The University of Sydney

Review of Voluntary Redundancy Program

7 July 2021

Consultation Reference:	RC001
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Review of Voluntary Redundancy Program

1. INTRODUCTION AND CONTEXT

Purpose

This document outlines the University's preliminary reflections on the implementation of the Voluntary Redundancy (VR) Program (the change initiative) and provides the framework to seek the views of staff in accordance with clause 396 of *The University of Sydney Enterprise Agreement* 2018-21 (the Enterprise Agreement).

Background

Over the period 1 September 2020 to 3 November 2020, the University consulted with directly affected staff and their unions on a proposal to undertake a VR Program.

In anticipation of the significant impacts of COVID-19 on the University and higher education sector more broadly, the VR Program was one of several steps the University sought to take to ensure it would be as financially prepared as it could be for the uncertainty it faced, without taking action that would have a greater adverse impact on staff.

Staff and their unions were given time to consider options, weigh up the benefits and drawbacks and ask questions throughout the consultation process, which comprised:

- Preliminary Consultation regarding a proposed VR Program was launched on 1 September 2020. View a copy of the Preliminary consultation pack (pptx, 4.9MB).
- Following the consideration of feedback through the preliminary stage consultation, a Draft Change Proposal (DCP) (pdf, 317KB) was released in mid-September 2020.
- Following the consideration of staff and union feedback in response to the DCP, a Revised Change Proposal (RCP) (pdf, 1.6MB) was released in October 2020.
- The Final Change Plan was released on 3 November 2020. The **Final Change Plan** is provided at Attachment 1. It includes an Implementation Plan at Attachment 5.

From December 2020 to early 2021, further consultation occurred within local areas as appropriate, and staff were notified of the outcomes of consultation and offers of VR were made with staff accepting a VR leaving the University from March 2021.

As required by clause 396 of the Enterprise Agreement, the University scheduled a review of the change initiative for within 12 months following the release of the Final Change Plan.

2. REVIEW OF CHANGE INITATIVE

The University has now reflected on the implementation of the VR Program relative to its rationale and expected outcomes, and considered comments and feedback from directly affected staff (refer to attachment 4).

FINAL CHANGE PLAN	REVIEW COMMENTS
Rationale	

It was projected that there would be a $217 million reduction in student fee revenue in 2021 compared to the previous forecast for that year, another $183 million for 2022 and that the pandemic would continue to impact the University's budget until 2025 (refer Attachment 3). We also expected that there would be ongoing pandemic related costs associated with safeguarding staff and students in 2021.

Increases in domestic enrolments would not be sufficient to address the financial shortfall from international student fee revenue.

Shortfalls of this magnitude were to be mitigated. Our performance as a world-class university would have been severely impacted by continuing the austerity measures that were in place for five years - research needed to be funded adequately with equipment, travel and strategic investment in critical infrastructure; the student

experience and innovative teaching needed to be supported; and a continued recruitment freeze would have had a serious impact on research and on the careers of many staff. The University has a responsibility to safeguard its financial position for the future. These decisions were not made lightly.

As previously advised Members of the University Executive had agreed to a 20% reduction in salary for 2020, including the Vice-Chancellor, Senior Deputy Vice-Chancellor, Deputy Vice-Chancellors, Vice Principals, Executive Dean and Deans.

The VR program was anticipated to assist as a prudent step given the COVID-19 impacts and significant future uncertainty. There was no expectation that a VR alone will solve the expected financial shortfall.

But any savings generated from a VR program were anticipated to allow the University to loosen some of the very severe austerity measures around equipment, travel, recruitment and other measures that would have continued over the next few years. As part of the preliminary consultation some staff proposed alternative measures such as working an eight-day fortnight, reducing

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The University's 2020 financial results showed an underlying net loss of $2.2 million, a remarkable outcome in a challenging and highly unpredictable year and one which most accurately reflects our true financial position. The University was able to save $257 million under temporary savings measures and, combined with stronger than expected international student enrolments for Semester 2 and other income, the reported operating surplus will be $106.6 million. It's important to remember that this includes revenue from philanthropic donations, investment earnings and research grants which cannot be spent on day-to-day operations. This means that in real terms we were able to roughly break even.

While revenue is higher than expected, our costs continue to rise and we remain short of our pre-COVID ambitions for 2021, though the savings measures, the Voluntary Redundancy Program and student enrolments have provided some relief.

Of the 503 expressions of interest in a VR, approximately 240 were approved to proceed to consultation. Of these, 223 offers of voluntary redundancy were accepted.

The VR program is one of the ways we have responded to the financial uncertainty the University continues to experience and based on the number of acceptances, we expect that from 2022 it will provide us with $30.7 million per year in salary savings, which will contribute to ensuring the University's financial sustainability (See Attachment 2 – VR Program Benefits).

On 22 April 2021, some of the temporary savings measures were eased. This included the additional approval process we had in place for recruitment (replacement and new) for both professional and academic roles.

Please refer to attachment 2 – VR program benefits for expected savings and FTE impacts for the University and by area.

