WALAILAK UNIVERSITY

SDG REPORT 2025-2026



Times Higher Education Sustainability Impact Ratings 2026

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

5 GENDER EQUALITY



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SDG 5 : GENDER EQUALITY

WU'S COMMITMENT TO NON-DISCRIMINATION AGAINST TRANSGENDER INDIVIDUALS



In higher education, policies that promote equality and protect transgender individuals are essential for creating a safe, inclusive, and respectful learning and working environment. Universities bring together people from diverse backgrounds and identities, making it important to ensure that all students and staff can participate in academic and university life without fear of discrimination, harassment, exclusion, or prejudice. Without clear policies. supportive measures and systematic diagnostic assessment, transgender individuals may experience stigma, unequal treatment, social isolation, and barriers to participation, which can negatively affect their sense of belonging, well-being, academic engagement, and professional development.

Walailak University (WU) reaffirmed its dedication to promoting inclusivity, equality, and respect for all genders and sexual orientations through its *Policy on Equality and Non-Discrimination for Transgender Persons.* This policy highlights WU's commitment to preventing discrimination and harassment against all members of the university community, including transgender and other transgender individuals.





The policy provides a comprehensive framework for promoting inclusivity and preventing discrimination against women and transgender individuals. The policy emphasizes equal access to education, employment, and opportunities for personal and professional development, while promoting a campus environment based on respect, understanding, and inclusion. It also calls for training and awareness-raising activities to challenge gender stereotypes and biases and establishes measures to protect members of the university community from harassment, bullying, and discrimination based on gender identity, gender expression, or sexual orientation.

In 2025, LGBT students accounted for approximately 12.5% of the student population at WU, while LGBT staff represented approximately 2.23% of the university's workforce. These figures reflect the presence of transgender members across the university community and highlight the importance of maintaining an inclusive educational and working environment where individuals of diverse gender identities and sexual orientations can participate equally.

Miss Transgender Nakhon Si Thammarat



WU continued to promote opportunities for LGBT students to participate in activities that celebrate gender diversity and inclusion. In 2025, the University supported LGBT students in attending the Miss Transgender Nakhon Si Thammarat University Competition. The initiative provided students with an opportunity to participate in a wider community activity celebrating transgender individuals and promoting greater recognition of gender diversity in higher education and society.

LGBT Freshy Awards

The University also continued to organize activities that recognize and celebrate the LGBT community. In 2025, WU organized the LGBT Freshy Awards, providing a platform for LGBT students to express their identities, showcase their talents, and participate in university life. The activity contributed to promoting visibility and recognition of LGBT students and reinforced the message that students of diverse gender identities and sexual orientations have an equal place within the university community.



LGBT Marriage Registration



In addition, WU continued to support initiatives that promote gender equality beyond the university campus. In 2025, the University collaborated with the Tha Sala District Office to organize “The Infinity o f Love: Marriage Registration – Rak Loy Fah” at Bota Sky Tower. The activity provided couples with an opportunity to register their marriages in a memorable setting and reflected the University’s support for gender equality following Thailand’s legalization of marriage equality. The activity demonstrated WU’s commitment to creating a society in which couples can live together freely and equally, regardless of gender or sexual orientation.



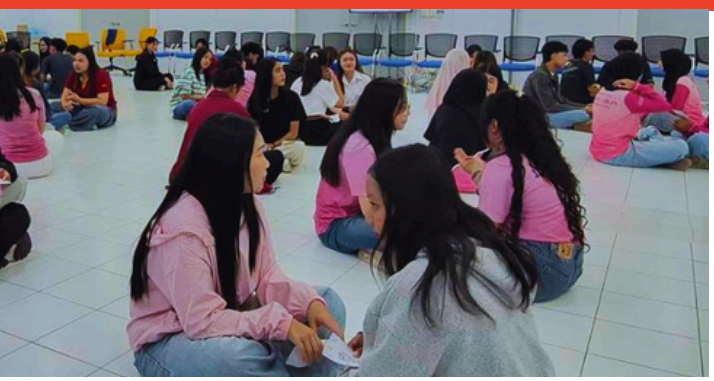
Gender-inclusive Restrooms



WU continued to provide gender-inclusive restrooms across the campus in 2025 to support the well-being of LGBT students, staff, and visitors. These facilities aim to foster a safe, respectful, and inclusive environment where members of the university community can feel comfortable and secure. The continued availability of gender-inclusive restrooms.

