

Gender Equality Action Plan 2021-2025





We acknowledge the traditional owners of the lands, in particular the Wurundjeri, Bunurong and Taungurung peoples on whose lands Holmesglen's campuses stand, and pay our respects to Elders past, present and emerging.

Our work at Holmesglen is education, to share and pass knowledge on to those who seek to gain it and we recognise the long-standing tradition of teaching and learning that has played such a great part in over 60,000 years of Australian culture.

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Foreword

Holmesglen Institute is established under the Education and Training Reform Act 2006. This Act – along with the Institute’s Constitution – defines our functions and duties, including:

- providing vocational education and training and higher education programs to benefit Victorian industry and communities
- undertaking applied research in partnership with learners, industry and communities
- providing facilities and services to support our learners and communities.

Our Vision 2030 as articulated in our Strategic Plan 2021-2023 is that we are a leading tertiary provider, valued by local and international learners, the community and industry. We are recognised for innovation in education, training and applied research, creativity and entrepreneurship. We have an open, collaborative and quality-driven culture in which learners and staff excel.

Our mission explicitly calls out our integral role in the community supporting diversity, inclusion and social cohesion. We value the diversity of our workforce and our students, however the results of our gender equality audit shows that there is significant room for improvement across the gender equality indicators.

The Institute is a defined entity under the Gender Equality Act 2020 (the Act), We are required to conduct a workplace gender audit, and develop a Gender Equality Action Plan (GEAP) every four years.

The development of this GEAP has provided us with the opportunity to assess the current state of gender equality at the Institute in the broader context of diversity and inclusion and to develop strategies to advance gender equality at the Institute.

The GEAP is an important component of a broader Diversity and Inclusion Plan, which we will develop in 2022, to ensure that we bring to life our role in social inclusion and cohesion and support diversity across the organisation.

Three priority areas for action have been identified for our

GEAP, which underpin and support strategic, meaningful, and sustainable change over the next four years. The goals and strategies in this Plan have been developed following consultation across the organisation, in response to the Institute’s workforce data against the gender equality indicators.

Priority 1:
We have zero tolerance for discrimination, bullying and sexual harassment with all staff empowered to report, recognise, address and respond to it.

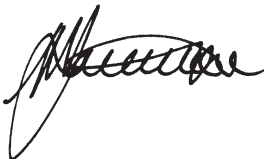
Priority 2:
We support gender equality through gender equity

Priority 3:
We have an active role in building and supporting a diverse and inclusive working environment.

We commit to embedding this Plan, ensuring appropriate resources to its implementation, monitoring, reporting, and evaluation, and supporting leaders to develop and implement operational plans. I am committed to establishing a Diversity and Inclusion Working Group which I will Chair, and the Working Group will oversee the implementation of this Gender Equality Action Plan.

In adopting and implementing this GEAP Holmesglen Institute demonstrates how it values the richness of diversity amongst its staff, and recognises its responsibilities to take organisational wide transformative actions to enhance inclusion for all.

I look forward to working with my colleagues to realise our vision for a diverse and inclusive working environment.



Mary Faraone
Chief Executive

Gender equality data

The Institute's workplace gender audit report is based on our internal workforce data and People Matter Survey responses. We have analysed our workforce data against the gender equality indicators to provide baseline data to develop our Plan. The baseline audit analysis identified areas for further data collection and analysis. The data collection methods will mature and evolve to align with the data recording and requirements of the Commissioner.



Governing bodies



Composition at all levels



Work segregation



Recruitment and promotion



Pay equity



Leave and flexibility



Sexual harassment

Governing bodies

Consultation found employees may be unaware our Board currently comprises 12 Directors, 7 women and 5 men, including the Chair.

Gender composition

Workforce data currently includes women and men only, with no-one choosing to identify as using another term for their gender. However, People Matter Survey respondents included 16% 'prefer not to say' or 1% 'use a different term' for their gender.

Consultation found people may not currently feel comfortable disclosing this information or other intersectional attributes due to concern about being identified, which is also thought to be the reason respondents select a different area other than the one they work in. We currently do not have the data to calculate pay gaps for intersectional characteristics.

People Matter Survey results also show the percentage of people who identify as LGBTIQ+, with a disability and who are of Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander, who agree that there is a positive culture of diversity and inclusion at Holmesglen is lower than for people of different age groups, different sexes/genders and from varied cultural backgrounds.