FINAL CHANGE PLAN	REVIEW COMMENTS
their employment fraction for a period of time, taking leave without pay or other forms of leave. The University was open to such arrangements and believed they should be staff-initiated conversations and negotiated locally on a case-by-case basis, mindful of any impacts on other staff. We believed the VR program would provide a reasonable additional protective measure for our uncertain financial future. The VR program was designed to accommodate the desire of some staff to depart, recognising that COVID-19 had also presented real challenges for staff, each of whom had individual and unique family and health circumstances and the necessity for different ways of working in response to COVID-19. Any resulting salary savings the VR program were anticipated to assist the University in: • managing ongoing costs • mitigating against the reduction in student revenue and helping better prepare for uncertainties in the future, consequently providing greater future job security for staff, and • easing some of the savings constraints impacting critical areas such as research, education and student support.	
Expected outcomes	
A consistent assessment process will apply to all EOIs submitted as part of the VR Program. The assessment and approval process involves: • an initial assessment and recommendation by a Faculty/Portfolio group; and • a subsequent review by a Central Review Group who will provide approval (subject to supplementary consultation), or advise of another outcome. Feedback received during supplementary consultation is considered by the Faculty/Portfolio group who make a recommendation to the Central Review Group for final decision.	As outlined in the VR Program Final Change Plan, a consistent assessment process was applied to all EOIs submitted as part of the VR program. Faculty/Portfolio Groups met between the 9th and 18th November 2020 to provide recommendations for EOIs submitted to the Central Review Group. The Faculty Portfolio Group comprised: • the relevant UE Member (Chair), • 2-3 nominees from the leadership team and, • support from the HR Partner.

FINAL CHANGE PLAN	REVIEW COMMENTS
	The Central Review Group comprised:
	• the Senior Deputy Vice-Chancellor,
	• Vice-Principal (Strategy),
	• Vice-Principal (Operations) and,
	• support from HR.
	The Central Review Group reviewed Faculty/Portfolio recommendations and made final determinations on the 23rd and 24th November 2020.
	In assessing the EOIs in VR, the University needed to be satisfied that the staff member's position was no longer required. Of the 503 expressions of interest in a VR, the University was satisfied that approximately 240 met this criteria and were approved to proceed to consultation.
	Examples where the University did not approve a VR included those where:
	• The removal of the position would have had a significant detrimental impact on the educational experiences of students, or particular research functions and/or outputs.
	• The staff member's position was still required to be performed (i.e., their departure could not be accommodated without having to replace them).
	• The staff member's employment costs were fully (or substantially) externally funded, or their departure would not comply with contractual or legal obligations to a third party.
Diversity and Inclusion The University has sought strategic and expert advice on workplace diversity and inclusion in relation to the design of the voluntary redundancy program so	Based on an initial analysis of staff data, the University believes there has been no significant impacts to University's diversity and inclusion performance measures as a result of the VR program. Diversity impacts as a result of the VR program were considered and measured

FINAL CHANGE PLAN	REVIEW COMMENTS

as to align the Final Change Plan with the University's commitments to diversity and gender equity. This includes advice on:
 	
• rules for the composition of VR program EOI decision making groups;
 	
• diversity and inclusion performance monitoring arrangements for the VR program including at the conclusion of the proposed process; and
 	
• strategies to address impacts to University diversity and inclusion performance that arise as a result of the VR program
	for gender, Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander representation and age profile.
	
	 (See attachment 3 – Diversity and Inclusion).
	
	Following initial advice on the design of the VR program during the formal consultation process, an expert advisory panel met on 24 June 2021 to discuss the impacts of the VR program on the University's diversity and inclusion commitments. The expert panel comprised:
	
	    • Director, Culture Strategy
	    • Dean, University of Sydney Business School
	    • SAGE Academic Lead
	    • Director, Workplace Relations
	    • Senior Manager, Diversity & Inclusion.
	
	The panel has recommended the collection and analysis of exit survey data on staff diversity and inclusion categories and noted no significant impacts to University diversity and inclusion performance measures as a result of the VR program.
	
	The DVC Indigenous Strategy and Services was also provided with updates on the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander VR program impacts which are outlined in attachment 3.
	
	Approximately 52% of EOIs received were from positions held by female staff. Of these 223 offers of VR accepted, 48% were accepted by female staff.

