

2024 UniSQ Gender Pay Gap



University of
**Southern
Queensland**



“As the University of Southern Queensland reshapes for the future, we remain dedicated to fostering a fair, safe, and inclusive environment for both work and learning. In the coming year, we will expand our efforts to enhance awareness, confidence, and accountability among all employees, reinforcing our commitment to positive duty and gender equity. The Senior Executive team and I are committed to strong, visible leadership and accountability for driving this positive culture shift.”

Professor Karen Nelson

Acting Vice-Chancellor, University of Southern Queensland

At a glance

As UniSQ rapidly transforms its workforce to prepare for the future, we have reinforced our long-term commitment to equality, safety, and inclusiveness. This is reflected in the University's WGEA results.

The table below shows UniSQ's overall median and average gender pay gap as to 30 March 2024.

Pay Gaps	UniSQ 2021-2022	UniSQ 2022-2023	UniSQ 2023-2024	Higher Education Industry 2023-2024
Average total remuneration gap	11.9%	12.8%	11.7%	11.4%
Median total remuneration gap	10.1%	12.8%	8.4%	9.5%
Average base salary gap	11.4%	12.3%	10.8%	10.4%
Median base salary gap	5.7%	7.0%	10.1%	9.3%

Two primary factors determine the gender pay gap calculation:

1. The proportion of women to men at each level within the organisation.
2. The salary paid to women compared to men within each level.

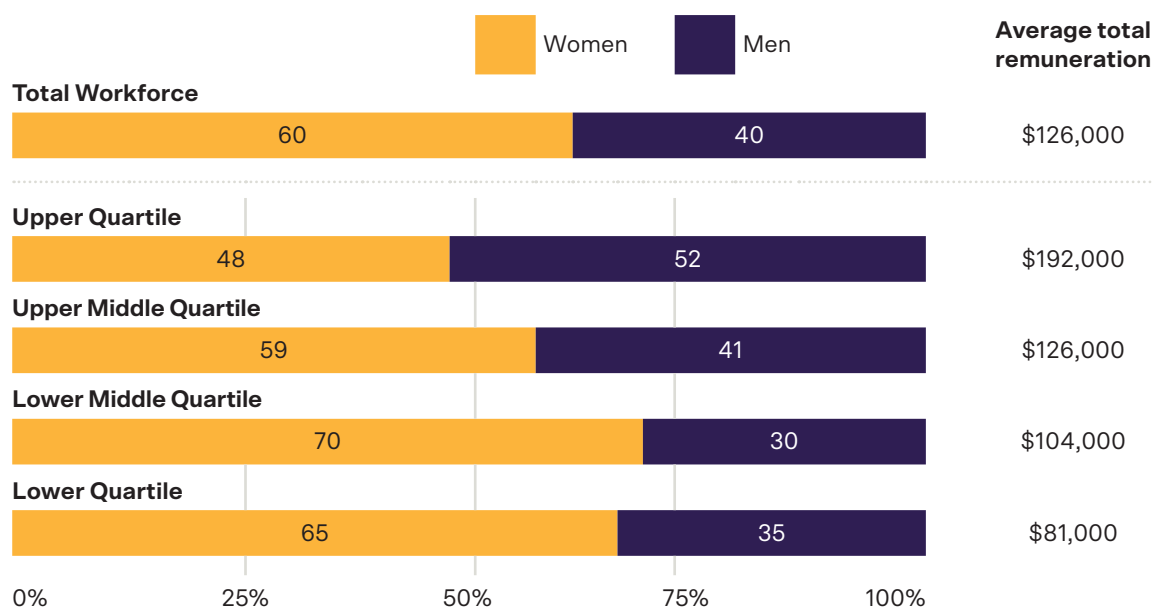
UniSQ's pay gaps for 2023-2024 show positive improvement, with a narrowing of the gap compared with previous years in all but one category, the median base salary gaps. The University is now on par with, and in some instances performing better than the higher education industry average gender pay gaps.

