



# Athena SWAN: Bronze and Silver department applications



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<b>Name of institution</b>	University of Essex	
<b>Department</b>	Economics	
<b>Focus of department</b>	<b>AHSSBL</b>	
<b>Date of application</b>	November 2020	
<b>Award Level</b>	<b>Bronze</b>	
<b>Institution Athena SWAN award</b>	<b>Date: November 2017</b>	<b>Level: Silver</b>
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# 1. Letter of endorsement from the head of department

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24 November 2020

Dear Athena Swan panel,

It is a great pleasure to give my strongest support to our Department's submission for the Athena Swan Bronze award. I became Head of Department in August 2019 as the successor to Professor Kate Rockett, our first female Head of Department. As an economist, I recognise that discrimination of any sort is inefficient as well as socially harmful. But I also understand that bias and discrimination is embedded in behaviour, norms and institutions and can be eradicated only with concerted effort.

Like my predecessor, I fully subscribe to the view that Athena Swan goals align with our aspiration to deliver transformational education to a large and diverse student body alongside a providing a rewarding work environment that ensures that all members of the department are equally valued and encouraged to fulfil their potential. That also translates into the wider goals of sustainable recruitment and retention, research excellence, and the open-mindedness that is a hallmark of high-quality university education.

Our action points consolidate our gains and address weaknesses. Our areas of good practice should be publicised and diffused more completely; EDI must be incorporated into strategic decision making across all aspects of education and research; our potential for role models and a diversity-centred learning should be honed; our existing informal systems must be systematised to keep pace with the growth of the department, yielding more consistent application of policies and comprehensive data collection to inform our actions.

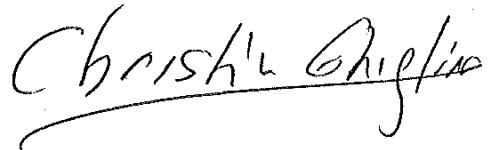
Although our previous Athena Swan application was unsuccessful, we have made considerable progress in recognising and addressing key areas where our performance can be improved. I am firmly committed to building on this progress and driving the process forward. In this round we have taken a slightly different approach with some changes in membership of the SAT team and by involving a wider range of students and staff. By infusing Athena Swan principles more deeply into our existing departmental structures and procedures, we aim to ensure that these principles become an enduring rather than a transient feature of the department.

As the process has evolved, it has generated deeper reflection on the points of weakness in our current processes and procedures and a firmer set of action plans for positive, feasible changes that are sustainable into the future. This process has involved surveys, meetings and consultations that have steered us towards building on existing good practice in our recruitment,

training and education, and endeavouring to meet challenges where the outcomes depend partly on external market forces.

I can confirm that the information presented in the application (including qualitative and quantitative data) is an honest, accurate and true representation of the department. I anticipate that the effect of this process will help us to achieve our strategic goals now and in the future.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Christian Ghiglino'.

Christian Ghiglino  
Head of the Department of Economics  
University of Essex

Wordcount: 511

## List of Acronyms

<b>Acronym</b>	<b>Description</b>
AS	Athena SWAN
ASC	Academic Staffing Committee
ASE	Academic Staff primarily with Education Responsibilities
ASER	Academic Staff with Education and Research Responsibilities
ASR	Academic Staff primarily with Research Responsibilities
BAME	Black Asian and Minority Ethnic
CER	Communications and External Relations Department
DEd	Director of Education
DEm	Director of Employability
DHoD	Deputy Head of Department
DMan	Departmental Manager
DoR	Director of Research
DSG	Departmental Steering Group
ED	Executive Dean of Social Sciences
EDI	Equality, Diversity and Inclusion
FTC	Fixed Term Contract
GEM	Gender Equality Charter Mark
GTA	Graduate Teaching Assistant
HEA	Higher Education Academy
HoD	Head of Department
HR	Human Resources
KIT	Keeping in Touch
OD	Organisational Development
OH	Occupational Health
P&C	People and Culture (replacing the former HR department)
PDR	Personal Development Review
PG	Postgraduate
PG CHEP	Postgraduate Certificate in Higher Education Practice
PGR	Postgraduate Research
PGT	Postgraduate Taught
PIP	Performance Improvement Plan
PN	Parents' Network
PS	Professional Services
PT	Part-time
REO	Research and Enterprise Office
REF	Research Excellence Framework
SAT	Self-Assessment Team
SL/R	Senior Lecturer/Reader
SPRINT	Essex Women's Development Programme
UoE	University of Essex
UG	Undergraduate
UROP	Undergraduate Research Opportunity Programme
WAM	Workload Allocation Model
WISE	Women in Science, Technology and Engineering
WLB	Work Life Balance
WN	Women's Network

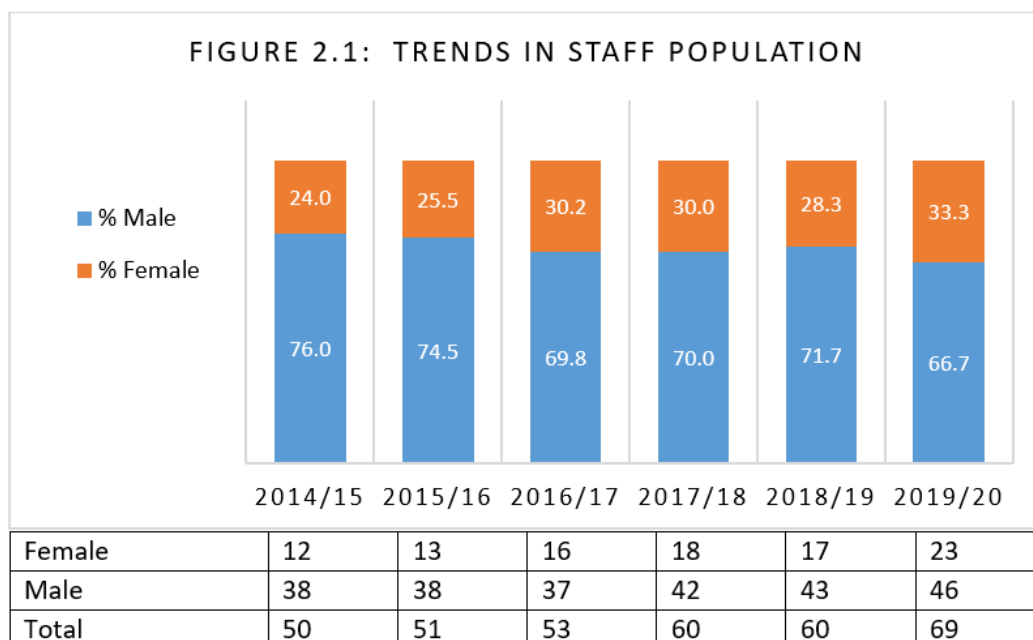
Throughout this application the data is presented, where possible, for academic years 2014/15 to 2018/19, in order to illustrate trends. When we describe the data as 'current' we are using the most recent figures that were available at the time of writing each section. When we mention our surveys, we refer to the latest questionnaire undertaken 2019/20 as part of this application. When we refer to the AS Bronze Award, we are referring to the University's institutional Bronze Award received in September 2013, renewed in November 2017. The University also achieved a GEM in November 2014 and became a member of the WISE campaign in November 2016.

## 2. Description of the department

**Background.** The Department of Economics dates from the University’s inception in 1964 and is located on the Colchester campus. It is part of the Faculty of Social Sciences, which includes 6 other subject-based departments, the Institute of Social and Economic Research and the UK Data Archive. The Department is located on two floors in a single building where academic staff, administrative staff and research students are co-located, fostering multi-faceted exchange. Occupational Health reviews indicate that staff well-being has fallen where individuals were isolated, creating concern for our scheduled relocation. [AP 2.1]

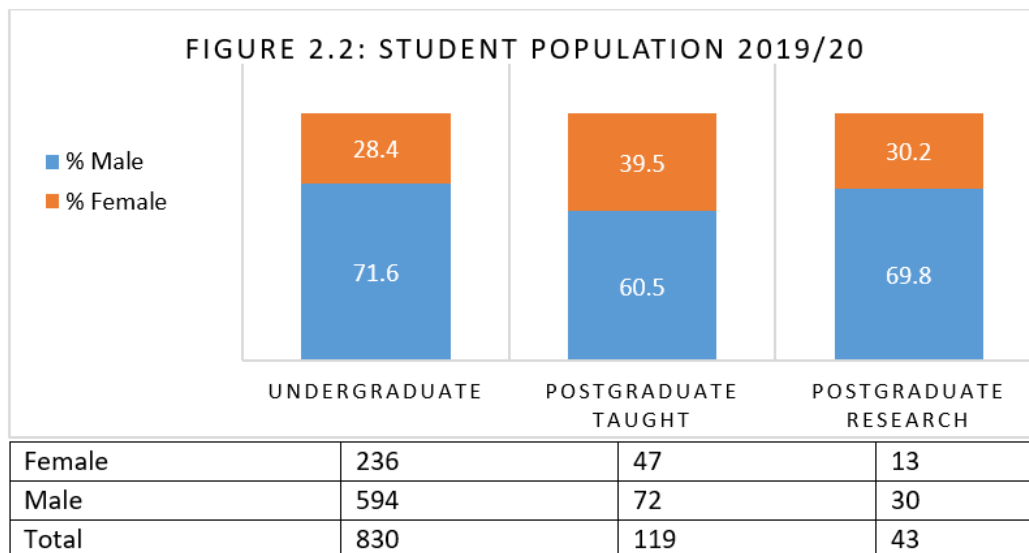
**AP 2.1: Participate in any new building layout design to ensure staff needs are met and encourage interaction.**

**Staff.** In 2019/20, departmental staffing totalled 69: 58 academic staff (17F, 41M, 8 fixed term including 4 part-time), 11 PS staff (6F, 5M, 3 part-time). One third are women overall (Figure 2.1): 29.3 percent of the academic staff (national average for economics departments - 29%) and 54.5% of PS staff. Over the last five years we have experienced rapid change in personnel due to a combination of growth and turnover. Our coincident actions to improve gender balance has increased the proportion of women on academic staff whilst decreasing the share among PS staff.





**Students.** Our community includes 830 UG, 119 PGT and 44 PGR students. The University’s strategic plan for growth has led to a strong increase of 50% in student numbers from 2014/5 to 2018/9. The current proportion of females increases across levels, following the pattern at our comparators (Figure 2.2) at 28.4 percent at UG (27.9% at comparators) 39.5 percent at PGT (48.7% at comparators) and 30.2 percent at PGR level (40.1% at comparators). BAME students comprise a substantial 63.2 percent of UG, 75.7 percent of PGT and 46.2 percent of PGR numbers (in 2018/19).