Supplementary consultation: In satisfaction of any Enterprise Agreement consultation obligations in implementing VRs, the following supplementary consultation will apply: 1. Where the University is proposing to accept particular VRs in a work unit, then subject to point 2:	The University believes that supplementary consultation was conducted in satisfaction of Enterprise Agreement (EA) consultation obligations for the implementation of all VRs. This included: • 100 Supplementary Consultation processes where no significant effects on staff were anticipated in accepting a VR

FINAL CHANGE PLAN	REVIEW COMMENTS
(a) The University will notify staff in the affected work unit of the VRs the University is proposing to accept and how that would be managed and any measures to mitigate impact on other staff. (b) The University will provide affected staff in the relevant unit and their relevant representatives a 7 day consultation period to provide feedback on how those VRs are implemented and accommodated and any comments on measures to mitigate the impact of accepting the VRs. (c) The University will consider and take into account the comments/feedback provided. (d) The University will provide a response to those comments/feedback and communicate the outcome to staff and their relevant representative(s), prior to the relevant VRs taking effect and subject to point 2, those VRs would take effect. 2. If in accepting particular VRs, the University was proposing to adopt major changes in organisational structure likely to have a significant effect on staff (eg closing a department, merger of major functions), (or if the issues raised in the consultation feedback identify clear significant effects that had not been identified and cannot be readily resolved without significant impacts on remaining staff) then consultation in respect of those major changes likely to have significant effects would occur under section 390-395 of the EA.	• 10 Formal Consultation processes were undertaken where it was anticipated that in accepting a VR it was likely to have a significant effect on staff. Consultation in respect of those major changes and effects occurred in line with section 390-395 of the EA. All supplementary formal consultation documents were made available to all staff on the intranet. These documents set out the VRs the University was proposing to accept within the work unit, how that would be managed and any measures to mitigate impacts on staff. Feedback was sought from staff in relevant work units on how the VRs were to be implemented and accommodated and measures to mitigate the impact of accepting the VRs. All feedback and comments received during supplementary consultation were considered and responded to, and the University communicated the outcome to impacted staff along with adjustments to mitigations proposed, prior to the relevant VRs taking effect.
Financial Savings It is anticipated that this VR program would result in financial savings in recurrent labour costs for the University to help safeguard the University through a period of financial uncertainty.	The University expects that from 2022 the VR Program will provide $30.7 million per year in salary savings, which will contribute to ensuring the University's financial sustainability. Total severance costs of the VR Program are forecast to be approximately $36m which will primarily be borne in 2021. (See Attachment 2 – VR Program Benefits). On 22 April 2021, some of the temporary savings measures were eased. This included the additional approval process we had in place for recruitment (replacement and new) for both professional and academic roles

FINAL CHANGE PLAN	REVIEW COMMENTS
Mitigations The following disadvantages were anticipated along with associated mitigations: • Disruption to staff through the change process. This will be mitigated through open dialogue and regular communication with staff. • The University's inability to accept a VR due to the position still being required may increase dissatisfaction by the staff member. This will be mitigated through transparent decision-making processes. • Accepting some VRs may require cessation and/or re-prioritisation of work across faculties and portfolios. This will be mitigated through planning at a faculty/Portfolio level. • Potential for long-standing staff to leave and the associated loss of corporate knowledge. This will be mitigated through staged transitions and knowledge transfer processes.	Disadvantages pertaining to the acceptance of EOIs for VR were mitigated through the consistent and transparent assessment process and subsequent supplementary consultation with staff in relevant work units. Where accepting some VRs required the cessation and/or re-prioritisation of work across faculties and portfolios, this was mitigated through planning at the faculty/portfolio level and outlined in supplementary consultation documents for feedback and comments. This included mitigations for workload and how any effects would be managed. Proposed mitigations affecting staff within the work unit were detailed, along with any alternate roles proposed as mitigations. Approximately 415 pieces of feedback were considered and responded to during supplementary consultation with the University communicating the outcome to staff along with adjustments to mitigations proposed prior to the relevant VRs taking effect.