Work segregation

People Matter Survey responses show strong agreement that work is allocated fairly, regardless of gender.

Gendered segregation using ANZCO occupational categories provides some insight into our workplace, however consultation identified the need for additional data for greater understanding of this indicator.

Recruitment & promotion

New recruits for the 12 months to 30 June 2021 were 52% women and 48% men. No recruits during this period identified as 'self-described gender', consistent with existing workforce data, people are choosing not to provide this information.

Our onboarding system has been modified to add the required additional intersectionality questions.

Equal pay

Social and economic factors combine to reduce a woman's earning capacity over their lifetime (Workplace Gender Equality Agency (WGEA), 2021). Investigation of workforce data found the number of women in lower positions of classification scales is the main contributor to the

Institute's pay gap, which consultation indicates may be due to women's disproportionate share of unpaid caring and domestic work. Research is required to gain a greater understanding of the issue.

Leave & flexibility

Data for flexible working arrangements was manually collated for the audit, as not all arrangements are currently recorded in our systems. We currently do not have intersectional data for flexible working arrangements or carer and parental leave.

The consultation confirmed that there may be staff not aware of policies, procedures and information in relation to leave and flexibility.

Sexual harassment

The percentage of People Matter Survey 2021 respondents experiencing sexual harassment was the same as the 2021 Public sector average and lower than People Matter Survey 2019 results.

Two types of sexual harassment were reported by respondents:

- sexually suggestive comments/jokes; and
- intrusive questions about private life or comments about physical appearance.

Formal reports and People Matter Survey respondents experiencing sexual harassment in the 12 months to 30 June 2021 are well below the Australian Human Rights Commission's (AHRC) 2018 national survey findings, however the difference between formal reports and People Matter Survey responses is consistent with AHRC survey findings.

People Matter Survey results and consultation suggest that there may be other underlying reasons why the reporting is low, such as:

- staff not knowing where to access information, including who to contact and how to formally report;
- staff not feeling safe to formally report; and/or
- staff thinking that making a formal report would not make a difference or could be detrimental.

Our initiatives in this area are designed to address these potential issues and are aligned with the Australian Human Rights Commission's guidance for effectively preventing and responding to sexual harassment.

Consultation and engagement

The baseline audit data was considered by our staff and the governing body as part of the consultation and engagement process. The consultation included a series of facilitated focus groups with employees and members of the Board, senior leadership staff and specific and relevant committees, workshops and broad consultation across the organisation. Participation in the consultation process was encouraged and supported across the organisation and feedback was extremely valuable in developing this Plan.

Focus Groups

Participants in the facilitated focus groups, were asked to comment on the audit report, as well as their general experiences and observations of gender equality at Holmesglen.

Participants included:

- Staff with caring responsibilities
- Culturally and Linguistically Diverse staff
- Staff who are members and allies of the LGBTIQ+ community
- Staff with disability
- Part time, full time, and casual staff
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff employees
- Union members
- Representation across different levels and areas
- The Board
- People, Culture and Remuneration Committee (Board Committee)
- Executive Group
- Leadership Group
- MEA Implementation Group (includes union representatives)
- Occupational Health and Safety Committee

Workshops

Workshop 1: A diverse group of employees representing different areas across the Institute, drafted the case for change and GEAP priorities.

Workshop 2: Leaders from across Holmesglen reviewed and refined the draft case for change and priorities and strategies and measures.

Institute wide consultation

The draft GEAP was disseminated across the organisation and with external union representatives for consultation and the final version endorsed by the Executive and the Board.



Case for change

Holmesglen acknowledges the gender equality principles outlined in the Act and is committed to developing a Gender Equality Action Plan in line with those principles and in so doing promoting and supporting gender equality. We commit to embedding this Plan, ensuring appropriate resources to its implementation, monitoring, reporting, and evaluation, and supporting leaders to develop and implement operational plans.

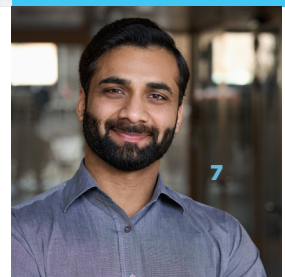
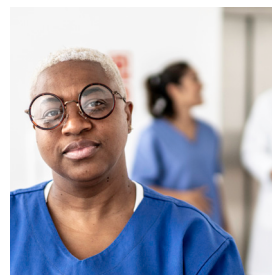
In adopting and implementing this GEAP Holmesglen Institute demonstrates how it values the richness of diversity amongst its staff, and recognises its responsibilities to take organisational wide transformative actions to enhance inclusion for all.