Through its policies, facilities, student activities, and community engagement, WU continues to promote an inclusive campus culture in which LGBT students and staff are respected, supported, and provided with opportunities to participate equally. These efforts contribute to advancing gender equality, reducing discrimination, and fostering a university environment where diversity is recognized as an important part of the academic community.

PROMOTING WOMEN'S ACCESS TO AND COMPLETION OF HIGHER EDUCATION



Women may face a range of barriers that affect their ability to access, participate in, and successfully complete higher education. Financial difficulties can limit opportunities to enter or remain in university, while academic challenges, mental health concerns, and health-related issues may also affect students' ability to fully participate in university life.

Through diagnostic analysis of women's access, participation, and educational needs, universities can identify barriers that may prevent women from entering or successfully progressing through higher education and develop appropriate measures to address them. In response, WU has implemented a range of women's access schemes, including mentoring, scholarships, and other targeted provisions, to address identified barriers before and after admission and support women throughout their university journey.

Mentoring Schemes

The Smile and Smart Center, under the Division of Student Support and Development, provides mentoring services to students, including female and LGBT students. The center offers guidance on university life, academic development, personal matters, and other issues that may affect students' well-being and educational progress.



In 2025, over 3,560 students received mentoring services and participated in activities with staff at the center. Of these, 824 were female students, representing 78.48% of all students who received the services. The issues raised by female students included personal relationships, depression, stress, academic performance, and financial difficulties. By providing accessible and confidential support, the mentoring scheme helps female students address challenges that could otherwise affect their academic participation and progression.

WU also provides an online channel through the Smile and Smart Center's Facebook Page for students who may not feel comfortable seeking support in person. Through this platform, students can access online mentoring, information about activities, mental well-being resources, and additional support. The satisfaction rate among students who participated in the schemes was 96.5%.

Scholarships

WU provides scholarships in collaboration with university partners to help ensure that students, including women from financially disadvantaged backgrounds, can pursue their education without financial hardship becoming a barrier to their studies.



In 2025, WU and its partners awarded scholarships to 1,125 students, with a total value of 73,496,950 baht. Among the scholarship recipients, 749 were female students, including 734 Thai female students and 15 female students from low- and lower-income countries. These scholarships provided financial assistance that supported female students in entering and continuing their higher education. By reducing financial barriers, the scholarship scheme contributes to women's equitable access to higher education and supports their ability to remain engaged in their studies through to graduation.

Health Provision: HPV Vaccination Program



Health-related concerns can also affect women's well-being and their ability to participate fully in higher education. Recognizing the importance of preventive health care, WU has provided free HPV vaccination to female students as part of its broader student support and health services.

WU continued its free HPV Vaccination Program for female students. The initiative was aligned with Thailand's national Quick Win 100 Days, 1 Million Doses Policy, which promotes HPV vaccination as an important measure for cervical cancer prevention.

In 2025, a total of 4,045 female students received HPV vaccinations through WU Hospital. Providing the vaccination through the University's hospital enabled female students to access professional health services within the university environment, supporting their health and well-being throughout their studies.

Other Provision: Sanitary Napkin Distribution Scheme



Menstrual health is another practical consideration that can affect women's comfort, dignity, and participation in education. To support female students and staff, WU continued its Sanitary Napkin Distribution Scheme in 2025, providing free sanitary napkins and promoting greater awareness of menstrual health.

WU installed sanitary napkin dispensers in female student dormitories so that students could access sanitary products when needed. The University also established a central distribution point at WU Bota Market, where university staff organized an awareness activity and distributed sanitary napkins to female students and staff.

In 2025, approximately 1,250 sanitary napkins were distributed through the initiative. By providing free and accessible menstrual products, WU helps address a practical barrier that may affect female students' daily university experience while promoting dignity, well-being, and equal participation.

Through mentoring, scholarships, and other targeted provisions, WU adopts a comprehensive approach to women's access to higher education. These schemes address different barriers, including financial difficulties, personal and academic challenges, and health and well-being concerns.

These programs can generate positive impacts by helping female students overcome challenges that may otherwise affect their ability to continue their education. The support provided through its services can help address the difficulties faced by approximately 70% of students who seek assistance, contributing to student retention and reducing the risk of students discontinuing their studies. By providing accessible support and targeted assistance, the University continues to strengthen opportunities for women to enter, participate in, remain in, and complete higher education.

