



Graduate Certificate in Gender Policy

Turn advocacy into
action for gender equality

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TEQSA: PRV12003



UNIVERSITY OF
CANBERRA



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Get ready to drive meaningful change! Embark on the Graduate Certificate in Gender Policy to develop the skills and experience to shape more inclusive and equitable gender policies. This programme equips you with innovative tools and real-world insights, and empowers you to advocate for a more just society.

Dr. Toni Johnson

Lecturer, Canberra Law School

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Why study the Graduate Certificate in Gender Policy

Turn advocacy into action for gender equality.

As Australia's first postgraduate course in gender policy, this pioneering course is designed for change-makers ready to advance gender rights and social justice. Whether you're working in government, the private sector, not-for-profits, or education, you'll gain the tools to shape inclusive policies and challenge systemic inequities.

Learn from leading policy, law, and advocacy experts at the Canberra Law School, the Canberra School of Government, and the News and Media Research Centre—and graduate with skills grounded in real-world challenges.

You'll build the expertise to:

- ✓ Evaluate public policies through a gender lens
- ✓ Design and implement inclusive initiatives across sectors
- ✓ Influence decision-makers and engage diverse communities
- ✓ Advocate for equitable outcomes at local, national, and global levels

Shape a more equitable future where gender rights are non-negotiable.

Flexible, supported and accelerated learning — designed for immediate impact.

Fit study around your commitments while gaining career-defining skills. You'll be empowered to lead change from the courtroom to Parliament, and everywhere in between—with the added benefit of a pathway into the Master of Public Policy for those seeking to deepen their impact.

It's more than a qualification. It's your platform to lead.



Advance your career. Drive change that matters.

Career outcomes

The Graduate Certificate in Gender Policy equips you with specialised skills that are increasingly in demand across public, private, and not-for-profit sectors. Whether you're entering the policy space or looking to lead meaningful reform in your current role, this qualification strengthens your credibility and expands your opportunities.

Graduates may pursue or progress in roles such as:

- *Policy Officer/Policy Advisor/Policy Analyst*
Contribute to evidence-based policy development with a gender equity lens.
- *Policy Manager/Director of Policy*
Lead teams in shaping inclusive public policies and social programs.
- *DEI Specialist or HR Manager/Director*
Embed diversity, equity, and inclusion across organisational strategies and workplace culture.
- *Senior Consultant or Legal Professional*
Advise on gender-sensitive practices, compliance, and systemic reform.
- *Roles in Not-for-Profit and Community Organisations*
Drive advocacy initiatives, shape community engagement, and influence social change.

You'll graduate with the tools to evaluate and design policy, lead advocacy initiatives, and influence change—from grassroots movements to government strategies. Wherever your career takes you, you will be empowered to advance equality and shape a more equitable future.

Course overview

Graduate Certificate in Gender Policy

Gender equity is a pivotal challenge in today's society, requiring informed leaders to drive systemic change.

The Graduate Certificate in Gender Policy equips you with the skills to assess and reform policies through a gender lens, implement effective workplace strategies, and advocate for inclusive practices across various sectors.

Ideal for professionals in HR, policy, law, or leadership, this course equips you to drive inclusive policies at organisational and government levels.

As a pathway to the Master of Public Policy, this graduate certificate enhances your credentials and positions you for advanced roles in policy-making and social advocacy.

Knowledge areas

Shaping Inclusive Public Policy

Gain practical skills in designing, implementing, and evaluating policies that promote equity and inclusion. Learn to influence public decisions, develop Gender Equality Action Plans (GEAPs), and create sustainable reforms.

Leading for Equity and Social Impact

Build leadership capabilities to drive systemic change. Learn to assess and advocate for inclusive practices across sectors, with a focus on equity for all identities.

Communicating for advocacy and engagement

Develop ethical and effective communication strategies to engage diverse and marginalised communities. Craft messages that resonate across platforms—even during times of crisis.

Advocating for gender equality and human rights

Apply intersectional and rights-based approaches to drive gender equality. Learn how to champion inclusive policy and advocacy strategies that tackle complex issues and create sustainable social change.



Course details

Duration	Fees	Intakes
8 months (part-time)	\$14,500 (\$3,625 per unit)	January, March, May, July, September, October

All prices are listed in Australian dollars. Visit our [Course Fees](#) page for up-to-date information, inclusive of 2026 indicative course fees. Fees are subject to annual review by the University and may increase annually, with the new fees effective from the start of each calendar year. Indicative fees are a guide for comparison only based on current conditions and available data. Study plans and completion times might vary depending on the choice of elective units, RPL, leave, and unit availability. For more information, please speak with a Student Enrolment Adviser.