Victoria's gender equality principles:

- All Victorians should live in a safe and equal society, have access to equal power, resources and opportunities and be treated with dignity, respect and fairness.
- Gender equality benefits all Victorians regardless of gender.
- Gender equality is a human right and precondition to social justice.
- Gender equality brings significant economic, social and health benefits for Victoria.
- Gender equality is a precondition for the prevention of family violence and other forms of violence against women and girls.
- Advancing gender equality is a shared responsibility across the Victorian community.
- All human beings, regardless of gender, should be free to develop their personal abilities, pursue their professional careers and make choices about their lives without being limited by gender stereotypes, gender roles or prejudices.
- Gender inequality may be compounded by other forms of disadvantage or discrimination that a person may experience on the basis of Aboriginality, age, disability, ethnicity, gender identity, race, religion, sexual orientation and other attributes.
- Women have historically experienced discrimination and disadvantage on the basis of sex and gender.
- Special measures may be necessary to achieve gender equality.

The workforce audit data together with the consultations suggest that whilst some good work is being undertaken in gender equality, further improvements need to be made. Key issues that emerged from the consultations in response to the audit data included:

- Lack of awareness across the organisation in relation to gender equality and intersectionality issues
- Low level of reporting for reporting of harassment, bullying and other inappropriate behaviour
- Lack of intersectional data to inform strategies and decision making
- Diversity in governance and leadership is not in line with the diversity of the workforce or the student population
- Equal opportunity and gender equity
- Lack of knowledge across the organisation of policies, guidelines and practices in relation to gender equality



Gender equality vision for 2025

Holmesglen is an educational institution where individuals, regardless of gender, are valued equally in an inclusive and safe environment that represents our diverse community.

Our vision for gender equality 2025 aligns with our:

- 2021-2023 Strategic Plan
- Vision 2030
- Our ASPIRE values
- Workplace Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Policy
- Occupational Health and Safety Policy
- Sexual Harassment and Sexual Assault Policy

Our vision is for a whole of organisation integrated and sustainable approach that sees gender equality principles and intersectional factors embedded in the culture and across all business practices of the organisation by 2025.

To support our vision we have identified three key priorities:

Priority 1:

We have zero tolerance for discrimination, bullying and sexual harassment with all staff empowered to report, recognise, address and respond to it.

Priority 2:

We support gender equality through gender equity.

Priority 3:



We have an active role in building and supporting a diverse and inclusive working environment.








Implementing our priorities

Priority 1:





We have zero tolerance for discrimination, bullying and sexual harassment with all staff empowered to report, recognise, address and respond to it.

Indicator/s	Objective	Deliverable	Who	When	Measure
 <p>Sexual harassment</p>  <p>Work segregation</p>	Support and maintain a workplace free from sexual harassment, bullying, discrimination, and inappropriate behavior	1.1 A communications plan that supports reinforcement of messaging from the Board and the CE on a zero-tolerance approach to sexual harassment, discrimination, and unfair treatment and inappropriate behaviour.	CE	2022	Reduction in People Matter Survey respondents who experienced sexual harassment, bullying, discrimination.
		1.2 A suite of relevant and specific professional development in relation to a safe and respectful workplace available and delivered to staff.	HR	Ongoing	Increase in percentage of People Matter Survey respondents who feel safe to challenge inappropriate behaviour at work.
		1.3 Improved induction process for new employees which includes information outlining values, policies, processes and expectations.	HR	2022	Increase in percentage of People Matter Survey respondents who feel safe to report inappropriate behaviour at work.
		1.4 A communications campaign which builds awareness of relevant policies, procedures and information, and what to do if staff experience or witness harassment, bullying, discrimination, and inappropriate behaviour.	HR LG	Ongoing	
		1.5 A clear and fair process in place for an employee or by-stander to report unwanted or offensive behaviour in the workplace, and at work-related social activities, confidentially and without fear of reprisals, with appropriate action.	HR	2022	
		1.6 An optimum model for the investigation of complaints is implemented.	CE	2023	
	Minimise the risk of harassment, bullying, discrimination, and inappropriate behaviour	1.7 A record of all call centre calls is available for training, monitoring and quality purposes	EDE&S	2022	
	Develop and launch a violence against women campaign, including consideration of women and intersectionality.	1.9 Relevant information and tools that clearly articulate issues in relation to violence against women, including consideration of intersectionality are available and distributed throughout the organisation.	HR	2023	

