARC) research project, led by Professor Glenda Strachan, Griffith University, examined gender and equity in higher education. The project had been proposed by the NTEU and was supported by industry partners, Universities Australia Executive Women and UniSuper. The findings of the project, which drew upon more than 23,000 survey responses from staff at 19 Australian universities, were released in 2016 in a report entitled [*Women, careers and universities: Where to from here?*](#)

It's important to note that the research project was unique in that it included professional staff and staff employed on insecure contracts as well as academic and research staff; these

staff had typically been excluded in previous research projects. As such, the research gives a comprehensive picture of the state of precarious employment in universities and gender bias.

The report found that universities are increasingly relying upon insecure forms of employment, usually in the form of fixed-term contracts and hourly paid teaching academics (casuals), as the major component of the university's workforce. Women are far more likely to be in this group than men. It should be noted that insecure employment is not only about there being uncertainty in on-going university employment; for those employed on serial fixed term contracts there are issues around professional development and many benefits, such as receiving additional pay for overtime or promotion or appointment at a higher level, are virtually non-existent. Furthermore, staff on fixed term contracts may not be able to access all gender equity and family leave policies, and casual staff and agency staff usually fall outside of these policies altogether.

The report also found that while women are the majority of staff, their employment patterns are marked by obvious vertical and horizontal segregation. Women were under-represented around senior professional and academic levels (HEW 8 and at Professor and Associate Professor (levels E and D)) as well as in some disciplines and in some professional areas. Conversely, the report also found that, across all areas surveyed, women were disproportionately represented at the lower levels, and that while between 2001 and 2011, their attainment of higher level appointments among both academic and professional staff had increased; gender inequity still persisted relative to their male colleagues.

The report also benchmarked gender equity in Australian universities amongst academic staff against the Australian Public Service (APS), and found universities to be considerably worse off, with women particularly under-represented in senior academic levels compared to the APS. Even for upper-middle tier academics (level C) there was a sizeable gap when compared with women's employment in the benchmark, equivalent tier of the public service.

For academic staff, horizontal segregation occurs through both discipline and role specialisation, impacting on women's advancement. There is not a single labour market for academic staff, but rather a series of segmented labour markets organised around disciplines. Some of these had higher levels of female participation than others. Gender inequities varied by discipline and role specialisation and therefore require action that takes account of disciplinary and specialisation effects.

The NTEU has collated unpublished data from the Department of Education and Training (DET) [Selected Higher Statistics – Staffing Data 2016](#), examining modes of academic

employment (excluding research only staff) in universities by gender, broad field of study and academic units. This data supports the findings of the report - that the levels of insecure employment can vary as a proportion of staff in that area, but in the majority of disciplines, women are over represented in terms of insecure employment (in these charts, identified as both actual casuals and limited term – otherwise known as fixed term contract)