**Degree programmes.** Added to our flagship BA/BSc in Economics we provide UG degrees in Financial Economics, International Economics and Management Economics, each with the option of a year abroad or a placement year. We offer more than a dozen major/minor or joint degrees with departments ranging from Mathematics to Government. At PGT level we provide Economics and sixteen more specialist degrees as well as the MRes (introduced in 2017), which also forms part of our 1+3 PhD programme.

**Research.** The department has four research clusters: *Microeconomics*, *Macroeconomics*, *Econometrics* and *Applied Economics*, with non-exclusive membership. Clusters organise subject-specific workshops, formally and informally mentor junior academic staff and comment on each other’s research. Gender issues are prominent in our research [AP 2.2]:

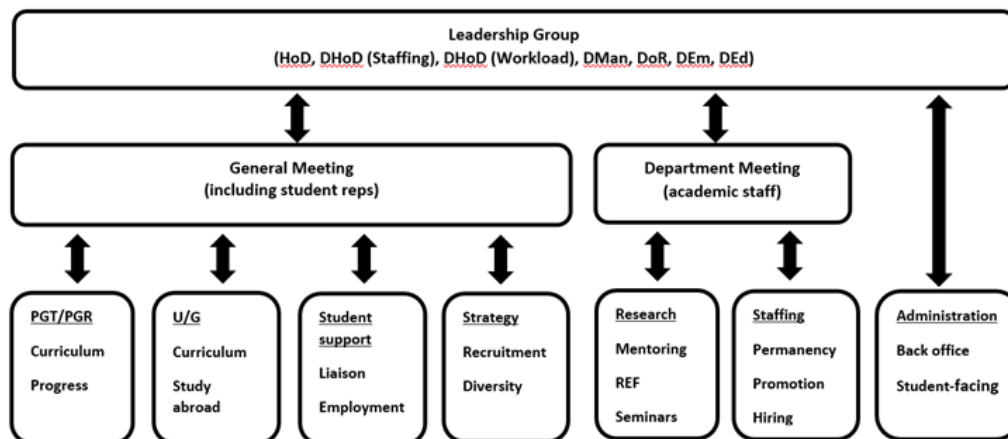
<https://www.essex.ac.uk/departments/economics/equality-and-inclusion>.

**AP 2.2: Maintain EDI web pages to highlight the achievements of women and showcase new research on the economics of gender.**

**Structure and Management.** The leadership group comprises the Head of Department (HoD, M), DHoD (permanent staffing, M), DHoD (workload, temporary staffing, M), DHoD (general, F), Department Manager (DMan, F) and directors of Research (DoR, F), Employment (DEm, M) and Education (DEd, M). Strategic issues are discussed and approved by consensus at General and Departmental meetings, with feedback to and from sub-committees and *ad hoc* groups (Figure 2.3). The design of leadership roles is determined by the HoD in consultation with senior staff. EDI has not been fully incorporated into this process. [AP 2.3] Further discussion is in Section 5.

AP 2.3: Re-design leadership roles to incorporate AS principles and responsibility.

FIGURE 2.3: ORGANISATIONAL CHART



- AP 2.1: Participate in any new building layout design to ensure staff needs are met and encourage interaction.
- AP 2.2: Maintain EDI web pages to highlight the achievements of women and showcase new research on the economics of gender.
- AP 2.3: Re-design leadership roles to incorporate AS principles and responsibility.

Word Count: 498

### 3. The self-assessment process

#### (i) The self-assessment team

The SAT includes Co-Leads Carol McCaskill (Department Manager), Kate Rockett (DHoD and former HoD) and Tim Hatton (former HoD). The HoD, the DoR, and the DEd, from the departmental leadership group, are members of the SAT to ensure integration with strategic activity. Others with specific expertise are included, with two members of the University’s HR (now P&C) department for guidance. Among the academics, 4 are lecturers (2 probationary), 4 are SL/Readers and 4 are professors; overall 7 are women and 9 are men (including one student). The SAT includes those with experience of fixed-term posts (2), part-time working (2) and caring roles (5). Further, it spans the range of departmental responsibilities. The result is highly representative, although the entire department is consulted frequently to ensure inclusivity.

Job Title	Role in team
Professor (ASER, FT) Deputy HoD, DepT. Union Rep.	Co-lead
Department Manager (PT)	Co-lead
Professor (ASER, FT)	Co-lead
Employee Engagement Officer (FT)	Advisor to application, data collection and analysis (surveys).
Fixed term lecturer (ASE, PT)	Focus: fixed term support and graduate teaching.

Reader (ASER, FT) Director of Research	Focus: REF and PGR support.
Lecturer (ASER, FT)	Focus: EDI in departmental culture, Seminar programme Mentoring.
President, Essex Economics Society	Focus: Student experience.
Lecturer (ASER, FT) PGT Director	Focus: PGT funding and progression.
Reader (ASER, FT)	Focus: Staff mentoring, promotion, Increments PGR support.
Professor (ASER, FT) Head of Department	Focus: AS process oversight Action point implementation.
P&C Policy and Projects (PT)	University AS coordinator and advisor.
Senior Lecturer (ASER, FT) Director of Staffing	Focus: BAME issues Promotion Staff recruitment
Senior Lecturer (ASER, FT)	Focus: Research leave External research grants ASE support.
Lecturer (ASER, FT)	Focus: Behavioural/ policy interventions New staff recruitment.
Professor (ASE, FT) Director of Education	Focus: UG education and student progression Student recruitment.

## **(ii) An account of the self-assessment process**

The AS process began in October 2019, initiated jointly by the HoD and the P&C department, who agreed the co-leads. SAT co-leads received 60 points (162 hours) and other SAT team members received 5 points (13.5 hours) in the workload model. The co-leads and P&C representatives held meetings every three weeks and discussed feedback from the failed bid for Bronze accreditation submitted in November 2018. This underlined the importance of improving data presentation, SMART action points, and clarifying section 5's text. The P&C department worked with us, and provided guidelines based on our experience, that of other UoE departments, and of economics departments at other universities.

To embed the AS philosophy throughout the department, we felt it important to integrate it into our day-to-day processes/practices. Hence, in addition to the SAT, we have involved the whole department by including AS principles and plans in our existing meetings, processes, and discussions with all staff and students by pointing out deviations and soliciting ideas on useful modifications of our processes/practices. By using existing communication channels, AS principles became an integral part of the way we work, supporting sustainable cultural change. We obtained higher engagement than before because this approach minimised the additional workload associated with the AS application.

The Autumn Term meetings mapped out a plan that included data collection, student and staff surveys (email and in person pre-Covid-19; online only post-Covid-19), establishing the wider membership of the SAT, the schedule for meetings, and a plan for winter focus groups (in person pre-Covid-19) and ongoing individual consultations to clarify comments and ideas (by email post-Covid-19). It established the AS standing item in the department meeting and the termly 'Student Voice' UG and PGT/PGR meetings. We agreed survey questions with P&C and distributed by email to students and staff in December 2019. Monthly follow-ups to May 2020 elicited a far lower staff response rate of 29.4% (F); 51.2% (M) than our first submission, where "in person" nudging was possible. [\[AP 3.2\]](#)

### **AP 3.2: Staff/student surveys conducted annually to measure progress against AP.**

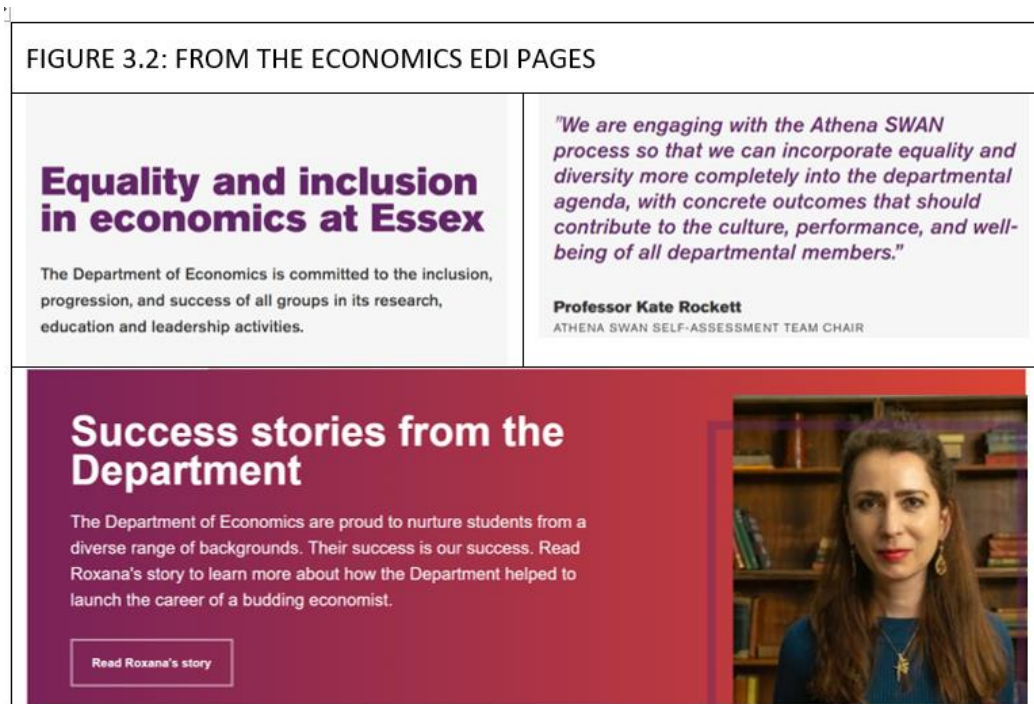
The whole department engaged in a detailed discussion of the AS process at its meeting on 12th February, including feedback on the process and suggestions for specific actions. The co-leads attended meetings of the UG and PGT/PGR 'Student Voice' committees (6<sup>th</sup> February 2020), explained the process and received comments. The co-leads also invited students to separate UG and PG focus groups, which took place on 11<sup>th</sup> March. These provided valuable insights into the student experience in lectures and classes and student views on career progression and employability. We reissued the student survey, stressing its value to all students, to increase responses.