ATTACHMENTS

ATTACHMENT 1 – FINAL CHANGE PLAN
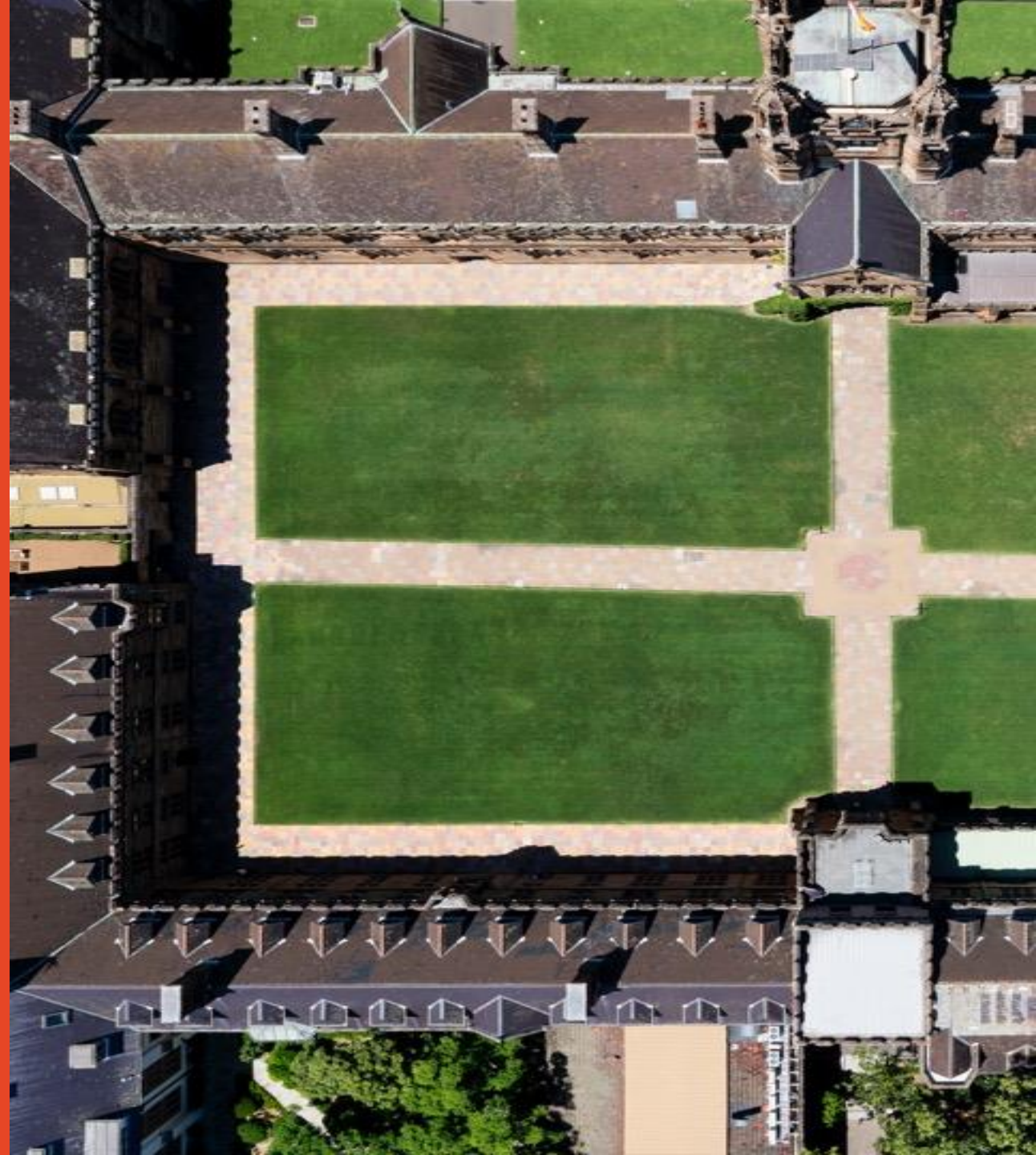
ATTACHMENT 2 – VR Program Benefits

ATTACHMENT 3 – Diversity & Inclusion

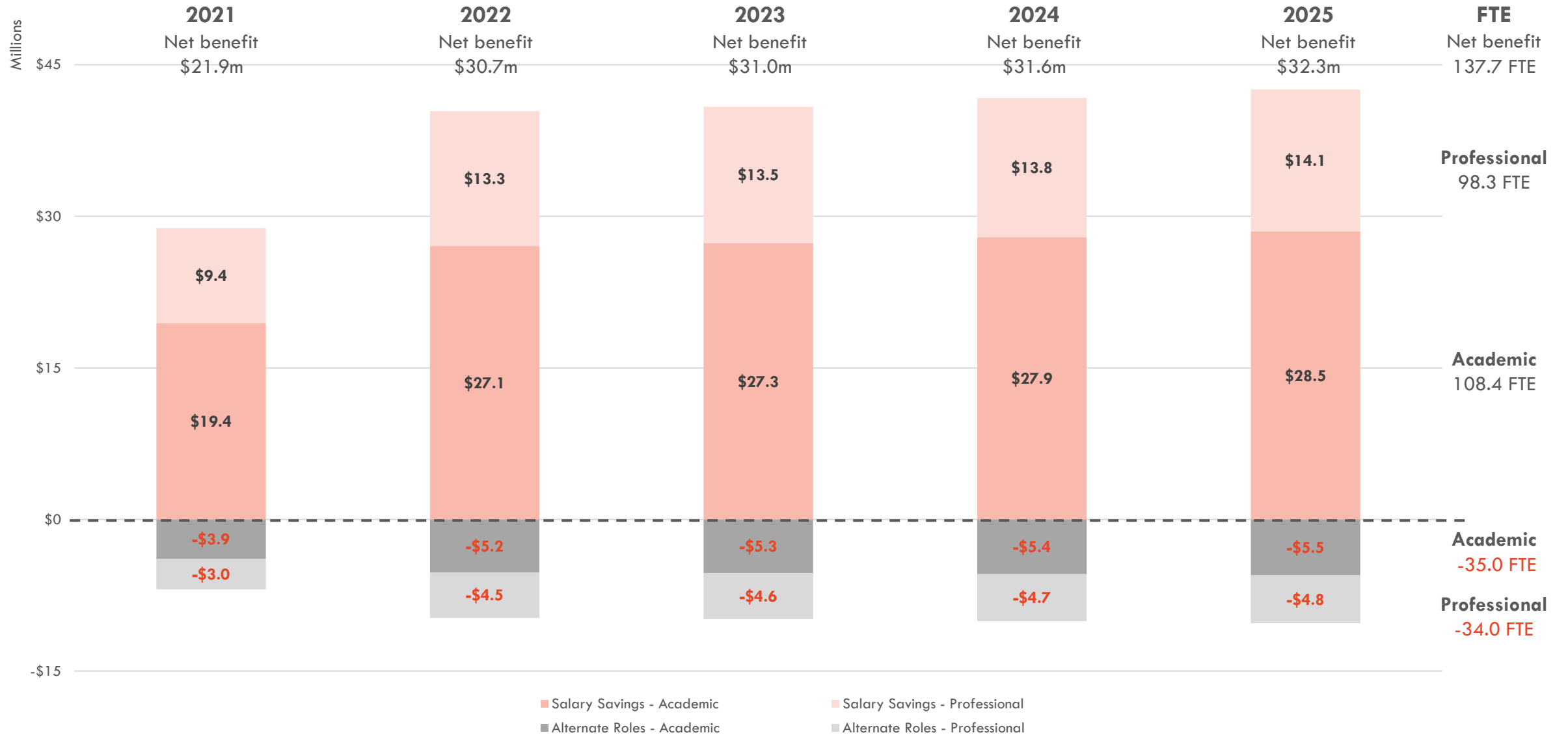**ATTACHMENT 4 – Response to feedback on review of change**