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Gender composition and average remuneration per pay quartile



Note: Part-time/casuals/ part-year employees are annualised to full-time equivalent for average total remuneration and does not include voluntary salary data submitted for Overseas Managers and casual managers. The average total remuneration is rounded to the nearest \$1,000.

UniSQ's reported proportion of women in the workforce overall is 60%, compared to the sector average of 64%. Women are disproportionately represented in the lower and lower-middle quartiles, making up 65-70%. This is a key contributor to UniSQ's overall gender pay gap. These results are comparable to the sector and have shown slight, 1-3% improvements over the last 12 months.

UniSQ's pay gap for managerial roles is 7.7%, compared to the sector average of 11.4%. The UniSQ pay gap for the managerial cohort is primarily driven by the over-representation of men in the top cohorts of senior leaders, with the exception of the Vice-Chancellor role. Over time however, UniSQ's female representation at the highest levels has increased from 14% in the 2021-2022 report to 25% in the 2023-2024 report. While this improvement is commendable, 25% remains below the sector average of 43%. The senior management cohort is relatively small, and annual changes in its composition significantly impact the University's WGEA performance.



Gender Equity Strategies and Trends Over Time

In 2009, only 14% of senior positions and 29% of positions above Level C and Level 10 at UniSQ were held by women, well below the sector averages of 35.5% and 34.6% respectively. This provided the opportunity for a wide-ranging investigation into systemic and cultural barriers for women's career progression at UniSQ which resulted in an ongoing program of women's career advancement programs, and policy and procedures to provide support for gender equity. These initiatives have delivered positive returns over time, and Table 4 shows the shift in key areas over the last 7 years. In addition, significant improvements have been made in promotion success rates for women over this same time, to where women's success rates (67% in 2024) have exceeded those for men (60% in 2024) for the last 3 consecutive years.

Table 4. UniSQ senior women representation (2017 to 2024)

Year	% of women on senior contracts	% of women at Level D and E	% of women at Level 9 and 10
2017	32.3%	30.6%	53.8%
2024	43.0%	39.8%	56.4%

To build upon these successes, UniSQ also engaged with the SAGE Athena Swan Accreditation Program to embed gender equity strategies in Science Technology Engineering Mathematics and Medicine (STEMM) and across the entire institution, providing a rigorous framework for ongoing improvement. After receiving the Bronze Award in 2021, UniSQ has successfully submitted four Cygnet Awards, recognizing significant impacts in the areas of onboarding, building the STEMM pipeline, career development for academic women, and parental leave.

Building on Our Strengths

At UniSQ we are working to maintain the ground we have gained. Some of our strengths:

- Gender representation on the University Council (board) is 62%, above the sector average of 46%.
- Gender balance in the upper and upper middle quartile.
- Managerial gender pay gap review.
- Increased work flexibility built into the current Enterprise Agreement, enabling all employees to work more flexibly.
- Successful Senior Women Academic Development Program.
- Early Career Academic Development Program.
- Senior Professional Women's Development Program.
- Women in STEMM projects – On-boarding, Recruitment, Early career research financial support, parental leave support, and specific support for grant writing, contract management and other specialised areas.
- Parental leave entitlements at 26 weeks, including paid superannuation during unpaid leave, with this available to the primary carer, regardless of gender. In 2024, this saw 13% of primary carer's leave taken by men, well above the sector average of only 3%.
- Measures to assist academic parents to remain research active and maintain continuous service.
- Domestic and Family Violence leave and support.
- A range of diversity and inclusion training initiatives, including the MATE By-Stander and Respectful Workplaces training for all leaders and supervisors.
- Organisation-wide Wellbeing survey enabling increased data analysis to understand workforce patterns and experiences by different diversity groups.
- Improved reporting, accountability and transparency for issues of sexual harassment and sexual discrimination.