Units of study (4 core units)

1. Foundations of Public Policy

Understand the fundamentals of policy design and implementation.

2. Equity, Leadership and Policy

Explore strategies to address gender disparities and promote leadership initiatives.

3. Communicating with Diverse Audiences

Develop skills to effectively engage and advocate across different sectors.

4. Gender Equality, Policy and Advocacy

Apply policy frameworks to advance gender equity in various environments.



Entry requirements

Admissions requirements

A recognised bachelor's degree or equivalent,

OR;

A higher-level qualification in any discipline, from a recognised tertiary institution,

OR;

Three years of relevant work experience.

Additional requirements

There are non-standard English language requirements for this course. To be eligible, you must have an overall IELTS Academic score (or equivalent) of 6.5, with no band score below 6.0. For alternate/ equivalent ways of meeting the English requirements for the course, please read this document on the [University website](#).

Recognition of prior learning (RPL)

RPL will not be offered for the Graduate Certificate in Gender Policy.

Pathway to a Master of Public Policy



Graduate Certificate
(with key outcomes)



Master of Public Policy
(with expanded
career potential)



For more information, **schedule a 15-minute call** with a Student Enrolment Adviser.

Schedule a call

Discover our experts



Toni Johnson

Toni Johnson is a Lecturer at the University of Canberra's School of Law, specialises in Legal Theory, Law and Society, Gender and the Legal System, and Criminal Law. With a PhD in refugee law (University of Kent) and a Master's in Law (University of British Columbia), Toni brings extensive expertise and focus on critical race, feminist, and deconstructionist methodologies. She co-ordinates the 'Reimagining Equity and Inclusion' research hub.



Mary Walsh

Mary Walsh is a Professor of Politics and Associate Dean at the University of Canberra, brings 30+ years of teaching and research expertise. She has led key programs like the Bachelor of Politics and International Relations and the Master of Public Policy, earning national and international recognition for her contributions.



Jonathan Pickering

Jonathan Pickering is an Associate Professor at the University of Canberra, specialising in democracy and justice in environmental and energy policy. With a PhD from ANU and a background in international development at AusAID, Jonathan's research has been featured in top journals like *Climate Policy* and *Environmental Politics*. He also leads an ARC-funded project on electricity transmission policy and teaches leadership and policy in the Master of Public Policy program.



Ashleigh Haw

Ashleigh Haw is a Senior Lecturer in Communication and Media at the University of Canberra and member of the News and Media Research Centre, specialises in social inclusion in digital and news media. With a PhD in Sociology and 15+ years of teaching experience, her work explores the representation of marginalised communities, mis/disinformation during crises, and critical disability studies. A strong advocate for accessibility, she brings lived experience to her teaching and research in ethics, inclusion, and crisis communication.

About the University of Canberra



¹THE Young University Rankings 2024

² Good Universities Guide 2025

³ THE Impact Rankings 2024

Top 9%

of young universities worldwide.¹

#1

in Canberra for student support and skills development.²

91%

postgraduate full-time employment rate.²

#2

in Australia —
and 7th in the world
— for tackling inequality
(SDG 10).³

5 Star

rating for full-time
postgraduate
employment.²

The University of Canberra's online experience

Supporting you every step of the way

- The University of Canberra is an ambitious university for ambitious people. Our practical, supported and accelerated online courses are designed to deliver outcomes that create real impact and inspire real change in the world around us.
- Our postgraduate courses are not only delivered online – they are career-relevant and designed for demand, so you can apply what you learn faster.
- Through its online studies, the University is committed to making sure you enjoy a truly flexible and inclusive learning experience that works for you and with you – no matter who or where you are. When you're connected to the University, you're connected to an inspiring community of teachers and learners in our nation's capital.
- The University's mission is to challenge the status quo in the relentless pursuit of better ways to teach and learn.
- For those who study with the University of Canberra, the benefit is clear: practical and professional postgraduate learning for those ready to make a difference.





Unit descriptions

Foundations of Public Policy

Unit overview

This unit introduces participants to the study and practice of public policy. It covers contemporary issues and problems in policy studies and aims to deepen participants' knowledge of the theory and practice of public policy-making. The unit is organised into four themes of critical inquiry.

In the first theme, Public Policy Fundamentals, we address the question: What is public policy, how should it be studied and practised?

The second theme, Understanding the Policy Environment, explores a range of analytical perspectives on the broad environmental factors that inform the policy process, such as the COVID-19 pandemic, the national, regional and global economic contexts and other processes of globalisation such as transnational policy-making, and geopolitics.