Figure1

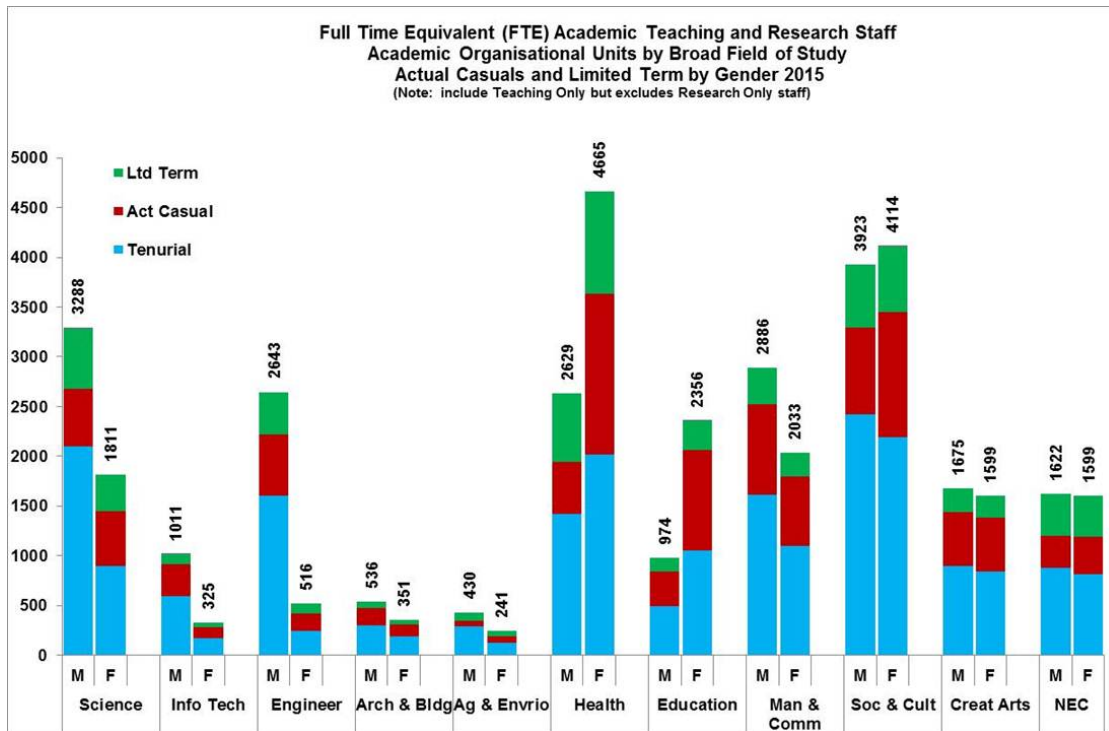
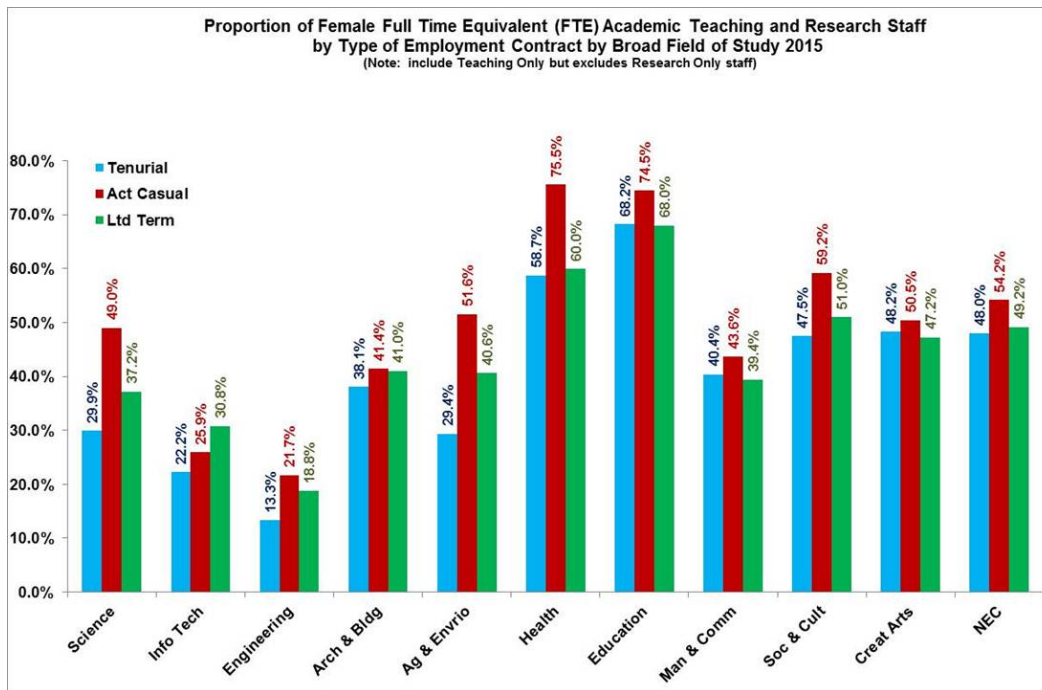


Figure 1 above, shows that in areas such as health, education, society and culture – which are feminised areas – there are significant levels of insecure employment. It also identifies the areas with low numbers of women (specifically, in science, IT and engineering) but that as a proportion, women in those areas are still over represented in insecure modes of employment.

