

In 2016, UAEW conducted some telephone interviews and a desktop analysis to identify examples of good practice in addressing unconscious bias and recruitment. This analysis drew on data gathered from 20 organisations, including five Australian universities, one NZ university and one from the UK. Input was also sought from a sample of Australian executive recruiters, diversity specialists and consultants. The table below presents UAEW's recommendations, based on the data gathered, to guide universities in developing strategies for addressing unconscious bias. A brief outline of benefits and potential challenges of implementing these recommendations is also included, along with links to a selection of resources that may be of interest.\*

Number	Recommendation	Commentary/Evidence	Benefits	Challenges	Useful Resources
1	<b>Generate <u>leadership and employee engagement</u> in Gender Equality.</b>	Change needs to be led from the top and engage and connect with employees at all levels to have impact. At least 15/20 organisations reviewed in preparing these guidelines appeared to have strong leadership “buy-in” to Gender Equity, with related increases in female representation at senior leadership levels.	Shows market and employees that diversity is a key priority. Ensures strategy and goals are clear for maximum impact and benefit. Demonstrates that senior leaders listen to staff in relation to gender equality.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Each university may measure ‘engagement’ differently making comparison of outcomes challenging.</li> <li>• Engagement alone is not enough.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• UN <a href="#">Women’s empowerment principles</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Male Champions of Change</a></li> </ul>
2	<b>Undertake <u>Unconscious/Conscious Bias Education</u> for Leaders.</b>	For 9/20 organisations who conducted education in unconscious bias, reported levels of awareness on the subject increased, creating momentum leading to practical ways to address cognitive biases in organisational processes and policies.	Raises awareness about the issue and provides practical ways to address and mitigate cognitive biases.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Training without accompanying leadership that prioritises change may create additional bias for participants.</li> <li>• Current indications suggest bias cannot be completely removed and the success of minimising bias via education has not been measured.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The <a href="#">Harvard Implicit Assessment Task</a>, a test of unconscious gender bias</li> <li>• The <a href="#">Australian HR institute</a> unconscious bias training</li> <li>• The <a href="#">University of California’s</a> list of unconscious bias resources</li> <li>• <a href="#">Diversity Best Practice</a> guidelines by CDO Insights</li> <li>• The <a href="#">Queensland Government’s</a> page on unconscious bias</li> <li>• Google’s <a href="#">employee training</a> on unconscious bias</li> </ul>
3	<b>Design/Revise and Implement a <u>Diversity and Inclusion Strategy</u>.</b>	17/20 organisations reviewed emphasised the value of an effectively implemented Diversity and Inclusion plan. Five organisations had alignment to external gender equity partners.	Communicates an organisational approach to Diversity and Inclusion and drives Cultural Change from the top.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Strategies can be ineffectual without effective implementation, monitoring and review.</li> <li>• Leadership needs to be active, frequent and concise to demonstrate diversity and inclusion practically.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">Diversity Australia</a> professional services and accreditation</li> <li>• <a href="#">The Australian Government Department of Defence’s</a> Diversity and Inclusion Strategy</li> <li>• <a href="#">Australian Department of Human Services</a> on workplace diversity and inclusion</li> </ul>

## Guidelines for addressing unconscious bias

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4	<b>Commit to realistic <u>gender targets</u> and objectives to meet the targets.</b>	The majority of organisations reviewed set targets. This created momentum and tangible results, all increasing their female representation in senior leadership.	Realistic targets with clear descriptors provide focus and rationale, remind of the need for change and facilitate the need for objectives and reporting (i.e. 'less talk more action').	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Targets can be viewed by some as tokenistic and disengage /discourage staff and current/future executive incumbents.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><a href="#">The 100% project</a></li> <li><a href="#">Workplace Gender Equality Agency's</a> perspective paper on targets and quotas</li> </ul>
5	<b>Review <u>policies and procedures</u> to mitigate unconscious bias in recruitment processes.</b>	Out of the 10 organisations known to have reviewed their practices and policies on unconscious bias, <i>all</i> had increased female representation in senior leadership.	Impacts on culture and enhances equality of opportunity. Embedding mitigation of unconscious bias into policies and procedures and implementation of changes will align efforts to create sustainable cultural change.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Efforts to change policies and procedures may appear tokenistic in isolation, especially if employees are not engaged in policy review or the implementation of changes.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Government of South Australia's Office for Women <a href="#">guidelines for gender neutral recruitment</a></li> <li>UAEW to commission research</li> </ul>
6	<b>Regularly <u>report achievement</u> of targets and objectives.</b>	70% of the organisations reviewed regularly reported on achievement of targets or diversity goals and all who did so increased female representation at senior leadership levels.	Regular reporting assesses progress to keep organisation on track, providing opportunity to tweak, engage with staff and continue to reach objectives.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Prioritising time and resources to report on progress is a challenge. Progress may not be immediately evident, despite the actions taken, which can be dispiriting.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><a href="#">Guidelines for Gender Balance Performing and Reporting Australia</a></li> </ul>

\*These resources may be of interest, but are not formally endorsed or sponsored by UAEW.