Decision-making – from Ideas to Action is the third theme. Students are provided with a micro exploration of the policy process via agenda-setting, problem definition, policy formulation, implementation, evaluation and learning (including innovation and long-term thinking). The module assesses the ingredients of policy 'success', 'failure' and innovation and issues involved in researching and studying policy continuity and change.

The final theme, Collaborative Governance Within and Beyond the Nation State,

examines the role of inter-organisational forms of policy-making and delivery. This includes transnational policy transfer, and whole of government task forces and delivery networks, where policy is the outcome of collaboration between different jurisdictions, state and non-state actors.

Learning outcomes

After successful completion of this unit, students will be able to:

- Describe key actors, their relationships and sources of influence in shaping policy outcomes and discuss the issues involved in studying the policy process.
- Identify the complex issues surrounding the formation, implementation and evaluation of public policy and the institutional and organisational contexts which shape the policy-making process.
- Explain key terms, processes and debates informing the contemporary practice of public policy.
- Interpret current policy models and frameworks used to assess policies and the policy process by academics and practitioners.
- Evaluate the policy decision-making process and identify factors relevant to understanding policy 'success' and 'failure', including past and present Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples' challenges.

Equity, Leadership and Policy

Unit overview

The distribution of opportunities and resources is a central concern of government policy.

The pattern of that distribution, and its implications and consequences, are important in an inward-facing sense in terms of the government's own operations, and in an outward-facing sense in terms of the government policy's impact on citizens.

Equity concerns are high on the list of potential political, and therefore policy, pressures faced by government. Understanding and acting effectively upon equity concerns requires both a consciousness of and insight into the specific issues and their context.

This unit examines the concept of equity from multiple standpoints (including race, class, gender, age and ability), its expression in policy, policy disputes in terms of equity, and how these things have changed — and continue to change — over time.

Success factors in dealing with equity challenges in policy will be explored, including the critical role of leadership in effecting equitable outcomes.

Learning outcomes

After successful completion of this unit, students will be able to:

- Understand the complex, dynamic environment and institutional contexts in which equity issues emerge and are addressed.
- Identify a range of equity concerns, articulate their significance, and analyse the effectiveness of government policy addressing them.
- Assess success factors, in terms of both policy design and implementation, for effective action on equity dimensions of government policy, including the critical role of leadership.
- Develop awareness of a range of approaches and techniques particularly useful in policy development and implementation for equitable outcomes, and demonstrate how they could be used in relation to policy addressing current equity challenges.

Communicating with Diverse Audiences

Unit overview

Diverse audiences absorb and react to communications in different ways.

To be effective, it is important that communication methods and approaches are adjusted to reflect the variances across audience needs. This unit focuses on exploring the communication needs and preferences of diverse groups, including First Nations communities and marginalised individuals.

In this unit, students explore what governments and communities around the globe learned about communicating with diverse groups in times of crisis, such as the COVID-19 pandemic, and why these lessons should be incorporated into communication and engagement practice in and outside crises. Students reflect on these lessons as well as lessons from community-led initiatives to develop targeted communication and engagement programs that address the unique needs of different communities.

Learning outcomes

- Understand the safety, efficacy and ethical considerations of community-led principles in the design of tailored communication and engagement programs.
- Analyse and articulate the challenges and opportunities of organisational communication and engagement with diverse communities, including in times of crisis.
- Critique the principles of community-led communication and engagement in a range of contexts.
- Evaluate why communication and engagement programs and campaigns need to consider diverse cohorts, including First Nations communities.

Gender Equality, Policy and Advocacy

Unit overview

Working towards a more equitable society requires an understanding of the impact of gender on public policy and advocacy. By examining and applying theoretical frameworks to legal and policy analysis in both historical and contemporary contexts, students explore how gender influences and is influenced by policy and advocacy across various sectors, such as criminal justice, legal practice, health, politics and sport.

Throughout the unit students gain the analytical skills to critically assess existing policy, legislation, case law and academic writing. Students can engage with existing policies, identify and address gender bias, emphasise the importance of intersectionality, and propose evidence-based solutions to promote gender equality and equity.

Learning outcomes

- Describe concepts and theories related to gender, law and public policy.
- Analyse the impact of gender on public policy and legal outcomes using appropriate analytical frameworks.
- Evaluate existing laws and public policies from a gender perspective, and recommend improvements.
- Design gender-sensitive policies and/or initiatives that address gender disparities.
- Communicate policy recommendations effectively to diverse stakeholders.





Thank you — we'd love to hear from you

Get in touch

Our Student Enrolment Advisers are here to help you with all your course and enrolment queries.

studyonline.canberra.edu.au

1300 471 770

future-student@studyonline.canberra.edu.au

For more information, **schedule a 15-minute call** with a Student Enrolment Adviser.

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