Review of Voluntary Redundancy Program

Review of VR Program

Attachment 2 – VR Program Benefits

July 2021

THE UNIVERSITY OF
SYDNEY

VR Program Benefits ($) at a University Level

Millions

| | 2021 Net benefit $21.9m | 2022 Net benefit $30.7m | 2023 Net benefit $31.0m | 2024 Net benefit $31.6m | 2025 Net benefit $32.3m | FTE Net benefit 137.7 FTE |

- Professional 98.3 FTE
  - 2021: $9.4
  - 2022: $13.3
  - 2023: $13.5
  - 2024: $13.8
  - 2025: $14.1

- Academic 108.4 FTE
  - 2021: $19.4
  - 2022: $27.1
  - 2023: $27.3
  - 2024: $27.9
  - 2025: $28.5

- Academic -35.0 FTE
  - 2021: -$3.9
  - 2022: -$5.2
  - 2023: -$5.3
  - 2024: -$5.4
  - 2025: -$5.5

- Professional -34.0 FTE
  - 2021: -$3.0
  - 2022: -$4.5
  - 2023: -$4.6
  - 2024: -$4.7
  - 2025: -$4.8

Legend:
- Salary Savings - Academic
- Salary Savings - Professional
- Alternate Roles - Academic
- Alternate Roles - Professional

*Benefits model assumes alternate roles commence in the month following VR exit.
*Severance costs are excluded from above chart. Total severance costs of the VR Program are ~$36m, primarily borne in 2021.

VR Program Benefits (FTE) at a Faculty and Portfolio Level

	ART	BUS	ENG	FMH	SCI	LAW	SCM	DVC-E	DVC-R	Provost	VCO	VP-Adv	VP-ER	VP-Ops	VP-S
Net benefit	18 FTE	8 FTE	16 FTE	27 FTE	16 FTE	2 FTE	9 FTE	6 FTE	2 FTE	14 FTE	1 FTE	0 FTE	3 FTE	15 FTE	2 FTE
	~3% of 2020 base (677 FTE)	~2% of 2020 base (420 FTE)	~3% of 2020 base (502 FTE)	~1% of 2020 base (2,031 FTE)	~1% of 2020 base (1,107 FTE)	~2% of 2020 base (113 FTE)	~9% of 2020 base (95 FTE)	~2% of 2020 base (274 FTE)	~1% of 2020 base (382 FTE)	~7% of 2020 base (213 FTE)	~1% of 2020 base (94 FTE)	~0% of 2020 base (100 FTE)	~1% of 2020 base (303 FTE)	~1% of 2020 base (1,173 FTE)	~3% of 2020 base (67 FTE)

*Benefits model includes discretionary, tied and support funded VR roles.