Coronavirus interrupted this process at the end of March. A partial move off-campus was followed by a complete transition to online working in the week beginning 16<sup>th</sup> March. Staff were required to stay at home while most students also returned home. Circulating survey questionnaires in lectures and classes became impossible. The following weeks focussed on Covid-19 adjustments in assessment, examinations, teaching delivery, and emergency planning to support the University's Covid-19 response and recovery strategy.

To adapt, we moved our previously planned activities online. Virtual focus groups of 3-4 people investigated issues in each sub-section on a bi-weekly basis, in April-May. Each group's composition followed the issues. A total of 170 students responded to the survey (47.14% F, 51.43% M, 1.43% Non-Binary), less than the first submission that benefitted from nudges in

lectures. The low response to both surveys prompted us to review the responses to our first submission to solidify our proposed agenda for change.

The UoE AS Steering Group, the Social Sciences Faculty Manager and Executive Dean, members of P&C, the University Peer College (colleagues with experience of AS) and two external reviewers (Prof. Sarah Smith (U. Bristol) and Dr. Emiliya Lazarova (UEA)) commented on the draft report. Open comments from students and staff occurred at the end of the process. The final output reflects revisions based on these comments.



### (iii) Plans for the future of the self-assessment team

The Department recognises that achievement of gender equality constitutes a long-term commitment. The SAT will continue to assess progress against AS principles to ensure that they remain embedded in our departmental structures, procedures and decision-making. SAT membership will be reviewed annually. The SAT will implement and update the plan at termly meetings and will report to the Department Meeting and Student Voice committees, where AS will be a standing agenda item. [AP 3.1] This ensures that the entire department, including students, is engaged in AS principles, informed about our progress, and consulted about further issues. Coordination with the leadership group should allow resourcing needs to be incorporated into the yearly planning cycle.

**AP 3.1: Embed SAT (reconstituted as EDI standing committee) into formal structure of department.**

Regular assessment of incoming data on student admissions, student progression, staffing changes, promotion and role assignment, and culture surveys (students and staff) will remain a SAT remit to allow for timely progress monitoring. [AP 3.2] We will also update our EDI webpages with information on developments and achievements and these will be integrated into our recruitment strategies. [AP 2.2]

**AP 3.2: Staff/student surveys conducted annually to measure progress against AP.**



The experience of members of our SAT will contribute to future institutional and departmental AS submissions. One of our co-leads served as a member of the institutional SAT in 2017/18 and we will sustain a high level of involvement at the institutional level. [AP 3.3]

AP 3.3: SAT members (and follow on EDI standing committee) to contribute to Peer College, Institutional submissions and EDI events.

FIGURE 3.3: MEETING KICKING OFF THE ATHENA SWAN PROCESS



FIGURE 3.4: BRIEFING FROM A SUCCESSFUL ATHENA SWAN DEPARTMENT



## SUMMARY OF ACTION POINTS

AP 3.1: Embed SAT (reconstituted as EDI standing committee) into formal structure of department.

AP 3.2: Staff/student surveys conducted annually to measure progress against AP.

AP 3.3: SAT members (and follow on EDI standing committee) to contribute to Peer College, Institutional submissions and EDI events.

Wordcount: 992

## 4. A picture of the department

### A. Student data

Our department has undergone significant expansion and change and so we provide five years of data wherever possible. As comparators we have chosen campus universities of a similar size, location-type, and vintage: East Anglia, Kent, Lancaster, Surrey and Sussex.

#### (i) Numbers of men and women on access or foundation courses

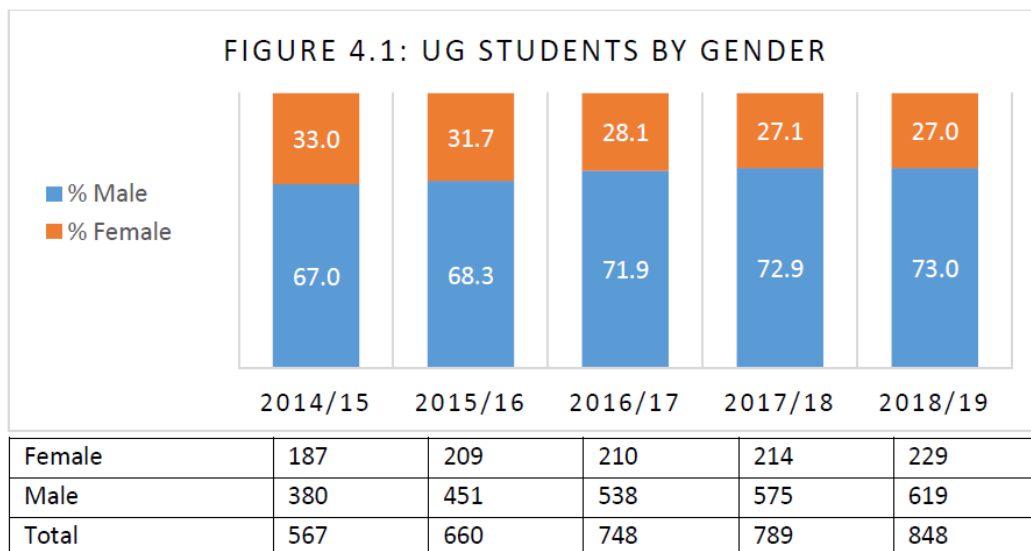
n/a

#### (ii) Numbers of undergraduate students by gender

##### UG student numbers

Over the last five years the number has increased, but the percentage of women has declined, accompanying rapidly increasing overall numbers (Figure 4.1). The percentage now approaches the share of women studying economics at A-Level. Among our comparators the female share has not fallen as fast: 29.4% in 2015/16 to 27.9% in 2017/19. This is a concern; a Women's Committee of the Royal Economic Society report shows that the image of economics among A-Level students is restricted to finance/banking, omitting the richer range of public policy, behavioural, and management areas that comprise current work. [AP 4.1]

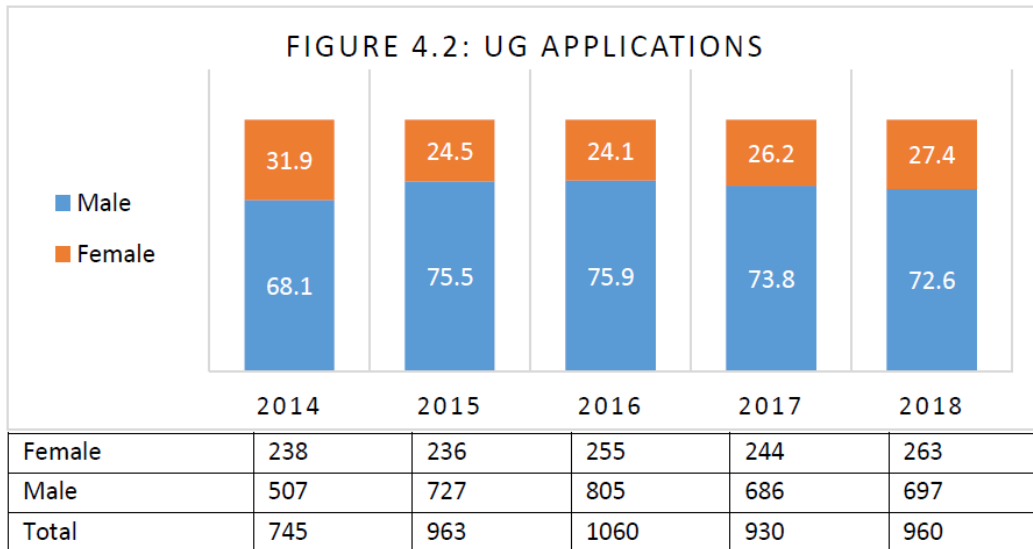




**AP 4.1: Encourage more female participation in Economics by targeted outreach activities at sixth forms.**

In 2017/18 there was only a marginally larger share of women in the BA Economics track (27.7%) than in the BSc, which is more technical (25.8%). In the more specialist degrees, the shares are significantly higher: 35.5% and 31.5% in BA and BSc respectively. We have introduced innovative new degrees, such as Economics with Psychology, with female uptake growing at well over 200% per year, suggesting that further diversification could broaden our appeal to women, although the numbers are small, and the female shares are variable. Focus groups suggest that women particularly value certifications more than specific titles, suggesting a second avenue for increasing female interest. **[AP 4.2]**

**AP 4.2: Actively investigate introducing new modules that provide waivers for professional examinations and titles that diversify our programme.**



The share of women undergraduates (averaging 29%, Figure 4.1) broadly reflects that among applicants (averaging 26.5%, Figure 4.2). It also reflects the population of the local region (East London and Essex) from which we recruit a large proportion of our home students. In that light we have reviewed our recruitment material, in coordination with central admissions, to ensure that women are prominently represented. We have sent female student ambassadors to local schools to encourage more women to apply and we will renew this campaign. [AP 4.1] But the University’s strategy of rapid expansion over the last five years has meant continued reliance on clearing, which leaves little scope for selective targeting. In the last four years more than a third of entrants came through clearing and this is reflected in the high ratio of offers to applications (Figure 4.3).