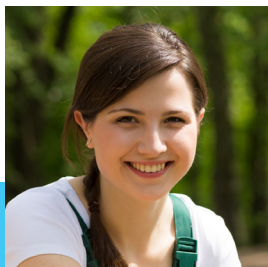
Priority 2: We support gender equality through gender equity

Indicator/s	Objective	Deliverable	Who	When	Measure
 Composition at all levels  Pay equity  Recruitment and promotion  Leave and flexibility  Work segregation	Encourage and support a workforce to include women, gender diverse people, with intersectional characteristics.	2.1 Additional intersectional and audit data is identified and collected ensuring clear information regarding its collection and use is provided.	HR	2022	Increase in percentage of staff who disclose their intersectional data. Reduction of gender pay equity gaps by 2025. Increase in number of staff who take up flexible work arrangements.
		2.2 Recruitment and selection processes, including advertisements, assessment and evaluation encourage and support a gender diverse workforce.	HR	Ongoing	
	A flexible workplace that enables staff to balance work and life responsibilities	2.3 Flexible work and other relevant policies are reviewed annually to maintain relevancy.	CE LG	Ongoing	
		2.4 Flexible work practices are promoted and supported by managers and senior leaders.	All	Ongoing	
		2.5 An annual report on uptake of flexible work options and arrangements is provided to the Diversity and Inclusion Working Group and the People, Culture and Remuneration Committee.	HR	Ongoing	
	Reduce gender pay equity gaps	2.6 Pay equity audits conducted at least every 2 years.	HR	2023 and 2025	
		2.7 All position descriptions and remuneration, are linked to objective performance measures that consider gender	HR	2023	

Priority 3: We have an active role in building and supporting a diverse and inclusive working environment.

Indicator/s	Objective	Deliverable	Who	When	Measure
 <p>Composition at all levels</p>  <p>Governing bodies</p>  <p>Recruitment and promotion</p>  <p>Work segregation</p>	Leadership support and promotion of an organisational culture and working environment that is inclusive and fair to all genders	3.1 Strategic Plan includes support for diversity and inclusivity.	CE Board	2023	Reduction in formal reports of sexual harassment, bullying, and discrimination. Increase percentage of workforce involved in events and activities to support diversity and inclusivity.
		3.2 A Diversity and Inclusion Plan is developed and monitored by the Diversity and Inclusion Working Group.	CE	2023	
		3.3 The Chief Executive establishes and chairs the Diversity and Inclusion Working Group to oversee, monitor and promote the implementation of the GEAP.	CE	2022	
	Appropriate use of gender neutral and inclusive language and diverse images	3.4 An inclusive language and imagery guide and tools is available for use across the organisation.	EDE&S	2023	
		3.5 All communications and information for external and internal use is checked to ensure language and images are appropriate.	EDE&S	Ongoing	
		3.6 Pronouns email signature option for staff is available.	TSD	2022	
	Build awareness of gender equality, diversity and inclusion	3.7 A program of activities and events is scheduled to engage and support informal learning and build awareness of gender equality and intersectionality factors, including International Women's Day, LGTBQA+ festivals and events, and significant cultural events including National Reconciliation week and NAIDOC week.	EDE&S	Ongoing	
		3.8 Gender equality, diversity and inclusion content is included in the ASPIRE Leaders program.	HR	2023	

Indicator/s	Objective	Deliverable	Who	When	Measure
		3.9 A training program on gender equality impact assessments, diversity and inclusion, unconscious bias, Cultural awareness is included in the suite of professional development activities.	HR	Ongoing	
		3.10 Gender equality & diversity and inclusion information is provided during induction.	HR	Ongoing	
	Demonstrate respect to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples by observing cultural protocols.	3.11 A formal Welcome to Country is included at the annual ASPIRE conference and Academic Graduation Ceremony by a local Traditional Owner or Custodian.	CE	Ongoing	
		3.12 A Cultural Protocols Guide is available across the organisation.	EDE&S	2022-23	
		3.13 Acknowledgement to Country or other appropriate protocol delivered by the meeting chair at the commencement of meetings hosted by the Institute.	All	2022	