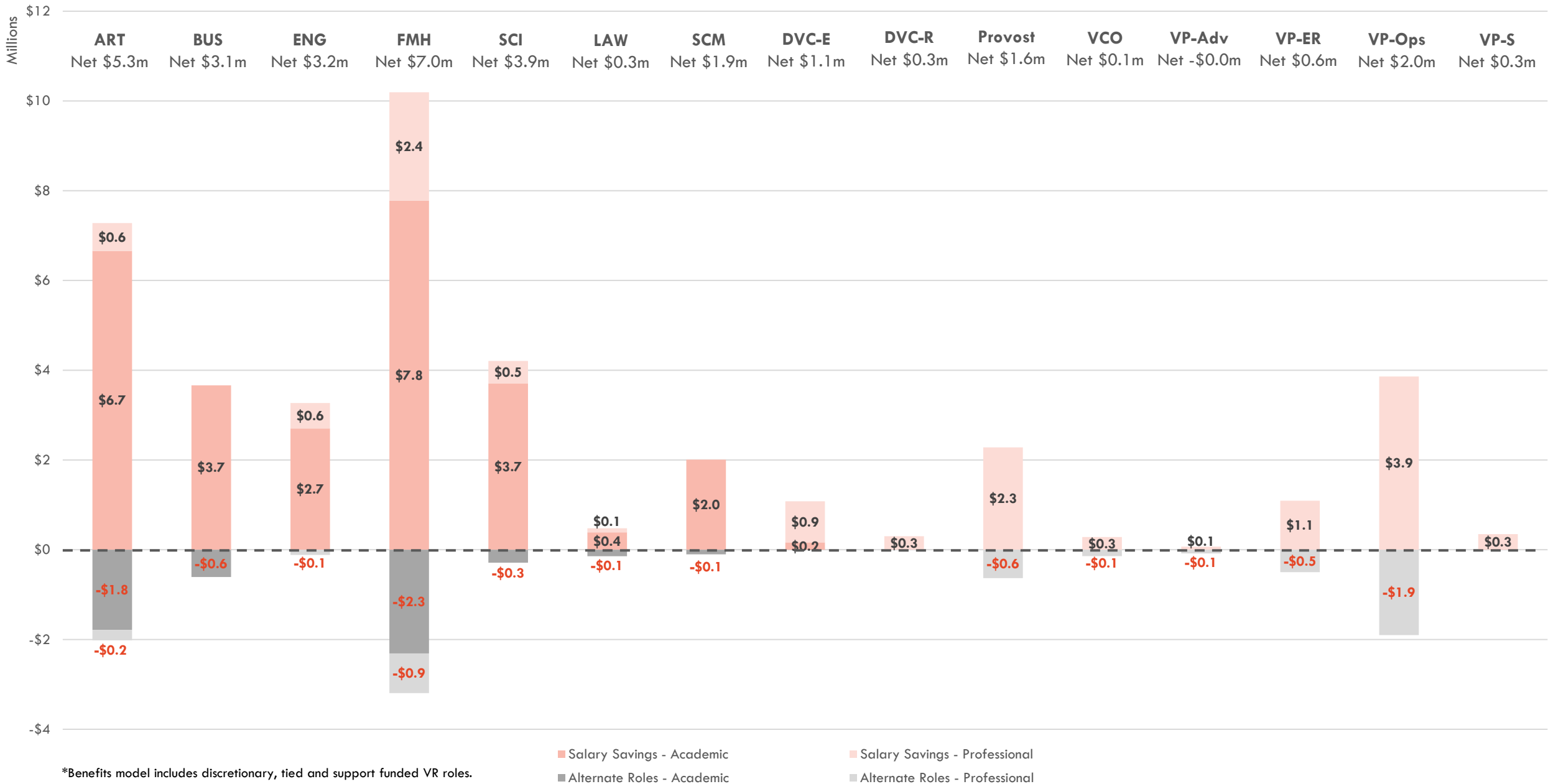*Base FTE for each faculty and portfolio reflects their November 2020 actual FTE, excluding PTT and casual.

Legend:
- Salary Savings - Academic
- Salary Savings - Professional
- Alternate Roles - Academic
- Alternate Roles - Professional

VR Program Benefits ($) in 2022 at a Faculty and Portfolio Level

ART	BUS	ENG	FMH	SCI	LAW	SCM	DVC-E	DVC-R	Provost	VCO	VP-Adv	VP-ER	VP-Ops	VP-S
Net $5.3m	Net $3.1m	Net $3.2m	Net $7.0m	Net $3.9m	Net $0.3m	Net $1.9m	Net $1.1m	Net $0.3m	Net $1.6m	Net $0.1m	Net -$0.0m	Net $0.6m	Net $2.0m	Net $0.3m

*Benefits model includes discretionary, tied and support funded VR roles.

- Salary Savings - Academic
- Salary Savings - Professional
- Alternate Roles - Academic
- Alternate Roles - Professional

Review of VR Program

Attachment 3 – VR Program Diversity & Inclusion

July 2021

THE UNIVERSITY OF
SYDNEY

Workforce Demographic Data

Gender	HC at FCP	% Workforce	VR Accepted	Total HC at FCP minus VR	% at FCP minus VR
Female	4878	57.9%	108	4770	58.1%
Male	3538	42.0%	115	3423	41.7%
Indeterminant, Intersex or Unspecified	12	0.1%		12	0.1%
Grand Total	**8428**	**100%**	**223**	**8205**	**100%**

First Nations	HC at FCP	% Workforce at FCP	VR Accepted	Total HC at FCP minus VR	% Workforce minus VR
Neither Aboriginal / Torres Strait Islander origin	5163		61	5102	
No Information Provided	3179		161	3018	
Of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander origin	6	0.1%		6	0.1%
Of Aboriginal origin	74	0.9%	1	73	0.9%
Of Torres Strait Islander origin	5	0.1%		5	0.1%
Prefer not to say	1			1	
Grand Total	**8428**	**1.0%**	**223**	**8205**	**1.0%**