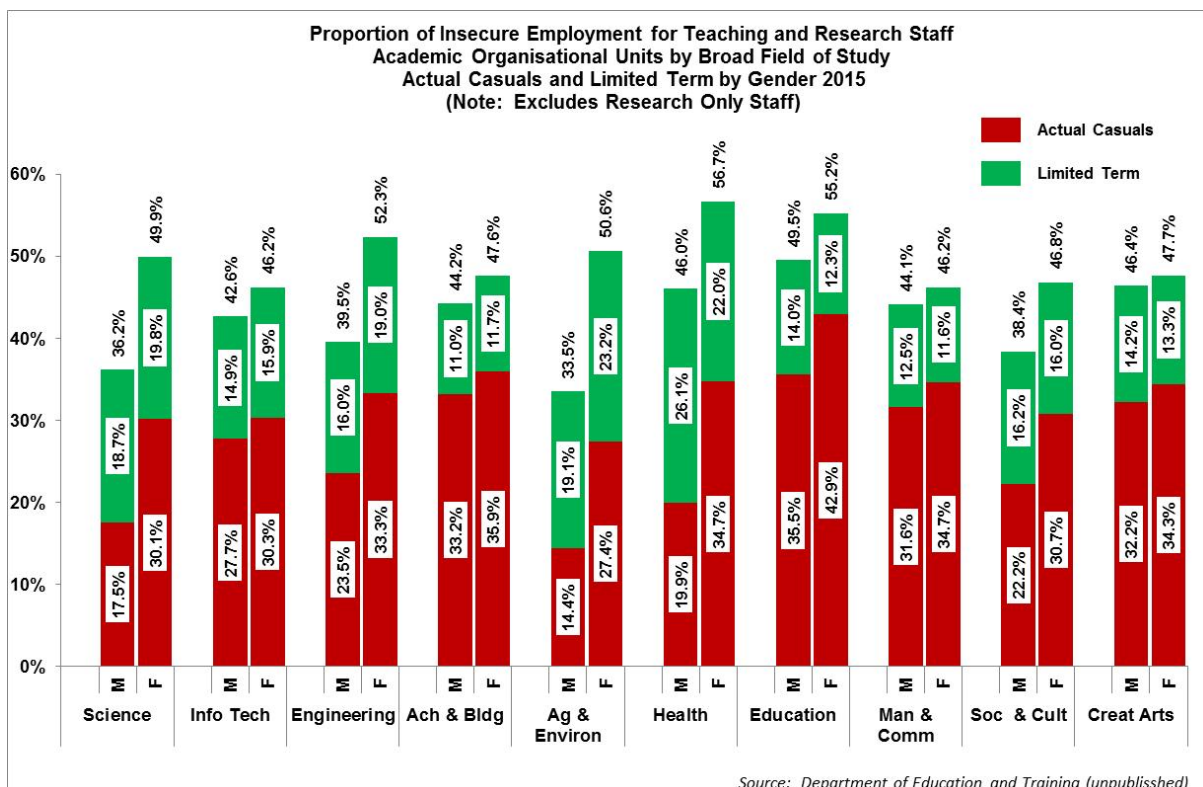
Figure 2 below expands on this point in greater detail, showing the percentages of women in the three modes of employment (tenured, or permanent, actual casual and limited term). It is worth noting that, while the NTEU's data focuses on academic areas only, the *Women, careers and universities* study found that, across both academic and professional areas, women were more likely to work part-time than men, and that they were more likely to be on a fixed-term appointment (contract) than full-time staff. It also found that while for professional staff there were variations in their degree of gender concentration in different discipline areas, with two exceptions, all forms of casual work were female dominated.

Figure 2



Finally, **Figure 3** below examines the variation between actual casuals and limited term (contract) staff by gender and discipline. As noted in the *Women, careers and universities* report, it is evident that casual employment is a significant form of employment across all areas, and that the majority in all disciplines are women.

Figure 3



Approximately 67,000 individuals worked as casual academic teaching staff in 2010, approximately 54 per cent according to UniSuper data, and 57 per cent from the survey were women. In comparison, women represented 45 per cent of the permanent and fixed-term academic workforce. Casual academic teaching staff, typically hired on a semester basis, were the largest component, on a headcount basis, of the academic workforce. Women constituted more than half of the casual academic teaching workforce.

The overwhelming majority (84 per cent) of research academics were employed on fixed-term contracts, and women were a little more likely to be on a contract than men (88 per cent of women, 82 per cent of men).

Women and men had a similar desire for more secure work, and there was no evidence to suggest that casual or fixed-term work was favoured by women as a means to achieve flexibility. A significant proportion of casual academics aspired to an academic career. However, while their work experience was viewed as preparation for an academic career, they received limited access to resources or supported professional development to assist. Despite their important work with students, the survey data showed how casual academics were invisible in the university, and often excluded from university activities.

For research focused staff, the study also found that while fixed-term (contract) positions were significant in all disciplines, these were rife in the STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics) disciplines, and that, as with other university staff professions, there was a strongly gendered aspect to this insecurity here too, with women more likely than men to be in insecure positions and end up in insecure career pathways. Fixed-term academic women, both research intensive (RI) and teaching intensive (TI), were much more dissatisfied with support in their careers than men. Two-thirds of research intensive (RI) academic staff, the majority employed on fixed-term contracts, had made no advancement since their first appointment.

The study also looked at work and working conditions. In universities, long working hours are the norm. This was verified by the study, which found that almost half (43 per cent) of full-time professional staff usually worked more than 40 hours a week. Almost all (90 per cent) full-time academic staff worked more than 40 hours a week. Nine per cent of full-time professional staff and half the full-time academic staff (51 per cent) worked 50 or more hours per week.

Yet here, too, there are issues around the genderification of work. The research showed that women academics were more likely than their male colleagues to undertake greater loads in teaching and (in particular) administration, than their contract indicated. Not surprisingly,

affected staff indicated that they would prefer to work fewer hours and expressed lower satisfaction with careers or work–life balance.

