

PSBU SDG 5.5 Policy: Women's Leadership and Participation

Purpose

Preah Sihamoniraja Buddhist University (PSBU) is committed to increasing women's representation in leadership and decision-making roles across all areas of the University. This policy aims to provide clear mechanisms to promote gender equity in leadership positions, faculty, research, governance, and external collaboration. It supports both structural change and individual support so women may fully realise leadership potential.

Scope

This policy covers:

- All levels of staff (academic, administrative, research) including Heads of Departments, Deans, Centre Directors, committees, and senior executive roles.
- Student leadership roles (e.g. student government, project leadership).
- Research leadership, conference chairs, grant leadership, publication lead positions.
- Domestic and international staff and students, with special attention to under-represented groups and those from rural or remote areas.

Policy Commitments

PSBU commits to the following:

1. Representation in Governance and Leadership Bodies

- Set explicit targets for women's representation in governance (Senate, Council), leadership (Deans, Department Heads), and decision-making committees.
- Ensure appointment and election processes are transparent, merit-based, and gender aware (i.e. considering potential gender bias).
- Review current membership of leadership bodies and identify under-represented areas; devise action plans to address gaps.

2. Mentoring and Leadership Development

- Establish and maintain a formal mentoring programme linking emerging female leaders with senior mentors (internal or external).
- Offer leadership training workshops (e.g. strategic leadership, negotiation, public speaking, research management).
- Provide opportunities (fellowships, secondments) for experiential leadership roles.
- Support career progression planning for women, especially those with caring or other external responsibilities.

3. Encouragement of Women in Research, Conferences, and Publications

- Provide support (grants, travel funding) for women to attend, present, and lead at conferences.



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- Encourage female academics to act as principal investigators and lead research collaborations.
- Ensure gender balance in organising committees and speaking panels at PSBU events.
- Recognise leadership in research and external engagement in performance reviews and promotion criteria.

4. **External Partnerships and Women's Leadership Networks**

- Partner with organisations, associations, and networks that promote women in leadership (locally and internationally).
- Engage in benchmarking and accreditation schemes for gender equality (e.g. those used elsewhere) to guide continuous improvement.
- Host guest lectures, workshops, and external mentorship opportunities in collaboration with these networks.

5. **Removing Barriers and Fostering an Inclusive Culture**

- Promote flexible work/study arrangements and leadership workload models to accommodate learners or staff with caring responsibilities.
- Ensure leadership roles are advertised widely and inclusively; make recruitment and selection processes accessible and free from gendered bias.
- Provide support services (e.g. counselling, networking, peer groups) to assist women navigating leadership pathways.
- Embed gender equality in leadership training for all leaders and decision-makers.

Responsibilities

- **University Leadership / Rectorate:** endorse gender representation targets; allocate resources; lead by example.
- **Human Resources and Academic Staffing Offices:** ensure fair recruitment, promotion, and talent pipelines; monitor leadership roles by gender.
- **Faculties / Deans / Department Heads:** identify potential women leaders; provide support; ensure female presence in key leadership roles.
- **Office of Research / Research Committees:** promote female researchers as leads; support funds/travel participation.
- **Partnerships / External Relations Office:** build and maintain links with leadership networks; arrange external mentorships.
- **Gender Equality Committee / Quality Assurance Office:** track progress; report annually; recommend policy refinements.

Measurement & Accountability

PSBU will track the following Key Performance Indicators (KPIs):

- Proportion of women in senior leadership roles (Deans, Department Heads, etc.)
- Proportion of women chairing committees and leading research projects



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- Number of women participating in leadership development programmes / mentorships
- Representation of women in conference speaking roles and publications lead authorship
- Participant feedback on leadership barriers and support efficacy
- Number and quality of external partnerships / membership in leadership networks

Reports on these KPIs will be published annually, with oversight by the University Senate / Council.

Related Policies and Strategies

- PSBU SDG 5.1 Policy: Equal Access to Education and Opportunities
- PSBU's Gender Equality Policy
- Staff Development, Mentoring, and Promotion Policies
- Diversity, Inclusion, and Anti-Discrimination Policies

Review Cycle

This policy will be reviewed every three years, or earlier if institutional changes, demographic evidence, or external best practice recommend it.

External Best Practice Benchmarks

Here are examples from Australian universities and sector initiatives that illustrate leading practice in women's leadership and gender equity.

Institution / Initiative	What They Do / Achievements	Relevance Benchmark as for PSBU
UNSW Sydney – SAGE Athena Swan Bronze & Cygnet Awards	UNSW has achieved the Bronze Athena Swan award then progressed through all five Cygnet awards toward a Silver status. The Athena Swan programme involves rigorous self-assessment of existing gender equity issues, action planning, and embedding changes in policy, culture, and practice. (UNSW Sites)	PSBU could follow a similar accreditation model: conduct self-assessment, define action plan, earn recognition, and use the process to drive measurable change.



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University of Sydney – Women’s Career Acceleration & Leadership Strategy	The University has a dedicated strategy to accelerate women into leadership roles. Key features include setting female representation targets, leadership training, flexible work policies, pay equity investigation, and inclusion in decision-making committees. (The University of Sydney)	PSBU can emulate via setting targets, leadership training for women, flexible arrangements, and transparent promotion / recruitment processes.
University of Newcastle – SAGE Athena Swan Silver Accreditation	Newcastle has achieved Silver accreditation under SAGE Athena Swan, reflecting its strong progress in gender equity, diversity and inclusion. Their “Progress to Equity Plan” focuses on increasing women in STEMM (STEM + Medicine) and senior roles, training and leadership development, closing gender pay gaps, and embedding flexible work culture. (Newcastle University)	PSBU could aim toward accreditation or equivalent recognition, with specific focus on female representation in STEM fields, leadership training, and flexibility in work/study arrangements.
Universities Australia – Gender Equity Toolkit & Collective Action	Universities Australia has produced a toolkit for gender equity and inclusion “by design”, focusing on policy, practice, leadership influence, and collaboration across the sector. Includes shared challenges and solutions. (universitiesaustralia.edu.au)	Using such a toolkit could help PSBU develop coordinated, well-resourced strategies rather than piecemeal interventions; sector collaboration helps share learning.



Next Review Date: September 2026 (Academic Year 26/27)