Age Band	HC at FCP	% of workforce at FCP	VR Accepted	Total HC at FCP minus VR	% Workforce minus VR
21 - 30	918	11%	2	916	11%
31 - 40	2739	32%	17	2722	33%
41 - 50	2238	27%	22	2216	27%
51 - 60	1687	20%	61	1626	20%
61 - 70	744	9%	99	645	8%
71+	102	1%	22	80	1%
Grand Total	**8428**		**223**	**8205**	

HC = Headcount
FCP = Final Change Plan
VR = Voluntary Redundancy

Workforce Demographic Analysis: Gender

A glance at how the Voluntary Redundancy (VR) Program has impacted the size, scale and makeup of the University*

VR Program Overall

48%

240 out of 503 expressions of interest were approved

223

out of the 240 approved EOIs have been accepted. This incorporates 225 positions declared redundant.

Overview of Gender

264 out of 503

Expressions of interest were **received** for VR and were positions held by females (52%)

108 out of 223

Offers accepted for VR were from female staff (48%)

Gender breakdown across Senior Leaders

Overall Target:

17 out of 109 accepted offers are female VRs for Senior Leaders (Level E, SPSD and Exempt) across the University

* Numbers have been rounded to the closest whole number

Academic Staff across Level E and Level D:

LEVEL E

There is a **40%** target for female representation of **Level E** Academics

Through the VR Program **16** female Level E Academics **accepted an offer of VR**

This means we had **no change** in female representation in Level E Academics from November 2020 (from 33% to 33%) as a result of the VR program
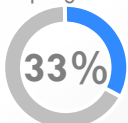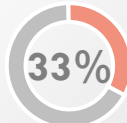
33% Nov 2020

33% Nov 2020 – April 2021

LEVEL D

There is a **45%** target for female representation of **Level D** Academics

Through the VR Program **14** female Level D Academics **accepted an offer of VR**

This means we had **no change** in female representation in Level D Academics from November 2020 (from 43% to 43%) as a result of the VR program.
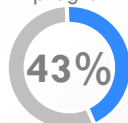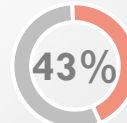
43% Nov 2020

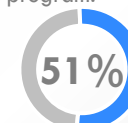**43%** Nov 2020 – April 2021

Professional Staff:
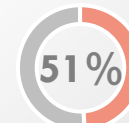
SPSD and Exempt

There is a **50%** target for female representation of **Senior Professional staff**

Through the VR Program **1** female SPSD and Exempt staff **accepted an offer of VR**

This means we had a **no change** in female representation in SPSD and Exempt staff from November 2020 (from 51% to 51%) as a result of the VR program.

51% Nov 2020

51% Nov 2020 – April 2021

Workforce Demographic Analysis: Other

## Age Profile across Senior Leaders

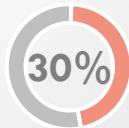### Academic Staff across Level E and Level D:

LEVEL E

30% of **Level E** Academics are in the age band **61 and over**

Through the VR Program **30** Level E Academics aged 61 and over **accepted an offer of VR**

This means we had a **1% decrease** in the age profile of this age band in Level E Academics from November 2020 (from 31% to 30%) as a result of the VR program.

31%
November 2020 - FCP
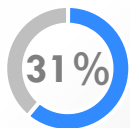
30%
April 2021 – Offers accepted / November 2020 - FCP accepted

LEVEL D

15% of **Level D** Academics are in the age band **61 and over**

Through the VR Program **19** Level D Academics aged 61 and over **accepted an offer of VR**

This means we had a **No change** in the age profile of this age band in Level D Academics from November 2020 (from 37% to 33%) as a result of the VR program.

15%
November 2020 - FCP
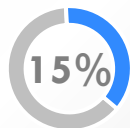
15%
April 2021 – Offers accepted
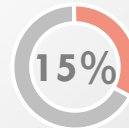
### Professional Staff:

SPSD and Exempt

14% of **Senior Professional Staff** are in the age band **61 and over**

Through the VR Program **0** Senior Professional Staff member aged 61 and over **accepted an offer of VR**

This means we had a **No change** in the age profile of this age band Senior Professional Staff from November 2020 (from 27% ot 26%) as a result of the VR program.

14%
April 2021 – Offers accepted

14%
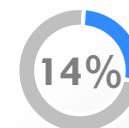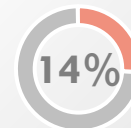
First Nations workforce

3% Target of total University workforce positions being held by Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander people

5 out of 503 **expressions of interest** from people identifying as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander

1 accepted VR

ATTACHMENT 4 - RESPONSE TO FEEDBACK ON REVIEW OF CHANGE

The following table outlines the feedback received on the Review of Change document prepared to reflect on the implementation of the Voluntary Redundancy Program.