Appendix 1: Key terms and definitions

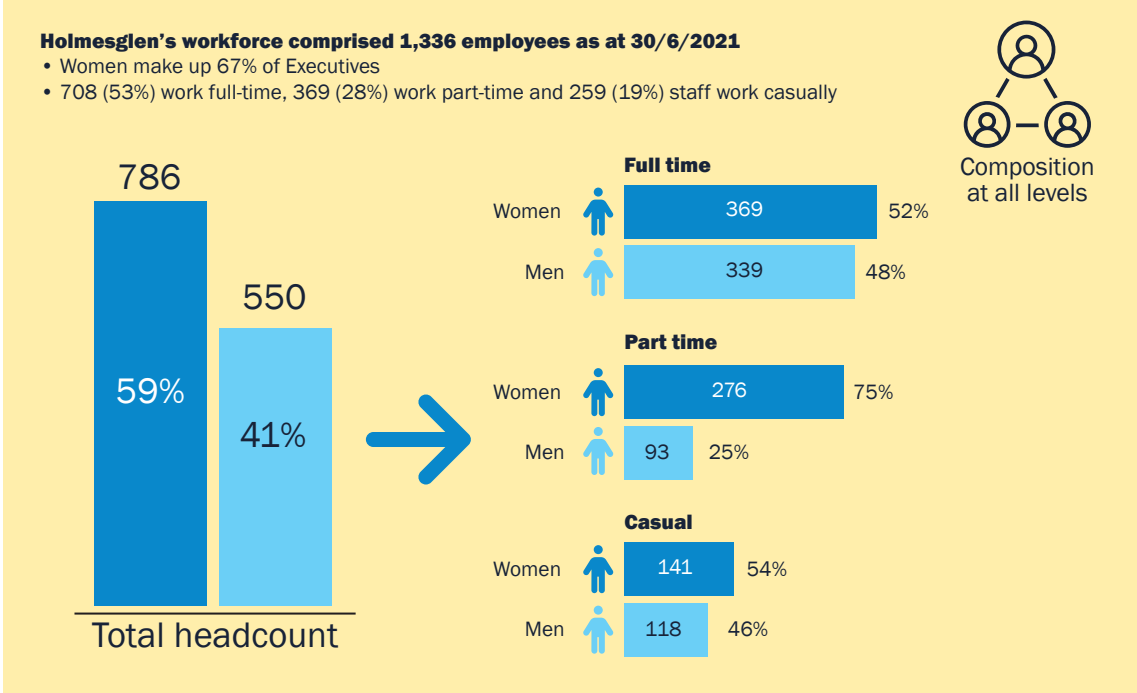
Term	Definition
Gender	Part of how a person understands who they are and how they interact with other people. Many people understand their gender as being female or male. Some people understand their gender as a combination of these or neither. Gender can be expressed in different ways, such as through behaviour or physical appearance. (VPS LGBTIQ Inclusive language guide)
Gender diverse	The term refers to people who fall outside the typical range of masculinity or femininity with regards to gender identity. It includes but is not limited to people who identify as agender (having no gender or androgenous), bigender (both a male and female) or as non-binary (neither male nor female). Some non-binary people identify as gender queer or gender fluid. (Rainbow eQuality guide)
Gender equality	Equal rights, responsibilities and opportunities of women, men, trans and gender-diverse people. Equality does not mean that women, men, trans and gender diverse people will become the same but that their rights, responsibilities and opportunities will not depend on their gender. (Victorian Gender Equality Strategy)
Gender equity	Fairness and justice in the distribution of benefits and responsibilities on the basis of gender. The concept recognises that people may have different needs and power related to their gender and that these differences should be identified and addressed in a manner that rectifies gender related imbalances. (Victorian Gender Equality Strategy)
Intersectionality	<p>The complex, cumulative way in which the effects of multiple forms of discrimination combine, overlap, or intersect, and their multiple effects on the same individuals or groups. (Source: Merriam-Webster)</p> <p>Gender inequality may be compounded by other forms of disadvantage or discrimination that a person may experience due to other characteristics, such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • race • religion • disability • sexual orientation • Aboriginality • ethnicity • age • gender identity <p>These are to be considered when developing our strategies and measures to promote gender equality. (Gender Equality Commission)</p>
LGBTIQ+	An acronym used to describe members of the lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans, intersex, queer or questioning community. It is sometimes used to include allies or supporters of the LGBTIQ+ community. Other acronyms used to describe this community include LGBTIQ, or LGBTIQA+. (Our WATCH)
Sex	A person's biological and physical characteristics This has historically been understood as either female or male. However, we now know that some people are born with natural variations to sex characteristics. (VPS LGBTIQ Inclusive language guide) A person's sex does not mean they have a particular gender identity or sexual orientation. (Our WATCH)
Sexuality or sexual orientation	A person's sexual or emotional attraction to others. People express their sexuality in different ways. A person's sex or gender does not mean they have a particular sexual orientation, and vice versa. (Our WATCH)