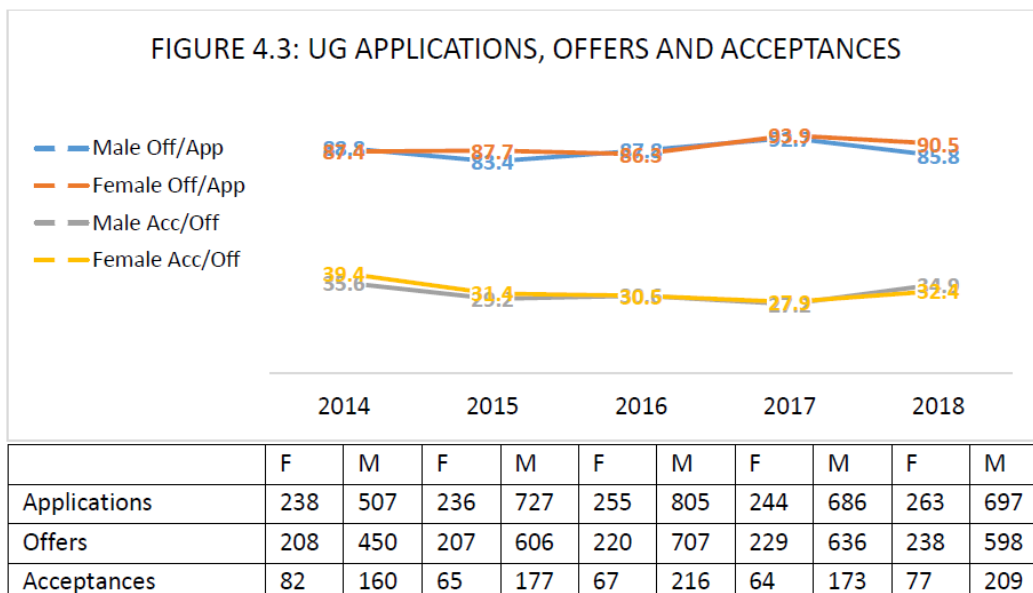
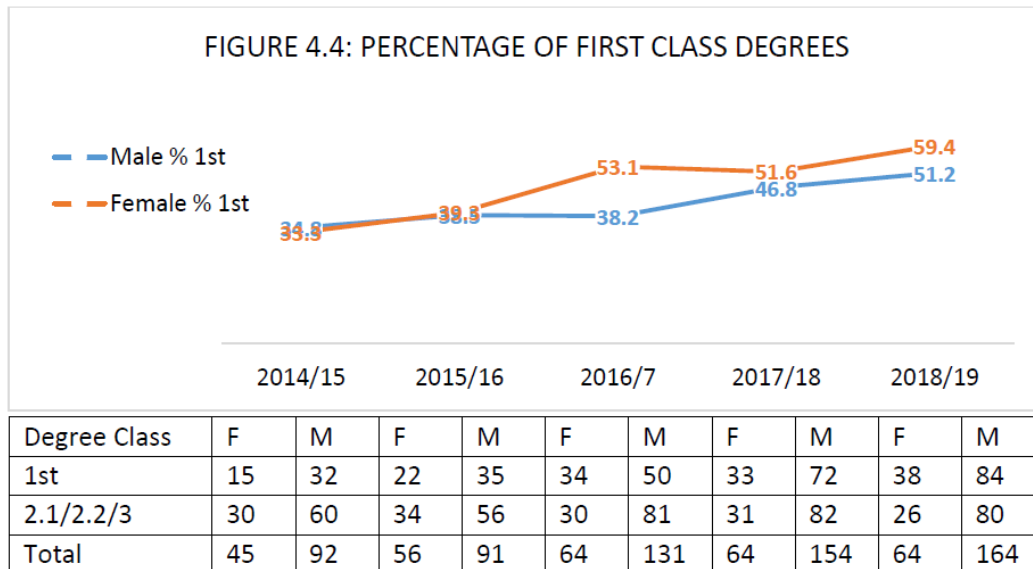


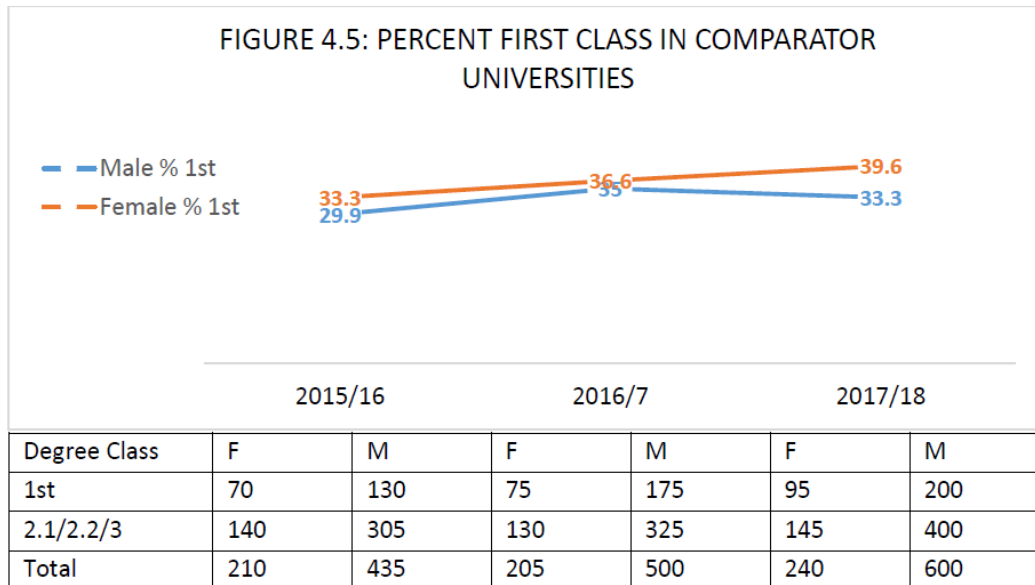
Figure 4.3 also shows that the conversion rate of offers is similar for women and men (averaging 32.2%). We have put more resources into open days/applicant days and have strengthened female representation in the team that meets the applicants and, based upon focus group feedback, we will highlight the choice of having a female tutor. [AP 4.3] Applicant day interviews

indicate that the importance of female leadership is not well anticipated by entering students compared to career and academic programme information and support.

**AP 4.3: Communicate the importance of female role models for the purpose of improving gender balance in student recruitment.**



Comparing the shares of first-class degrees in 2014/15 to 2018/19, women’s share has increased by 70% overall to 59.4% whereas men’s share has increased by 51.9% overall to 51.2% (Figure 4.4). Contributory factors include an upgrade in student support, including the introduction of a personal tutor system and extensive voluntary support activities from basic skills to targeted module support. The individually supervised (whole year) final year research project now includes more regular meetings and closer monitoring of progress with clear milestones throughout the year. This has increased the proportion of firsts for both genders, giving women a 16% advantage (59.4%/51.2%) in the most recent year. In our comparator group the overall level and rate of increase is lower but the female advantage persists at 18.9% (39.6%/33.3%, Figure 4.5).

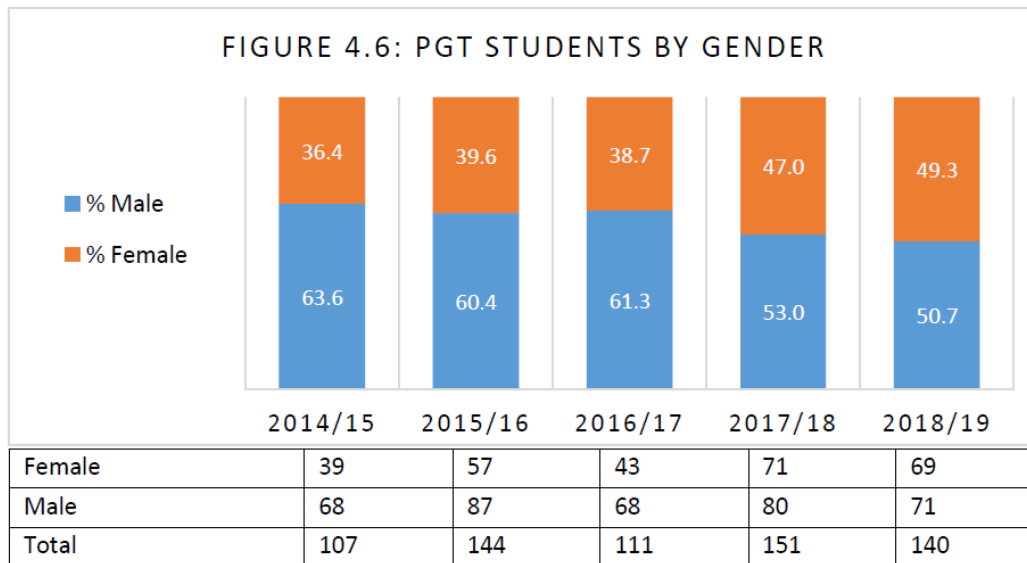


In 2016/17 95% of women and 75% of men were in employment (after six months) or further study. Our one-year in-degree work placement scheme is an important element. In 2018/19, women comprised 30.8% of the placements (versus 27% in the UG degree), showing no gender bias. Our compulsory employability skills training programme lasts throughout the three years of study but is poorly attended. We will review the inclusivity of this scheme to improve attendance of women. [\[AP 4.4\]](#)

**AP 4.4: Review the employability module with a view to being more valuable 4.4 to women.**

**(iii) Numbers on postgraduate taught degrees by gender**

The number on PGT degrees has grown and the proportion of women has increased to almost half (Figure 4.6). In the most recent year of data, our comparator group achieved a similar average of 48.7%. New degrees and international partnerships have been introduced in order to increase both numbers and diversity. The proportion of BAME students is also higher than at UG level (75.7 percent in 2018/19 compared with 63.2% for undergraduates), which sets us apart. In order to accommodate those with work/family commitments we now offer the option of part-time study for all our master’s degrees. So far, there have been ten part-time students, four of whom were women.



As of 2018/19 there is strong female representation in our new interdisciplinary and more 'practically-oriented' MSc in Behavioural Economics (60%) as well as MSc's involving finance (59%) and there is scope for further development. [AP 4.5]

**AP 4.5: Diversify MA/MSc to be more inclusive of women and other groups.**

The number of PGT applications has increased since 2015 and so has the share of women (increasing from 38.1% in 2015 to 42.1% in 2019, Figure 4.7). The offer/application rate is slightly higher among women, but the overall acceptance/offer rate is low (Figure 4.8). Because PGT applicants have less opportunity to visit in person we rely more on our publicity material and response to enquiries. Targeted marketing to women in 2017 increased applications in that year (Figure 4.7).