In contrast, the receipt of pay loadings among both professional staff and academic staff was higher for men than for women. In both groups, this was especially the case for market and, to a lesser extent, performance loadings, and not all of this could be explained simply by differences in level. Put simply, the research found that the value of the loading was greater for men than women, reinforcing the problem of the gender pay gap in tertiary education.

In terms of career advancement, the study found that the initial level of appointment for women was in a lower classification than for men, among both academic and professional staff. This echoes research undertaken by bodies such as the Workplace Gender Equity Agency (WGEA) and Graduate Careers Council of Australia, which has found that for the majority of graduates, men often have higher starting salaries than their women colleagues (see the section entitled *Impact of the Gender Pay Gap* in this submission).

The *Women, careers and universities* study also reinforced broader research that found part-time work acted as a small but measurable ‘brake’ on career progression for female professional staff, and that women who had only worked part-time were less likely to have advanced than those who worked full-time or had periods of working both full- and part-time.

There has been an assumption that women seek out ‘flexible’ work due to carer obligations, or that women choose to have a family over their career. Yet the study found women aspired to higher-level positions at least as much as men, among both academic and professional staff. They applied for promotion at the same rate as men, and were just as likely to be successful in these applications. Among professional staff, success rates in reclassification applications were the same for women and men.

Yet (with the exception of facilities management), women were under-represented at senior levels across the board. In terms of academic women, the study argued there are three important structural impediments, related strongly to discipline, which disadvantaged those women in seeking to advance academic careers:

- ***Insecurity***. The tendency, within each role specialisation, for women to be more likely than men to be in fixed-term rather than continuing jobs.
- ***Marginalisation***. The greater tendency for newly appointed women to be placed into teaching-intensive positions (some of them teaching-only positions), which are widely seen as lacking the career opportunities that are available in more balanced teaching/research (TR) positions; and

- **Funnelling.** The reducing proportions of women with movement into higher academic levels.

Each of these was linked to discipline, and was a particular problem for women in research-heavy disciplines (that is, most STEM disciplines).

The study also looked at the issue of work/life balance. It found that working mothers in universities were more likely than fathers to perceive problems with workplace attitudes to workers with family responsibilities, with the majority of fathers neutral on this issue. Mothers were also more likely than fathers to report missed opportunities for promotion or other career-related opportunities. Mothers were more likely to perceive problems and to report some missed career opportunities in male dominated, compared with gender neutral or female dominated, work units. However, there were contrasting patterns across work units between academic staff and professional staff, and fathers and mothers, in access to flexible working arrangements.

The male 'breadwinner' model appears to persist with mothers were more likely than fathers to want, request, and be granted shorter working hours. The study noted that the continued cultural perception of all male 'breadwinner' undermines efforts to reduce gender inequities in the workplace, and the universities are yet to address this successfully despite policies being in place to counter these attitudes and behaviours. It is, however, reflective of a broader social issue in Australia.

Finally, the research found that there was a gendered aspect to harassment and bullying in the workplace. One-quarter of staff had experienced harassment or bullying in the workplace, and this was slightly greater among women and highest for academic women. Fewer than half of the staff who had experienced harassment considered taking formal action due to the adverse impact it was expected to have on their career.

WGEA's findings on gender segregation in universities

The findings of the *Women, careers and universities* report are supported in the data on universities collected by the Workplace Gender Equity Agency (WGEA). The Workplace Gender Equality Act 2012 requires non-public sector employers with 100 or more staff to submit a report to the WGEA, between 1 April and 31 May each year, for the preceding 12 month period. Universities are included in this cohort of employers, and as such must provide information, in actual numbers (headcount) on their total workforce. This includes their full-time, part-time, casual and temporary staff, by gender and broad categories (e.g. manager level, professional, clerical and administrative, technical, etc.), against a range of gender equality indicators.

With this now the fifth year of reporting, there are a number of trends emerging in the data. Importantly, it is clear that the levels of insecure employment in universities are spread across all areas – that is, insecure employment is the primary mode of employment in professional (academic), technical and administrative areas. As with the Women, careers and universities study, the WGEA data also shows that insecure work is highly gendered – across all areas.

As the WGEA data is based on employer reports, it is possible to extract from these the levels of insecure employment at each institution and apply a gender lens to the reports. What is clear is that, while there are variations within the sector, all public universities rely heavily on insecure employment, regardless of their relative size, financial status or institutional reputation.

To illustrate, the University of Melbourne's 2015 WGEA report shows that only 58 per cent of all staff have access to employer paid parental leave. This entitlement is notable as it is one that NTEU is still seeking to extend to casual and short term contract staff in most of the collective agreements, and thus reveals the levels of non-permanent staffing.