Workplace Gender Audit Report

Data sources

- 1. Workforce data, collected from internal payroll and HR systems**
As at 30/6/2021 men and women were the only genders recorded in workforce data
- 2. Employee experience data, gathered via the People Matter Survey2, administered by the Victorian Public Service Commission. Response rate: 41%, n = 609**
People Matter Survey data groups respondents who selected 'prefer not to say' (16%) or 'non-binary and I use a different term' (1%) for their gender together, totalling 17% of all respondents

Summary of audit findings



Governing bodies

Holmesglen has 12 Directors; 7 are women and 5, including the chair, are men.

Recruitment and promotion

In FY21:

- women represented 52% of Holmesglen's 212 new recruits
- 81% of Holmesglen staff participated career development training
- Women and men exited at equal rates

Gender	Count	Percentage
Women	111	52%
Men	101	48%

Pay equity

Women earning less than men

8.4% **Average (mean) base salary pay gap**
Full time, permanent employees
(Excluding junior employees)

This method is used by the Workplace Gender Equality Agency (WGEA) to **simply compare** pay gaps across organisations, industries and states.



Extract from the Australian Human Rights Commission 2018 report¹

Workforce data:
<5
Formal reports of sexual harassment
(Exact number excluded to prevent identification)

People Matter Survey:
6%
Experience sexual harassment

Prevalence of workplace sexual harassment

In the last **12 months**, 23% of women and 16% of men have experienced sexual harassment at work.

In the last **five years**, 39% of women and 26% of men have experienced sexual harassment at work.

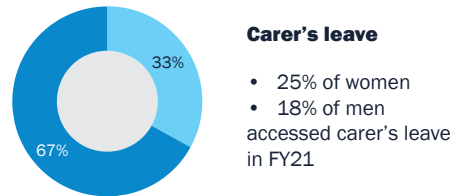
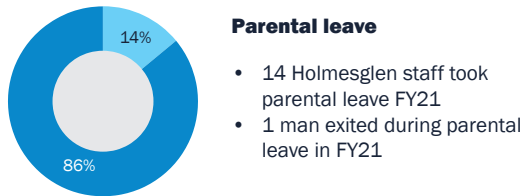
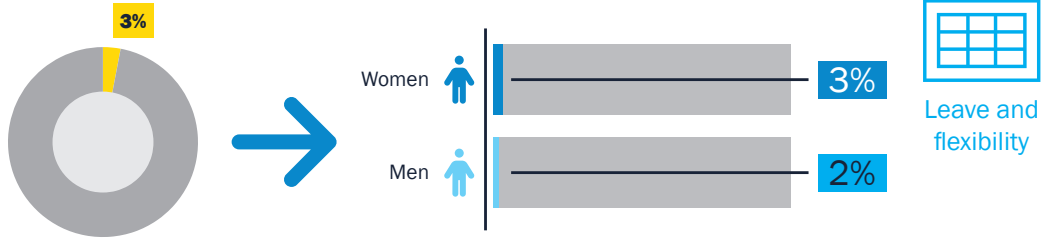
Reporting of workplace sexual harassment

Fewer than one in five people (17%) made a formal report or complaint about workplace sexual harassment.

Almost one in five people who did report, were labelled a **troublemaker** (19%), were **ostracised, victimised or ignored by colleagues** (18%) or **resigned** (17%).

Fourth national survey on sexual harassment in Australian workplaces, AHRC 2018

Use of formal flexible working arrangements



Workforce data: ANZSCO code major groups