Women and men may not react to the delay in offers in the same way if they systematically differ in alternatives or risk aversion (Booth et al., 2014). This suggests investigating whether the higher delay in issuing offers at Essex compared to other institutions may affect both student numbers and diversity in our programme. [AP 4.6] [AP 4.7]

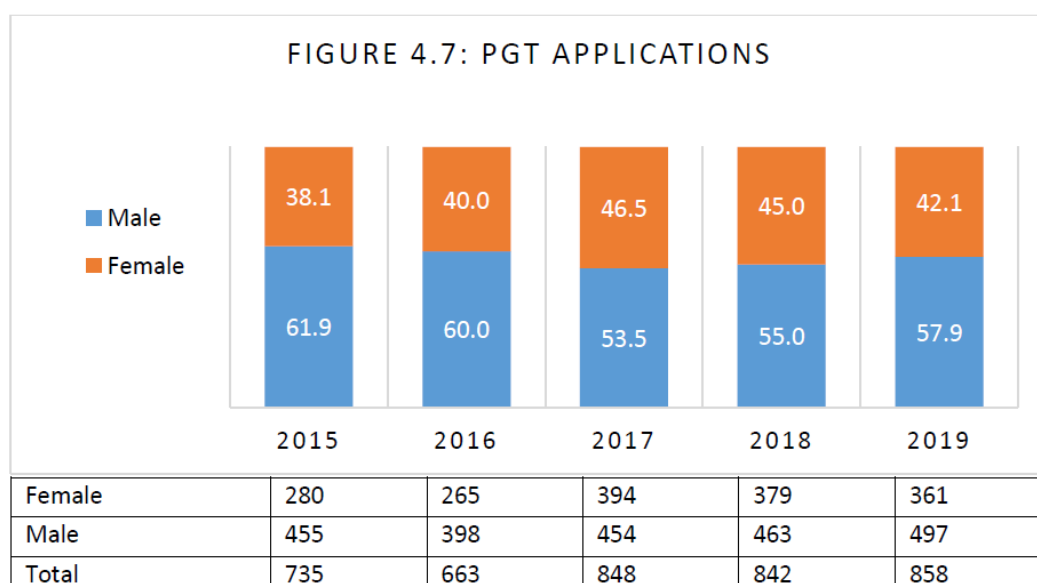
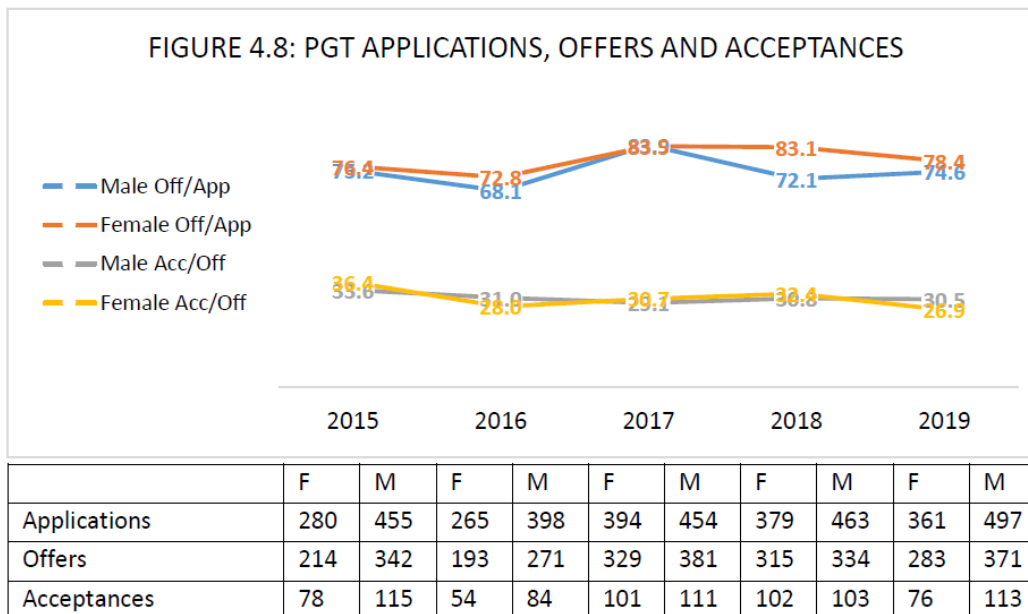


FIGURE 4.8: PGT APPLICATIONS, OFFERS AND ACCEPTANCES

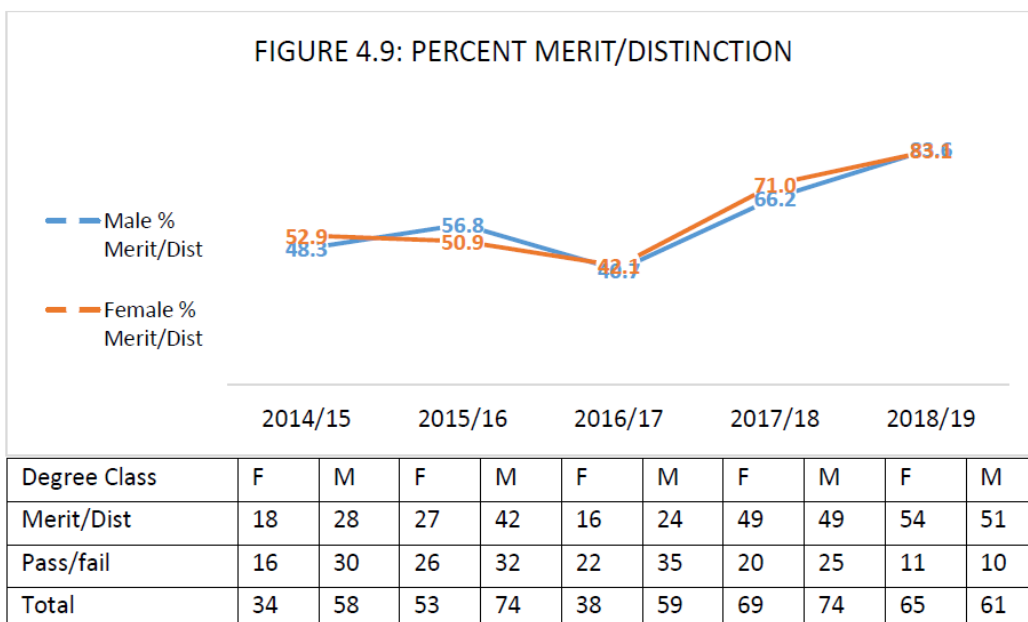


AP 4.6: Increase diversity content in the marketing of master's programmes.

AP 4.7: Reduce time needed to produce conditional PGT offers by streamlining the process.

The proportion of merits and distinctions has increased steeply and similarly for men and women (Figure 4.9) and this needs to be kept under review. [AP 4.8]

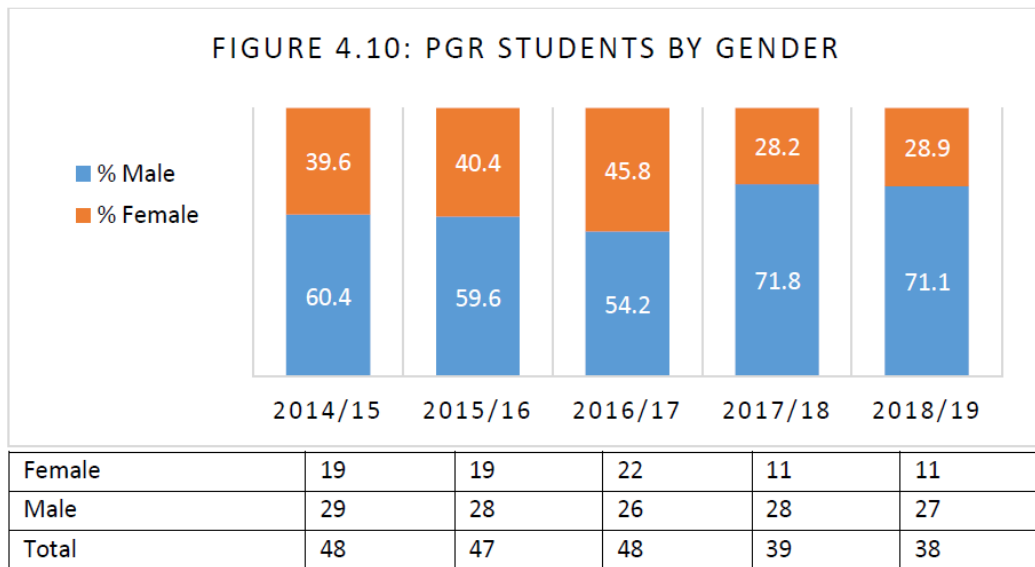
FIGURE 4.9: PERCENT MERIT/DISTINCTION



AP 4.8: Monitor the increasing proportion of good degrees for both gender and standards issues.

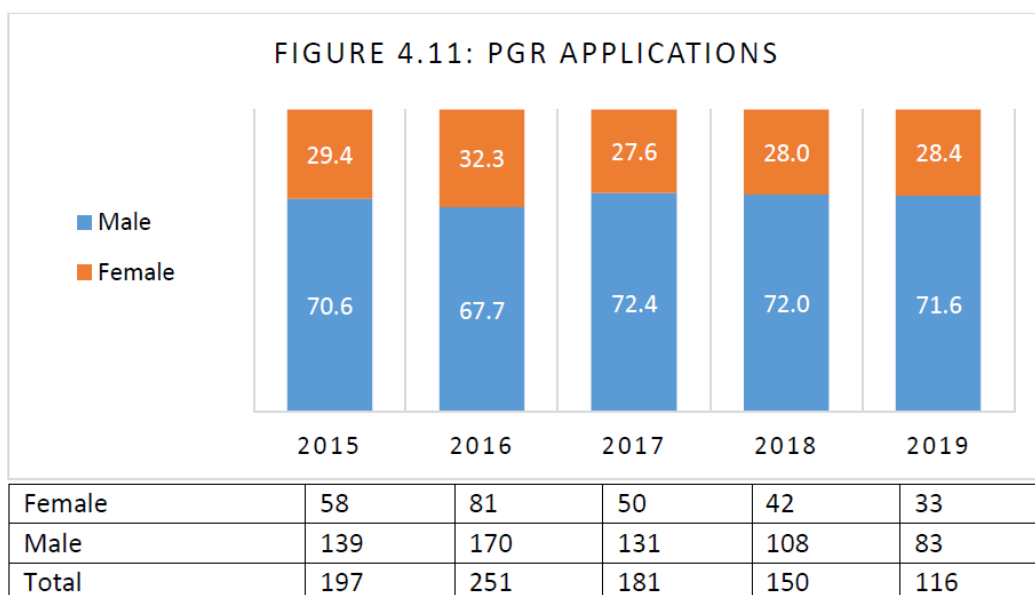
**(iv) Numbers of men and women on postgraduate research degrees**

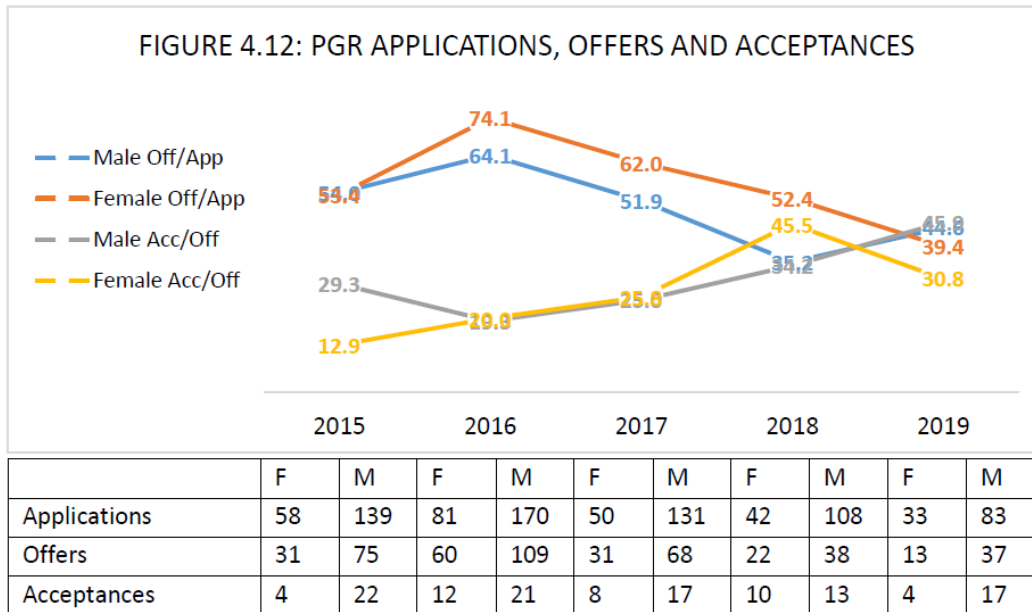
The number of PGR students has declined in recent years, as has the proportion of women (Figure 4.10), currently lower than our comparator group at 40.1%. Focus group feedback attributes this to: (a) inclusion of the MRes as the first year of what is now, for most applicants, a four-year programme, (b) cuts in funding for international students, (c) the elimination of a GTA contract as part of the funding offer, and (d) tighter monitoring to ensure timely completion.