	Comment/ Question	Response
1.	This document is misleading. It does not identify that 33 EOIs were told they would be subject to a formal consultation. It shows that 10 proceeded to that stage but doesn't explain the fate of the other 23. It doesn't identify the timeframe for the 10 that proceeded to formal consultation. It does not explain why the other 23 did not. I was one of those 33. I believe that the process was poorly managed and communication was inadequate. I enquired, once I had been advised I was one of the 33 EOIs that would be subject to consultation, about the timeline. No information of any practical use was provided, simple further rehashings of what I had been told. This new document sheds no further light on what happened to those 10 EOIs that proceeded to formal consultation in terms of the timeline for this. This whole experience has been very negative - and no, I don't need to be referred to EAP, thank you in advance for the offer - I needed to be respected and dealt with honestly. Within the law faculty, I am aware that my position was one of two from corporate law teachers. It is ironic that I was allocated to corporate law, given that in my five years at SLS, I've only taught it twice. I also feel that the process was highly political. The two corporate law people - me at Senior Lecturer and I believe another at professorial level, could easily have been converted into 1 lecturer level appointment and thus saved even more money for the faculty. Why this was not happening is a mystery until you factor in likely political machinations.	Thank you for your feedback, we acknowledge your view on the Assessment Process. In assessing the EOIs for VR, the University needed to be satisfied that the staff member's position was no longer required. Supplementary consultation for accepted EOIs commenced from 8 December 2020. Supplementary consultation was finalised for the majority of EOIs with no significant effects identified in late 2020. If accepting a particular EOI/s was likely to have a significant effect on remaining staff, the University engaged in the full consultation process in accordance with section 390-395 of the Enterprise Agreement. There were 10 formal consultation processes incorporating 47 EOIs that took place in this category. Staff were communicated of this requirement in December 2020 that the EOI was paused pending further review from January 2021. All formal consultation was completed throughout Q1 2021. The University does not agree with your comment on how the VR Program was managed and communicated to staff. Staff were provided communication on outcomes by email with estimated timings provided where possible. Actual timings for EOIs where formal consultation described above took place was not known until further review of the significant effects in accepting a VR on remaining staff was completed in early 2021. This timing varied depending on the complexity of each consultation process. We sought to minimise any delays, to provide as much certainty as possible on timeframes for staff that lodged an EOI in VR. The mitigations for supplementary consultation, including any alternate positions were determined by local Faculty/Portfolio groups in

		consultation with Managers/Supervisors who reviewed the effects of the removal of the position. We acknowledge that some staff did not have a positive experience with the VR Program timelines, however given the wide scope of the program and the many variables considered when assessing EOIs, this was difficult to ensure.
2.	My feedback is in regards to Supplementary Consultation arising from VR Program for COS: KNOWLEDGE AND SELF SERVICE (SC011) This VR request should never have been approved and it's initial approval was a complete failure of the process, and the judgement of those making the decisions. Staff in the team were forced to do Management's job for them, making clear the painfully obvious need for the position that was proposed to be made redundant (one of our Senior ICT "Specialist" staff). We desperately rely on these positions to support us as frontline Helpdesk staff - they are our primary support internally for difficult cases, escalations and identifying broader problems/trends/P1s, and without them the University would quickly find itself in trouble operationally. This was 1 of 4 FTE promised for this role in a formal change process less than two years ago - yet at the time of the VR program, we were down to just 1-3 FTE staff in these positions for the majority of the time that SSC has existed. The need for filling the empty positions was great, yet instead the VR request was approved after initial assessment, with no rationale or evidence to demonstrate that this was carefully considered and thought out. In the supplementary consultation document, no mention was even made of the unfilled positions, nor was any meaningful explanation given for who would do the work remaining after making this position made redundant. It was a demonstration of a complete lack of understanding of our work, and we should never have been put in the position of having to	Thank you for your feedback and comments on the VR assessment process. The consistent assessment and consultation process was implemented following a formal consultation with all staff and Unions on the proposal between September 2020 and November 2020. The assessment criteria and consultation process were published in the Final Change Plan and available to all staff on the intranet. In line with the VR Program Final Change Plan, a local assessment group in the portfolio assessed whether positions in VP Operations could be declared redundant, and the departure of staff members accommodated. Mitigations for accepting an EOI in VR formed part of the supplementary consultation document for feedback. The University does not agree that "staff were forced to do Management's job for them". In cases where the University initially accepted an EOI, the supplementary consultation process was followed prior to offering a VR. In line with the supplementary consultation process, if following consultation and feedback the removal of the position could not be accommodated with the proposed mitigations, the EOI did not proceed to an offer of VR. The transparent consultation process was intended to allow for feedback on the initial decisions to accept EOIs for VR prior to offers being made.

give feedback that, in the end, meant the decision to give VR to one of our much-respected colleagues was reversed, and they subsequently resigned. This whole process made staff feel disempowered and demeaned, and could have created a rift between colleagues, except for the fact that the person ultimately denied VR was incredibly gracious and understanding of why the position was needed. A truly shambolic process that I hope is never repeated.	