Addressing the Gap

The focus of many of our past initiatives has been on reducing barriers for women, however, the recent UniSQ Workplace Wellbeing survey results, along with other data and feedback indicates the university will benefit from increasing attention and resources for the broader workforce, creating a safe and inclusive workplace culture, with increased behavioural awareness, accountability and transparency. This not only aligns with the higher expectations set by the positive duty obligations, but creates an environment which attracts, retains and supports women.

The following actions are being implemented to directly address the findings and key drivers of UniSQ's gender pay gap.

Gender Equity Priorities and Actions

1. Consultation and Data Analysis

The UniSQ 2024 Wellbeing Survey provided insights into employee experiences and perceptions on a range of topics from gender equity, inclusion, culturally safe work environments, change, work arrangements and others while providing comparisons across divisions, gender and various diversity groups. This has assisted in providing insights for 2025 systemic and cultural priorities for Gender Equity. Pulse surveys and focus groups will continue to provide insights and advice on implementation.

2. Professional Development and awareness campaigns for preventing and addressing sexual harassment and sex-based harm

As UniSQ strives to increase awareness, confidence, accountability, and transparency in building inclusive teams, providing trauma-informed support, and eliminating sexual harassment and discrimination, the following topics will be the focus of 2025:

- Understanding sexual harassment and sex-based discrimination
- The impact and consequences of inappropriate behaviour, using UniSQ specific case examples
- Power Imbalance
- Psychosocial hazards
- Accountability and transparency
- Trauma – informed support
- How to report
- Creating inclusive teams

3. Recruitment

We will use the current period of limited recruitment activity to carefully consider our strategies and options to increase representation of women at senior levels and in under-represented areas. Whilst improvements have been made, women remain overrepresented in professional, non-managerial staff appointments, while at the same time, over the last four years the proportion of men being appointed into academic, and particularly senior roles, has increased. We will continue to develop our efforts to attract high performing talented women to pursue and develop their careers at UniSQ, with our new Enterprise Agreement providing further opportunities to offer flexible and hybrid work, generous parental leave, research support and other benefits.



4. Leadership Pipeline Development

We are committed to identifying and building our female leadership pipeline through the workforce planning process. With data showing a persisting gap between men and women in our senior ranks, we are focussing on the development of high performing women in senior leadership roles through succession planning and a 'grow your own' approach.

5. Academic Leadership Development

In 2025 we will retain our commitment to the advancement of senior women into roles at Level D and E. This program supports a broad intersectionality approach, including First Nations female academics and has contributed to our 10% uplift in the representation of women at Associate Professor and Professor level over the last seven years.

6. Managerial remuneration review

Each year, we conduct a comprehensive gender pay equity gap analysis as part of the senior remuneration review cycle to identify potential inequities or anomalies and implement specific actions to address gaps where identified. Decreasing our managerial pay gap through targeted interventions support actions designed to increase our representation of women in the most senior ranks.

7. Women in STEMM Actions

The SAGE Women in STEMM program has delivered strong results for UniSQ, and led to the significant and sustained action across the following priority areas:

- On-boarding
- Recruitment
- Early career research financial support
- Parental leave experience
- Remaining research active
- Paid superannuation while on unpaid parental leave
- Specific support for grant writing, funding and contract management and others

While the program of works was designed to deliver outcomes for Women in STEMM, the systemic changes were implemented for all women and have improved family friendly work arrangements. These initiatives will be mainstreamed into our wider diversity and inclusion framework and activities in 2025 and beyond.

8. Policy and procedure review and implementation

2024 ushered in UniSQ's new Enterprise Agreement, and a proactive review of all employee-related policies and procedures to identify unintended or systemic barriers to equal participation in all aspects of work at UniSQ, along with ensuring that policies and procedures address the positive duty obligations on the University as an employer to actively prevent gender-based, sex-based and sexual harassment and discrimination, and create a safe working environment.

2025 will focus on capability development, awareness and support for people using these policies and procedures.