The WGEA reports break these levels of insecure employment down further, into the different work categories. Leaving aside the management category (of which there are no insecure employment categories reported by the University despite most senior management staff being on fixed term contracts), the non-management areas are divided into professional (largely academic and research, although this can vary with individual institutions), technical and trades, and clerical and administrative (general and academic support staff).

Of the professional staff 37 per cent are reported as casuals. Adding the numbers of full time contract or part time contract increases the levels of professional staff in non-secure employment to 69 per cent.

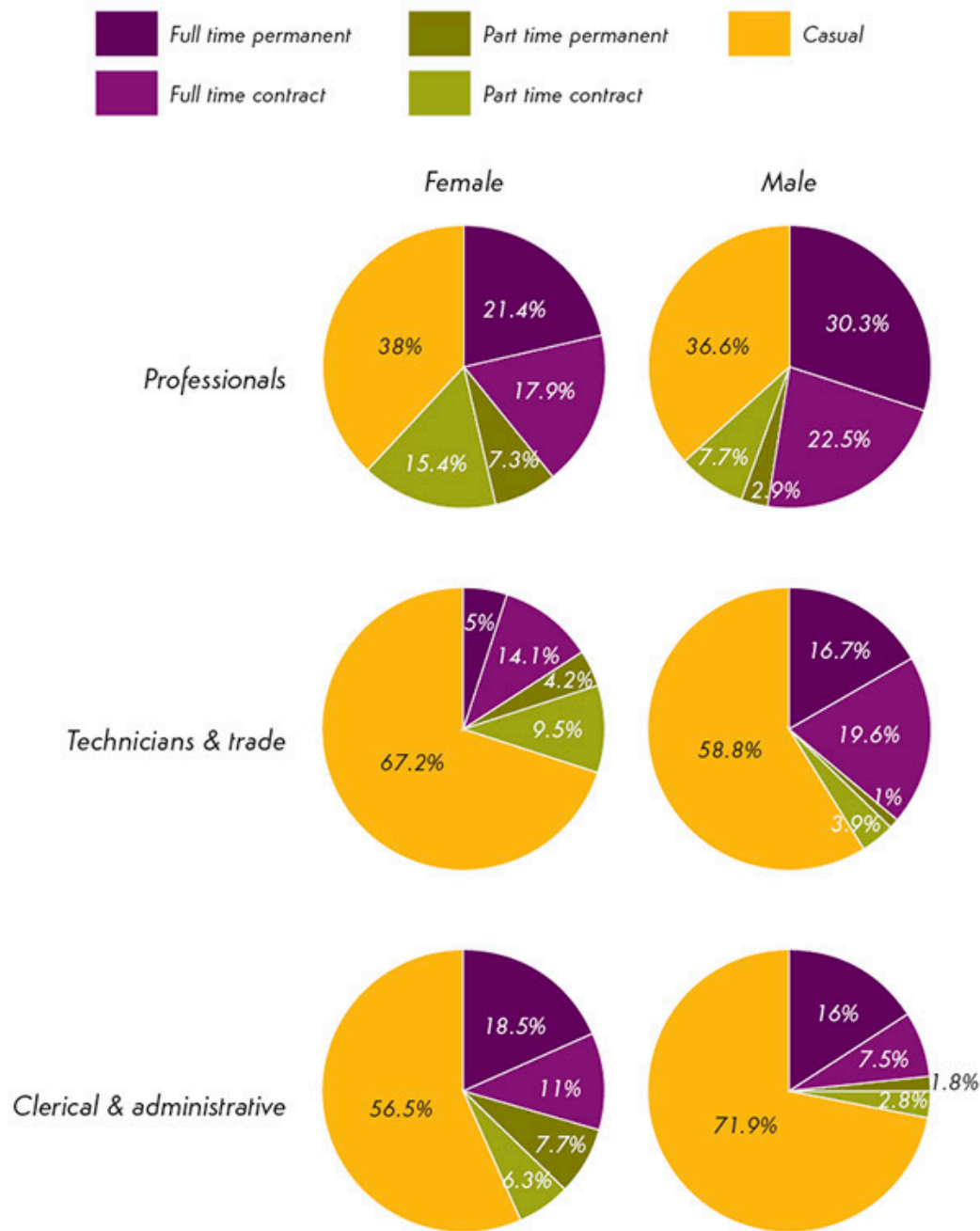
Of the technical and trades workforce, 64 per cent are casual. Although the actual numbers are smaller overall, in adding the full time contract and part time contract numbers, the percentage of insecure workers are actually 88.5 per cent.

However, it is in administration and clerical areas that the University has the highest levels of insecure employment. According to the WGEA report's workplace profile, there are 2778 clerical and administrative staff at Melbourne. Of these, 61 per cent are casuals. Adding to this the non-secure contract categories, and the result is that 76 per cent are insecurely employed (that's 2120 staff, out of 2778).