PROMOTING WOMEN'S LEADERSHIP AND PARTICIPATION IN UNIVERSITY GOVERNANCE



Women may continue to face barriers to equal participation in leadership and decision-making, including limited access to leadership opportunities, unequal representation in senior positions, and institutional or social expectations that can affect career advancement. To identify and address these challenges, WU takes a diagnostic approach to understanding barriers to women's participation and representation in leadership and governance. In higher education, such diagnostic analysis is particularly important because identifying gaps in women's representation can help institutions develop more targeted measures to promote gender equality, women's empowerment, and inclusive decision-making. Recognizing these challenges, WU actively promotes equal opportunities for female staff and students to participate in leadership and decision-making at different levels of the University.

WU actively promotes gender equality in leadership by encouraging and supporting female staff to assume executive roles across the institution. The number of female staff holding executive positions has consistently exceeded that of male staff, reflecting the University's recognition of diversity, inclusive leadership, and equitable decision-making, where all genders play an essential role in shaping institutional directions and policies. Female staff from all faculties and administrative units are equally eligible to hold executive positions at WU without discrimination.



The University has demonstrated measurable progress in advancing women's leadership. In theprevious year, 269 female staff members held executive positions. By 2025, this number increased

significantly to more than 379 female staff members, indicating a clear and continuous institutional commitment



WU also promotes women's representation in student governance. The University supports female students to participate in the Student Administrative Board of WU and the Student Council of WU as part of its recognition of student independent union representation. More than 45% of the members of these student governance bodies are female students, providing women with meaningful opportunities to participate in student leadership.



Through these executive and representative roles, female leaders and student representatives actively participate in strategic decision-making and contribute to academic, administrative, and student affairs. Female executive staff receive equal rights and benefits as their male counterparts, including position allowances, health benefits, and other employment entitlements. These measures support fairness, equal treatment, non-discrimination, and equitable career advancement for women within the University.

The growth from 269 female executive staff to more than 379 in the previous year, together with more than 45% female representation in key student governance bodies, demonstrates the University's continuing efforts to empower women and strengthen gender-balanced leadership. Through inclusive policies, equal opportunities, and meaningful participation in governance, Walailak University continues to foster an equitable institutional culture and contribute to the achievement of gender equality and women's empowerment.

ADVANCING GENDER EQUALITY THROUGH ENHANCED MATERNITY AND PATERNITY POLICY

Balancing professional responsibilities with pregnancy, childbirth, and childcare can create significant challenges for women in the workplace. Through diagnostic assessment and identification of workplace and family-related challenges, it is recognized that without adequate maternity and childcare support, women may face difficulties in maintaining their employment, continuing their careers, and participating fully in professional activities. At the same time, a diagnostic assessment of childcare responsibilities highlights how an unequal distribution of caregiving duties may place a disproportionate burden on women and affect their long-term career development. Recognizing these identified challenges and support needs, WU has put in place comprehensive maternity, paternity, and parental leave measures to support employees with family responsibilities and promote women's continued participation in the workplace.









WU has in place *the WU Regulations on Leave for Staff and Employees, B.E. 2568 (2025),* which establish inclusive maternity, paternity, and parental leave provisions for both permanent and temporary staff. These regulations provide institutional support for employees during pregnancy, childbirth, and the early stages of child-rearing, while helping ensure that family responsibilities do not become a barrier to women's participation, career continuity, and professional development.

Under the maternity policy, female staff, including temporary employees, are entitled to 98 days of maternity leave with full pay. This provision is in place to provide women with sufficient time to recover from childbirth, care for their newborns, and support their children's early development without having to choose between family responsibilities and continued participation in employment. In addition, eligible female staff may apply for parental leave of up to 150 days, providing additional flexibility for childcare during infancy and further strengthening the University's support for women's participation in the workplace.

WU has also put in place a paternity policy to encourage fathers to participate actively in childcare responsibilities. Under the regulations, male staff are entitled to 15 consecutive working days of paternity leave with full pay, enabling fathers to care for their newborn children and support their spouses during the postnatal period. Where necessary, the leave may be taken in more than one period in accordance with the University's regulations, providing flexibility for employees to respond to their family's specific needs.



The paternity policy is particularly important for supporting women's participation because encouraging fathers to share childcare responsibilities can help reduce the disproportionate caregiving burden often experienced by women. By enabling fathers to take paid leave and participate directly in childcare, WU promotes a more equitable distribution of family responsibilities and helps create conditions in which women can maintain their employment and continue their professional and academic careers.

Through these policies in place, WU demonstrates its commitment to gender equality, equal opportunities, work-life balance, shared parenting, and women's continued participation in the workplace. The combination of maternity, parental, and paternity leave provides a comprehensive institutional framework that supports both mothers and fathers, reduces potential barriers associated with family responsibilities, and contributes to a more inclusive, equitable, and family-friendly working environment.