The applications to our PGR programme have decreased markedly as well (Figures 4.11, 4.12). To increase the female percentage, focus groups of potential applicants (at PGT) suggest targeted scholarships especially for the MRes year as a ‘bridge’ to funding for the PhD years, explaining the effect of the targeted funding in 2016/17. [\[AP 4.9\]](#)

**AP 4.9: Actively work with the University to create targeted funding opportunities, specifically for students on the MRes.**

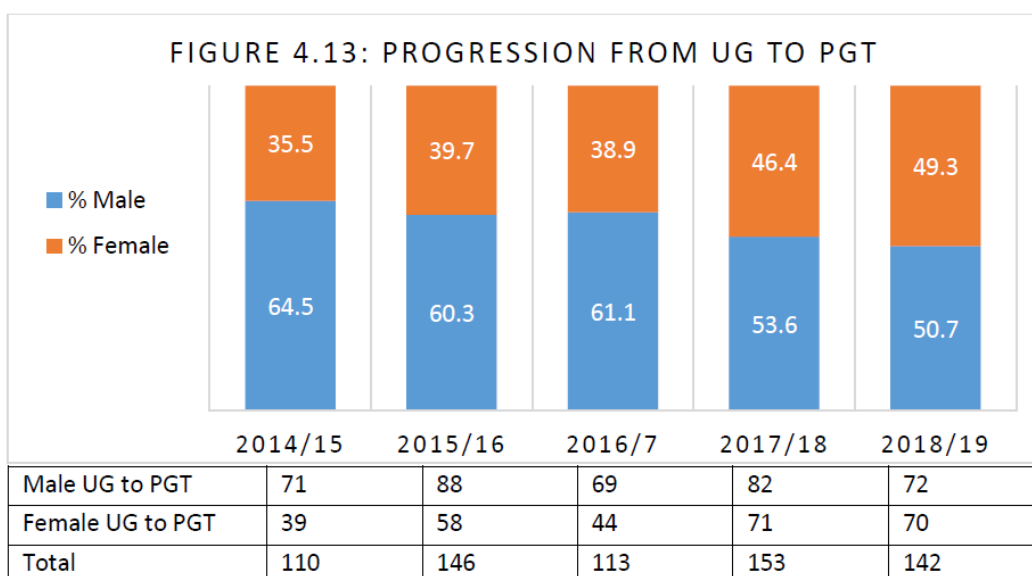




Over the last five years ten students either withdrew, transferred or failed to progress; three were women, two of whom transferred to better match their evolving research. All the students who completed did so within the five-year target and, of those graduating, 58 percent of both men and women went into academic posts.

**(v) Progression pipeline between undergraduate and postgraduate student levels**

Over the last five years 42% of undergraduates progressing were women (Figure 4.13), which is higher than the undergraduate female population overall. We encourage undergraduates to consider postgraduate study but not specifically at Essex, as this may not be the best personal or academic match for them. Of the minority who stayed, 40% were women. Student feedback suggests that PGT government loans, Essex discounts for high marks, the Essex Women of the Future PGT Fellowship, lower entry tariffs, and a wide choice of programmes have been important to continued study.



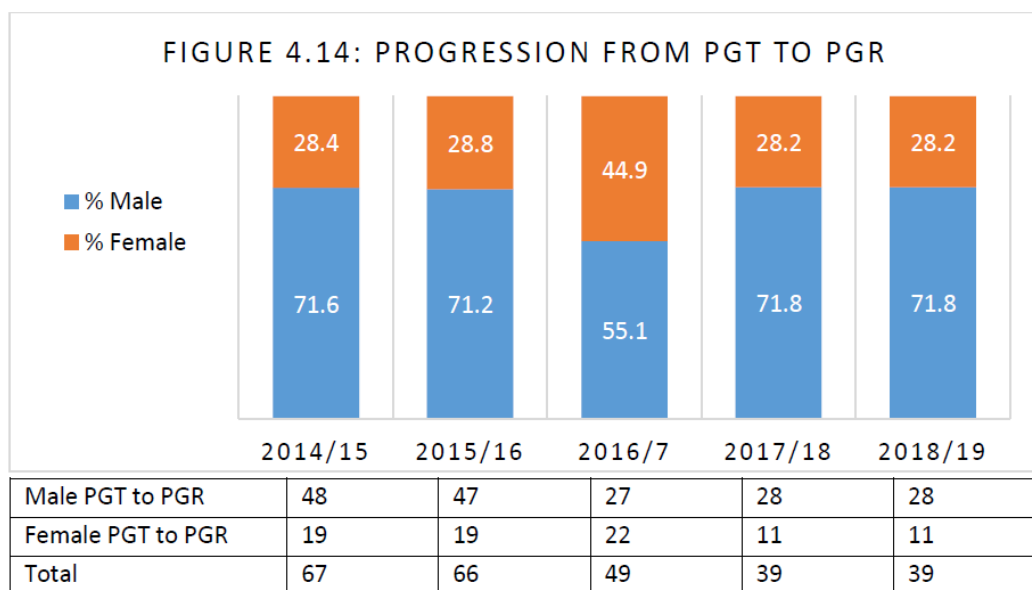


We will provide information sessions about our PGT programmes, about the entry tariff and about fee discounts for high marks. [AP 4.10]

**AP 4.10: Actively promote PGT programmes to undergraduate students.**

Of the 260 PGT students who continued to PGR study most did so at another university and less than a third were women (Figure 4.14). We do not explicitly promote continuing at Essex, but of the nine who did continue with us four were women. [AP 4.11] Funding is important and one who received a fellowship for her MRes year and then transitioned to ESRC support described the funding as ‘transformational’. [AP 4.9]

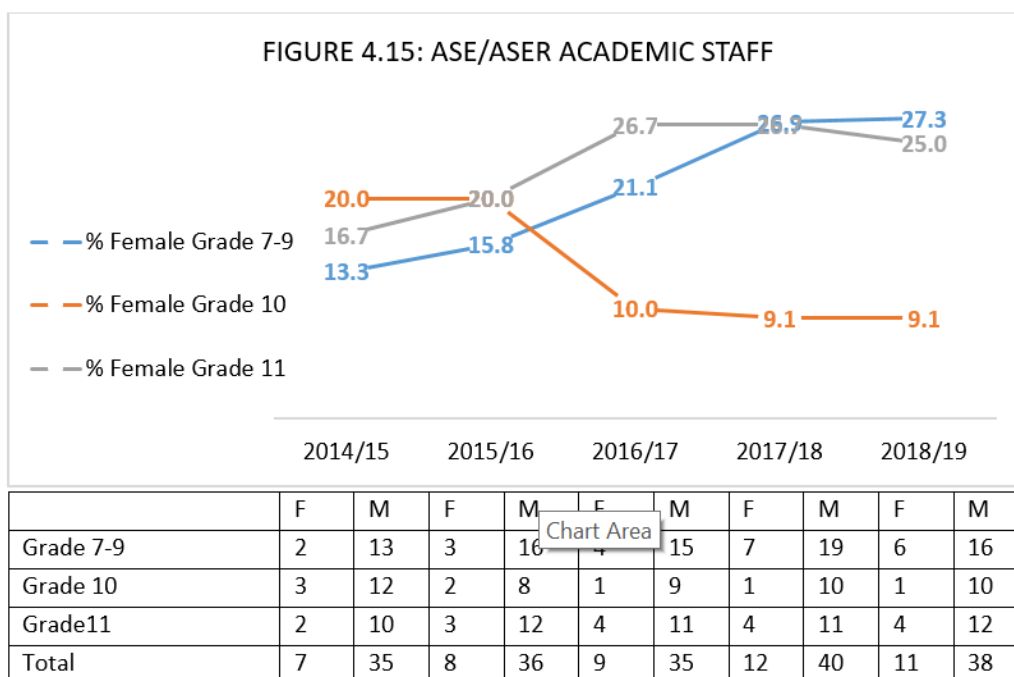
**AP 4.11: Organise information meetings for our PGT students to strengthen the gender balance of our pipeline to PGR.**