The following graphs give a visual break down of the data by different work categories, employment and gender for the University of Melbourne. In all the non-management areas of casual employment, the significant majority are women.

Figure 4

University of Melbourne 2014-15 WGEA Employer Reporting Data – Employee (non manager)



Employment status of males and females in non-manager occupational categories

The gender bias of casual employment is continuing unabated, and insecure employment is now the norm in all non-management areas at Melbourne University, noting that it does not have the same funding constraints as smaller or regional institutions.

The WGEA employer reports for other institutions show even greater levels of insecure employment. For example, at the Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology University (RMIT), over half of their non-management staff (6,326 out of 10,016) are casuals and the majority of these are women (not counting part-time and full-time contract staff, the majority of whom are also women). Even adding RMIT's 493 managers, it's still more than half the workforce that don't have access to employer paid parental leave.

At the University of Sydney, there are 2,672 casual professional staff, and another 1,524 contract staff. This represents 74.5 per cent of the total professional workforce. In clerical and administrative areas, the levels of insecure work are also high: there are 2,098 casual staff, and 768 contract staff. Together, these staff form 65 per cent of the total clerical and administrative workforce. In both the professional and administrative categories, it is women who are the majority in insecure employment.

A final example from the University of Queensland shows that these figures are not isolated. There are 1,919 professional casual staff (1,033 women), with a further 2,940 contract professional staff (and 1563 of these women as well). When combined, these staff are 73 per cent of the professional staff at the university. Looking at clerical and administrative staff, there are 833 casual and contract staff (633 of these women), which is 53 per cent of the total administrative and clerical workforce.

These few examples, from relatively better resourced institutions, show the levels of insecure employment, and how this impacts on access to those entitlements that many university managements use when promoting their gender equity credentials. It remains that while insecure work continues to flourish unabated in our universities, the majority of staff employed in this manner are women.

Impact of the Gender Pay Gap

The work of the WGEA is also of considerable importance in monitoring the gender pay gap, both nationally and within specific industries. Although the education sector is considered to be a leader in gender equality, WGEA in 2016 reported a 10% gender pay gap for professional full time staff across all of the education and training sector, with the figure blowing out to 13% for senior management levels.

Women students are also facing inequity, with a graduate gender pay gap of 3.4%, which increases over time. Graduate Careers Australia figures released in 2016 reveal that within three years of graduation, men are out-earning women by 9.3%.

The gender pay gap also impacts on economic security over time. According to *UniSuper*, the industry superannuation fund for university staff, the retirement saving gap between men and women who have worked in universities is currently 37%. While this is concerning in itself, staff employed in non-secure modes of employment are often not entitled to the same levels of employer paid superannuation as their permanent staff colleagues, and some may not receive any superannuation at all. This has a profound impact on their capacity to save, particularly when many employed either as casual or contract staff are often in reality long term employees.

Review of the Gender Pay Gap and reversing the cuts to WGEA reporting

The NTEU contends that there is scope for a Productivity Commission review into the success of current strategies aimed at addressing the gender pay gap and how these could be improved through a national strategy that would support the work of the Agency.

As part of this, the NTEU argues that the Government's 2015 cuts to the reporting requirements for employers with 100 or more employees to the Workplace Gender Equity Agency (WGEA) should be reversed, as reduced reporting does not assist in identifying areas that are problematic. These cuts included reporting on:

- remuneration of Chief Executive Officers or equivalent, key management personnel above the Chief Executive Officer and managers employed on a casual basis
- workers engaged on a contract for services basis (e.g. in the case of universities, this excludes staff employed by external employment agencies – a significant proportion of professional and general staff)
- annualised average full-time components of total remuneration
- information on the number of applications received and interviews conducted
- the number of requests made, and approvals granted, for extensions to parental leave
- the number of requests made, and approval granted, to return to work part-time from a period of parental leave

The NTEU is opposed to these omissions, particularly the non-disclosure of CEO remuneration, the omission of external contract workers and the number of requests (compared to approvals) for extensions to parental leave.

Domestic and Family Violence is gendered, has an impact on economic equity, and is relevant in the workplace

The issue of domestic and family violence in the workplace, and the gendered nature of this violence, must be noted in the context of its impact on economic equity. Research has shown that around one quarter of women (1 in 4), and between 7 and 8 per cent of men will experience domestic and family violence during their lifetimes. It has also been shown clearly, that a continued connection with the workplace is paramount for those who are victims of domestic and family violence (particularly for women) in being able to financially, and emotionally, leave their abusive partner or family member.

It is for this reason that Australian unions have, since 2010, led the way in negotiating with employers for paid domestic violence leave to support workers experiencing domestic violence. In universities, approximately two thirds of collective agreements now include some form of paid leave for those affected by domestic violence. While not detracting from the fulsome support eventually given by a few universities, each of these provisions was achieved through campaigning and negotiation by the NTEU.

Motivating the NTEU, like other unions, is the clear value to those dealing with domestic violence of maintaining their income by not losing their jobs and plunging into poverty. For employers the advantages of retaining valued staff outweighs the relatively minor financial costs incurred by facilitating paid leave and other support. Additionally all parties have made it clear that they are keen to join in efforts to decrease the incidence of domestic violence and to deal with the consequences. However, it is deeply concerning that the Federal Government and employer groups are seeking to limit the extension of paid leave to deal with domestic and family violence to all Australian workers, by opposing the ACTU's claim in the Fair Work Commission (FWC) for 10 days family and domestic violence leave to be included in all modern awards; [AM2015/1]

A recent paper by Dr Jim Stanford, for the Australia Institute, highlights the positive economic impacts of extending domestic violence leave to all workers in Australia. The paper, [“Economic Aspects of Paid Domestic Violence Leave Provisions” \(2016\)](#) reviewed data from employers with existing domestic violence policies and applied this on a national basis.

Importantly, the research found that:

- Only about 1.5 percent of female employees, and around 0.3 percent of male employees, are likely to utilise paid domestic violence leave provisions in any given year.
- Incremental wage payouts to workers on domestic violence leaves associated with the universal extension of a 10-day paid domestic violence leave policy will be modest – in the order of \$80-\$120 million per year for the whole economy.
- Those incremental wage payouts are equivalent to less than one-fiftieth of one percent of existing payrolls (0.02 percent).
- The costs to employers associated with those payouts are likely to be largely or completely offset by benefits to employers associated with the provision of paid domestic violence leave: including reduced turnover and improved productivity.
- The cost of domestic violence to all sectors of society (including its victims, governments, and employers) is very large, estimated to total around 1 percent of GDP. Just a small reduction (even just 1 percent) in the incidence of domestic violence, resulting from the expansion of paid domestic violence leave (and complementary workplace measures), would therefore generate broader economic benefits that exceed the incremental costs.
- The recent claim by the Government and employer groups that provision of paid domestic violence leave would damage Australia's international competitiveness is not credible – in light of both the magnitude of those costs, and a modern understanding of the determinants of global competitiveness.

That said, the NTEU believes that the discussion should not be around introducing universal domestic and family violence leave (this should be a given), but how it can be better targeted and accessed by those who need help when dealing with these issues. Not all victims of domestic violence take leave from work, and that would continue to be the case even with a universal paid leave provision (The ACTU claim is for time to be taken in order to attend specific, documented activities or events related to the violence experienced).

This is supported by ABS data which shows that only about one-fifth and one-quarter of women who experienced intimate partner violence will take time off work directly because of that violence in the 12 months after their most recent incident, and around half that figure will apply to men who similarly experience violence. Adding to this is research which has found that there was an average of leave of just under 8 days for women, and just under 6 days for men. The question unions, employers and the Government should be considering therefore, is not whether there should be mandatory domestic and family violence leave for all workers (there should be) but are current domestic and family violence leave provisions effective

enough, or can more be done to help employees who need to access domestic and family violence leave to do so - and what role can the workplace play in this?

Conclusion

The NTEU contends that vertical and horizontal gender segregation remains a key feature of university workplaces and women, individually and as a group, are likely to encounter obstacles to achieving gender equity due to ongoing discrimination and prejudice towards women.

The clear over representation of women in precarious employment, combined with the unabated and growing use of insecure modes of employment by university managements, will see gender segregation only worsen. While the general perception of the public may be that universities lead the way in gender equity, this submission clearly highlights numerous problems with this assumption. It is evident that much more needs to be done, both at the local level and more broadly, if the negative effects of gender segregation are to be challenged successfully.

Further universities are the site of rigorous and evidence based research, and as such should be more receptive to making changes to improve gender equity and thereby increase equality.

The gender segregation highlighted in our submission shows that, while the NTEU has managed to secure entitlements for permanent staff, such as domestic and family violence leave, paid parental leave and the ability for professional staff to move from full-time to part-time to full-time work, universities are far from being bastions of equity and that further work is needed to address these specific gender equity issues.

The NTEU will continue to push for universities to recognise the gendered nature of work in higher education and address the negative consequences of this. However, that does not mean that there cannot be action taken at other levels. The NTEU has advocated for a number of years that higher education needs a to deal with workforce planning issues, and it would be appropriate to address gender segregation in the workplace as part of university funding requirements – both for Commonwealth Grant Scheme (CGS) funding and for research block funding.