## B. Academic and research staff data

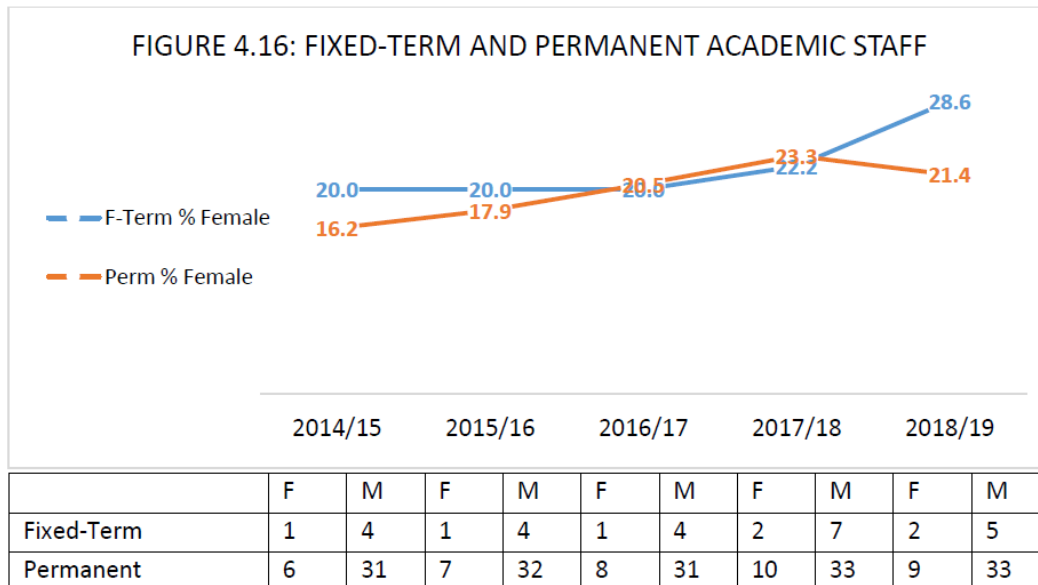
### (i) Academic staff by grade, contract function and gender

Fixed term academic staff in economics are all at grades 7-9. From 2014/15 to 2018/19 academic staff (grades 7 to 11) increased from 42 to 49 and the number of women from 7 to 11 (Figure 4.15). The number of women professors has increased over five years from 2 (16.7%) to 4 (25%) and lecturers from 2 (13.1%) to 6 (27.3%), but SL/Rs have declined from 3 (20%) to 1 (9.1%). This “hollowing out” at the middle grade is partly because female lecturers are relatively new while those more established have been promoted. Comparator universities in 2017/18 exhibited a similar share of women at grade 9 (22%), a higher share at grade 10 (23%) and a lower share at grade 11 (7%).



### (ii) Academic and research staff on permanent, fixed term and zero-hour contracts by gender

We have no zero-hour contracts. Fixed-term staff at all grades have increased from 5 to 7, two of whom (28%) are women (Figure 4.16). All are at grade 7-9 and have been appointed to replace teaching buyouts or fill shortfalls in permanent posts. As part of the institutional AS Bronze action plan, the University is reducing fixed term contracts. Grant successes, resignations and expansion have made it difficult for economics to maintain our student/staff ratio without fixed-term appointments. In recent years all but two have served as a post-doctoral steppingstone for new PhDs or as a bridge to permanent posts for those returning to the workforce (often part-time).



To achieve these outcomes, we integrate them into the academic life of the department, provide a special job market conference, and ensure that as many as possible gain Fellowship of the Higher Education Academy. While we provide mentoring and peer review of teaching there is scope for further support in planning for the job market. [AP 4.12]

**AP 4.12: Establish a forward-looking PDR meeting near the end of the FTC.**

**(iii) Academic leavers by grade and gender and full/part-time status**

The HoD conducts an informal exit interview to solicit department-level feedback. This indicates that all those departing did so for higher paying jobs or promotion at universities of similar research quality but with a salary profile that Essex does not offer or a promotion threshold with a lower administrative contribution. Female departures are a concern as they are difficult to replace, especially at the senior level.

The University’s recently updated Employee Experience Questionnaire, which is sent to departing members of staff, invites the individual to have a one-to-one interview with P&C. Building on that, the University will introduce a standardised Leaver’s Checklist for departmental use. The Department will ensure that managers are aware of this list while encouraging leavers to complete the Employee Experience Questionnaire in order to improve our statistical analysis to assist retention. [AP 4.13]

**AP 4.13: Ensure that departing staff members complete the standard Leaver’s Checklist.**

FIGURE 4.17: FIXED TERM AND PERMANENT STAFF DISCUSSION POST-COVID-19



FIGURE 4.18: PHD SUPERVISION POST-COVID-19



## SUMMARY OF ACTION POINTS

AP 4.1: Encourage more female participation in Economics by targeted outreach activities at sixth forms.

AP 4.2: Actively investigate introducing new modules that provide waivers for professional examinations and titles that diversify our programme.

AP 4.3: Communicate the importance of female role models for the purpose of improving gender balance in student recruitment.

AP 4.4: Review the employability module with a view to being more valuable to women.

AP 4.5: Diversify MA/MSc to be more inclusive of women and other groups.

AP 4.6: Increase diversity content in the marketing of master's programmes.

AP 4.7: Reduce time needed to produce conditional PGT offers by streamlining the process.

AP 4.8: Monitor the increasing proportion of good degrees for both gender and standards issues.

AP 4.9: Actively work with the University to create targeted funding opportunities, specifically for students on the MRes.

AP 4.10: Actively promote PGT programmes to undergraduate students.

AP 4.11: Organise information meetings for our PGT students to strengthen the gender balance of our pipeline to PGR.

AP 4.12: Establish a forward-looking PDR meeting near the end of the FTC.

AP 4.13: Ensure that departing staff members complete the standard Leaver's Checklist.

Wordcount: 1874 words

# 5. Supporting and advancing women's careers

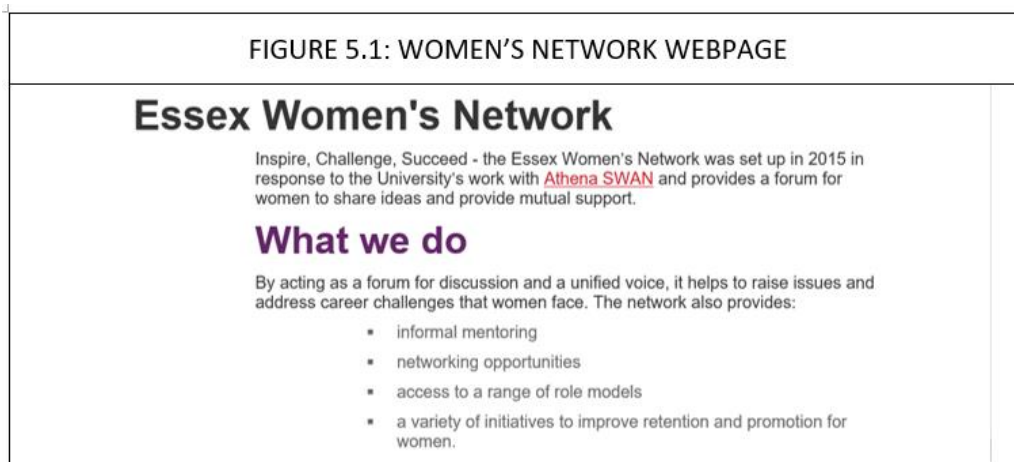
## A. Key career transition points: academic staff

### (i) Recruitment

The central resourcing team provides specialist guidance on the recruitment and selection process. All advertisements use templates provided by P&C, who check for gender-biased wording. We add departmental researcher expertise in gender-bias to double-check. All jobs are advertised on multiple websites to reach a global audience.

University templates and job descriptions for each academic pathway (ASER, ASE and ASR) reflect remuneration and duties, but also align with future permanency and promotion requirements. The job packs employ consistent language on the responsibilities for education, research and leadership/citizenship. They also highlight support for staff to maintain a healthy work/life balance, including our flexible working policy and career break scheme. Our EDI staff networks feature prominently: Essex Women's Network, Parents' Network and Access Forum and our national accreditations including AS and Stonewall Top 100 Employer.

Over the years for which we have comparable data, the female share of applicants is 7% at professorial level, 28% at SL/R, and 35% for fixed-term lectureships. We will attempt to attract more female applicants by further stressing the department's commitment to EDI and highlighting our strength in gender-based research. **[AP 5.1]**



**AP 5.1: Increase the visibility of our commitment to EDI in staff recruitment materials.**

Departmental shortlisting panels include at least two women and are advised by pairs of subject specialists who read applicant portfolios. Training in EDI, including unconscious bias, is required for panel members. [AP 5.2] Interview panels are chaired by the ED or the Vice Chancellor and include at least two female members plus an external. This visible diversity has been a draw for recent recruits:

*“Diversity is quite important, for myself, when I applied, because I want to be part of the team, not feeling excluded. I was interviewed by two female Essex staff on the job market. I was positively impressed because in other job market interviews, I had at most one female staff among other male staff, even those from Scandinavian universities.”* - probationary lecturer (female).

**AP 5.2: Monitor Essential Training as part of the Annual Review and increase uptake to 95%.**

**FIGURE 5.2: SUMMARY FROM ESSENTIAL TRAINING BOOKLET**

ESSENTIAL TRAINING	EMPLOYEE ROLE			
	ALL EMPLOYEES	REPORTING MANAGERS	STRATEGIC/FUTURE LEADERS PARTICIPANT	MEMBER OF COUNCIL/USG
COMPUTER SAFETY ESSENTIALS (OF A COMPUTER USER)	✓	✓	✓	✓
EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ESSENTIALS	✓	✓	✓	✓
FINANCIAL REGULATIONS ESSENTIALS	✓	✓	✓	✓
FIRE SAFETY ESSENTIALS	✓	✓	✓	✓
HEALTH AND SAFETY ESSENTIALS	✓	✓	✓	✓
INFORMATION SECURITY ESSENTIALS	✓	✓	✓	✓
SAFEGUARDING ESSENTIALS	✓	✓	✓	✓
UNCONSCIOUS BIAS	✓	✓	✓	✓
COACHING ESSENTIALS FOR MANAGERS		✓		
DO YOU MANAGE THE ESSEX WAY?		✓	✓	
MANAGING DIVERSITY ESSENTIALS		✓	✓	
MANAGING HEALTH AND SAFETY ESSENTIALS		✓	✓	
RECRUITMENT AND SELECTION ESSENTIALS		✓	✓	
HEALTH AND SAFETY LEADERSHIP TRAINING				✓
CHANNEL AWARENESS TRAINING				✓

Most shortlisted candidates receive offers, but the conversion rate among women is 28.6% compared with 34.5% for men (Figure 5.3). Follow-up with those who declined indicates that, despite the presence of female role models and a significant diversity among staff, concerns about salary, institutional prestige and location overcame the positive features offered by Essex. Accommodation of dual careers including flexible working, flexible start date, and on occasion, a second job in the local area, have been positive reasons to join. 24% of academic staff and 40% of female academic staff have a spouse employed by the University.