Recommendations

The *Women, careers and universities: Where to from here?* report made a number of specific recommendations that address gender segregation and equity, and could be readily adopted by individual institutions and reported on annually. It should be noted that while

some of these recommendations may intersect with policies touched on in employer reports to WGEA, the Agency has no enforcement powers, and reporting does not constitute action. Universities have, until now, shown a reluctance to address workforce planning issues and gender equity in a strategic manner. While there are individual initiatives at particular institutions, these are usually sporadic and rely on 'champions' within the institution to promote such schemes. The recommendations below, tied to funding, would go some way in ensuring gender equity is addressed in a sustainable and deliberate manner within the institution.

The *Women, careers and universities* recommendations call for universities to:

- Address areas of inequity uncovered in the report as a priority – for example, the level of first appointment and the payment of loadings on top of the regulated salary
- Apply a gender lens to institutional policies in the context of the changing environment and workforce needs, and monitor these
- Be aware at all levels (from the chancellery to local departments) that gender inequity remains and is enacted in various ways each day. Vertical and horizontal segregation is a persistent feature of university employment. HR departments, managers and staff need to be educated on the issues and strategies put in place, and have responsibility for these at line management level. Line managers should be asked to devise specific strategies for gender equity within their organisational units.
- Recognise that insecure employment is gendered, and that strategies (such as deeming casual work after 6 months of regular and systematic engagement) need to be put in place to cap the unrestrained use of insecure employment.
- Develop explicit career paths for employment groups within the institution that are currently stagnating, for example teaching intensive academics, and for transfer to other specialisations if the staff member desires.
- Recognise the relationship between gender and teaching intensive (TI), fixed-term academic appointments in research-heavy (STEM) disciplines, and as a result require managers in areas where gender inequity has been identified to play an active role in the development of specific equity policies and their implementation.
- Liaise with professional bodies and the Academies to counter sexism and discrimination in career progress, as university employment and gender inequities do not stand alone
- Ensure that training for managers and HR staff deals with the prevention of, or subsequent handling of, harassment and bullying. This must also address workplace culture, where non-harassment is promoted within the organisation, and staff have

confidence in the integrity of complaint systems. Particular attention should be paid to academic areas, where the study found higher rates of harassment of women.

- Provide all staff who have managerial and supervisory responsibilities with mandatory training in combatting 'unconscious bias' which leads to stronger weighting given to the qualifications and achievements of male candidates and a lower weighting to the achievements of female candidates for positions in areas that historically were male dominated.
- Not only develop (or extend) 'gender egalitarian' work/family policies, but monitor the success of these policies and where needed, amend these to improve the workplace culture. For example that is, these could include extending parental – as opposed to only maternity – leave entitlements and ensuring that policies such as temporary, part-time, or other flexible working arrangements explicitly state that they are open to men as well as women. These policies should be publicised internally and include examples of successful flexible arrangements taken by individual staff.

Intersectionality

Finally, while the study was focused on gender equality, it found that **one per cent of all university workers surveyed identified as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders, and two-fifths of staff were born outside of Australia.** The report therefore recommended that universities also need to reflect on the issue of intersectionality and how this impacts on working conditions and career advancement. In other words, intuitional policy needs to be extended beyond gender to take consideration of these under-represented groups.

The NTEU also believes that, in order to improve gender segregation in the workplace, there are further policy levers which the government can incorporate at a macro level:

- Re-examine government policy initiatives that drive financially unsustainable and/or unplanned growth in universities, resulting in managements replacing permanent staff positions with precarious ones;
- Better link the levels of gender segregated and precarious employment in institutions to university funding requirements – both for Commonwealth Grant Scheme (CGS) funding and for research block funding.

- Support the ACTU's claim in the Fair Work Commission for all workers to have access to 10 days paid leave to deal with the impacts of domestic and family violence, including leave for casual staff;
- Recognise the value of women's caring work and maximise the capacity to balance family and working life;
- Revise the government's paid parental leave (PPL) to allow more women access (by amending the work test to extend the 8 week gap between 2 consecutive days of work to 14 weeks) and allow for superannuation to be included as part of the paid parental leave scheme. The current changes to the PPL, as proposed by the Turnbull Coalition Government, should be rejected, and instead the Government should look at extending it to 26 weeks (approximately 6 months) as advocated by health professionals and experts, as well as the World Health Organisation (WHO) and the International Labour Organisation (ILO). There should also be recognition that the PPL was designed to provide a minimal safety net whilst ensuring that parental leave was seen as an industrial right (not a welfare payment) and that unions and employers could negotiate around this. As such, the Government should maintain the integrity of current employer PPL arrangements) and have the PPL embedded in the National Employment Standards (NES).
- Examine the success of current strategies aimed at addressing the gender pay gap through a Productivity Commission review and seek recommendation on how these could be improved at a national level.
- Reverse the 2015 cuts to the reporting requirements for employers to the Workplace Gender Equity Agency (WGEA) and examine further ways for reporting to be enhanced.

15 February 2017