FIGURE 5.3: APPLICATIONS AND HIRING									
	2016/17		2017/18		2018/19		Three-year total		
	F	M	F	M	F	M		F	M
Fixed-term Lecturers									
Applications	13	22	12	33	23	35	Ratios (percent)		
Shortlisted	2	1	2	4	13	17	S-list/Apps	35.4	24.4
Hired	1	1	1	3	6	5	Hired/S-list	47.1	40.9
Permanent Lecturer/Senior Lecturer/Reader									
Applications	113	291	83	198	70	190	Ratios (percent)		
Shortlisted	6	14	5	7	3	8	S-list/Apps	5.3	4.3
Hired	2	4	0	3	2	3	Hired/S-list	28.6	34.5
Professor									
Applications			1	13	1	14	Ratios (percent)		
Shortlisted			0	1	0	2	S-list/Apps		11.1
Hired			0	0	0	1	Hired/S-list		33.3

Feedback from professorial applicants indicates that they typically are drawn by some past connection with the department. [\[AP 5.3\]](#)

Fixed-term staff are appointed to cover buyout and permanent hiring shortfalls and are for the period of required cover. The recruitment process is, however, the same.

**AP 5.3: Increase contact with potential female candidates for professorial positions via seminars/conferences and encourage members of the department to publicise our vacancies.**

## (ii) Induction

All new employees undergo a formal and informal induction process. Formal induction is managed locally but follows central guidance, “Welcome to Essex”, accessible on Moodle. This along with their welcome pack, includes all essential training requirements (e.g. health and safety, EDI), induction checklist, staff handbook, other policies and support mechanisms, and a range of information to help the staff member integrate. 52 new appointments in economics have completed this process since it was established in 2012.

All new departmental staff receive information in advance on teaching and administrative allocation and overall workload, which (for all staff) resides in a visible Moodle archive. A welcome meeting covers issues particular to the department and social or informal functions. This is supported with extensive informal contacts, coordinated by those whom the new staff member knows (the former members of the hiring committee). New staff are paired with a mentor, usually a senior staff member with cognate research interests, who provides individual-specific advice. Some challenges remain, however, in coordinating our induction events and providing equal quality for mid-year starters. [\[AP 5.4\]](#)

**AP 5.4: Provide improved guidance at induction.**

The department holds a “Rentrée Workshop” at the beginning of each academic year at which newcomers are encouraged to showcase their work in a relaxed atmosphere followed by a welcome dinner. This formal/informal setting has proven successful at integrating colleagues



quickly into productive joint working, including grant applications, and developing a supportive culture. Those starting in January must wait for this benefit, however. [AP 5.4]

*“I found it quite easy to approach colleagues for any questions I had... [A] formally assigned mentor [makes little] difference, because for different questions I might want to turn to different people. What might have been better would be some kind of 'formal' induction [in January as well as in October] about who of the support staff does what, and about certain things that are expected of us...[T]he department does things differently.”* – January start new hire moving to Essex from abroad (male).

*“I could rely on many colleagues for support on many matters concerning department life.... Coming from outside the UK I was not familiar enough with various peculiarities of UK university education and had to learn this on the way...”* - New hire at Essex (non-native speaker, female)

### (iii) Promotion

Following the Institutional AS Bronze award, the University revised the promotion criteria in 2013/14 to be explicit on how the impact of career breaks and the full range of activities (including administrative, outreach and pastoral activities) are now considered in promotion. Promotion to the next academic level is purely based on evidence of merit and not dependent on there being a vacancy. The University's P&C section and the UoE Women's Network run a series of events encouraging and helping women to apply for promotion.

Departmental workload assignment requires the full set of activities including education, research and leadership to be reviewed and evaluated annually by the HoD and DHoD. The workload model is reviewed with applicants during the job market and our survey indicates a general feeling that this is transparent (80% agreement for women; 95% agreement for men). Research activity is reported centrally; outputs are evaluated for the REF by the Research Committee in consultation with the REO. Feedback is provided by a member of the leadership group or via the mentor on the prospects for promotion, but individuals are free to self-nominate (and are supported in doing so). Advice on the procedure, the presentation, and coping with a negative decision, is all part of this process. If a clear need for further skills is identified, advice is given on how to proceed.

We have reviewed different pathways to fulfilling the promotion criteria at different levels and ensured that they are not gendered statistically. Survey responses support this, with more than 85% approval. Considering our own research showing teaching evaluations to be gender-biased, the department recognises a wide set of teaching metrics. From our staff survey more than 85% agree that this has been successful.

*“I like the current system...We all have input in the process and the applicant will be reassured that the department is behind him/her.”* - member of staff (female).

An experienced senior member of staff and the Staffing Director review and give detailed advice on each candidate's application for promotion/increments, including content and presentation. Membership of the departmental staffing committee carries workload points and its director has undertaken both unconscious bias and EDI training. All Senior staff at or above the grade applied for then receive the application and discuss it at a meeting. [AP 5.2] This provides additional feedback for improvements in the application and forms the basis of the department's recommendation, which the candidate receives. Both parts of the application go to the ED for further feedback and, if approved, are then presented to ASC for a final decision. Unsuccessful

applicants receive feedback on how to improve their application to resubmit next year with support from the department.

Since the new system was introduced in 2013/14 the department's recommendations have been positive in all but one case with no evidence of gender bias. Still, the success rate is 50% for women and marginally higher for men at 57% (Figure 5.4). Those who were rejected did not find the feedback from ASC helpful or fair. Three appealed, and two of these were upheld. [AP 5.5] Feedback on those decisions suggests no gender bias.

FIGURE 5.4: PROMOTION APPLICATIONS (SUCCESSFUL IN BRACKETS)										
	2014/15		2015/16		2016/17		2017/18		2018/19	
Seeking	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M
Grade 9						1 (1)				
Grade 10R				1 (0)				1 (1)		1 (0)
Grade 10 SL/SRF	1 (0)	1 (0)		3 (1)		1 (0)		1 (1)	1 (1)	
Grade 11	2 (1)	3 (3)	1 (1)					1 (1)	1 (0)	
Note: This includes one successful Grade 11 female part time applicant in 2014/15										

Following rejections after the University's redefinition of the criteria for promotion to professor, our departmental process was revised to ensure conformity. Nevertheless, some individuals search for opportunities elsewhere rather than spend time and effort applying for promotions that do not match outside salaries.

*"I think we have to be clear that if the promotion (or increment) was turned down...we show the applicant that we want to fully understand with the university why this happened and how to achieve the outcome ASAP."* – female member of staff

*"I felt low morale in our senior staff (particularly junior professors/readers) that the only way they can get rewarded in a fair way for their research is by leaving. This is not due to rent seeking, but feeling the university was not treating them fairly given the large amount of money professors from outside get offered when arriving to Essex"* – female member of staff.

**AP 5.5: Improve the support package for unsuccessful promotion candidates.**

#### **(iv) Department submissions to the Research Excellence Framework (REF)**

The department ranked fifth in economics in 2014. We submitted selectively as part of the University's strategy to maximise our rating. Two women and two men were not submitted in 2014 and they were sent letters explaining that this was for strategic reasons and not a reflection on their overall contribution.

For 2021 all ASER staff must be submitted and the University has required each to have three outputs rated at 3\* or above, with interim requirements of two by 2016. All women met the interim target although two men did not. A new University Performance Improvement Procedure (PIP), emphasising mentoring and resource provision, supported by Occupational Health, was applied to those who missed the target. Both (men) recovered but found the PIP stressful. [AP 5.6]

**AP 5.6: Revise and implement improved departmental support for PIP.**

## b. Career development: academic staff

### (i) Training

All staff are expected to complete essential online training modules including EDI. As this has not been reported effectively, departmental completion is low at 47% for all courses with slightly higher rates of 68% for EDI training completion and 51% for Unconscious Bias training. Line managers are expected to complete further modules in Coaching Skills, Managing Diversity, Managing Health and Safety and Recruitment and Selection (which also covers EDI and Unconscious Bias). Recruitment and Selection training is mandatory for members of recruitment panels. [AP 5.2]

**AP 5.2: Monitor Essential Training as part of annual review and increase uptake to 95%.**

Other members of staff must complete essential training. Take-up is lower for senior professors and fixed term teachers, the latter partly due to poor communication. [AP 5.2] Among other members of staff there is no gender disparity. Some staff are unaware that all training lapses after three years, some are unaware of what is required and what is optional, but with better management data a targeted reminder should improve this.

New members of staff grade 9 and above are expected to qualify as Fellows of the Higher Education Academy (now required for permanency) and professors as Senior Fellows (alternatively, PG CHEP). Qualification is required for promotion and counts for increments. Among permanent staff at grade 9 or above we have: 13 FHEA (4F, 9M), 7 SFHEA (3F, 4M); 5 overseas/other qualifications (1F, 4M) and 9 pending and postponed due to Covid-19. Starting GTAs who obtain Associate Fellowship receive a pay increment.

Academic and professional staff are nominated by the HoD to undertake the University's Future Leaders programme or the Strategic Leaders programme, with all Senior Lecturers and Readers taking Future Leaders and anyone who wishes to be promoted to Professor taking Strategic Leaders. These are a pathway to senior roles and all eligible staff, especially women, are encouraged to complete this training.

While the department encourages women to participate in the in-house Aurora and Chrysalis programmes, none have taken this up. Focus group discussions indicate that we need to raise their awareness, as women focus scarce time on subject-related skills and research instead. [AP 5.7]

**AP 5.7: Improve visibility of leadership programmes for women (i.e. Chrysalis and Aurora).**

Department members rely strongly on advice, mentoring and 'apprenticeship' to learn roles and procedures. They serve as deputies for at least a year before taking on full leadership roles. This allows "practice", not just "policy" to transfer by co-working and has proven highly successful. It also is a resilient structure accommodating absence for caring, or other responsibilities, as a "double" is available where needed.

Fixed-term training is intense, involving peer review, job market preparation, letter writing, and mentorship as the department aims to continue its past record of success at moving such people on to high quality permanent posts. Our blended learning taskforce has adapted these procedures to online versions for the Covid-19 period. [AP 5.8]

**AP 5.8: Increase visibility of the departmental training offer for recruitment purposes.**

## (ii) Appraisal/development review

All members of staff must submit research progress reports in January each year, which are centrally reviewed by the REO. The HoD and Staffing Director review PDRs with feedback given by the end of January or early February and promotion or increment applications following where warranted. The deputy HoD supports this process and serves as supervisor and mentor for fixed term lecturers, who are on a shorter cycle, and those under a PIP. Probationers discuss their progress with their supervisor in the context of their probationary agreement. This process feeds into workloads, which are adjusted to facilitate meeting the targets for development. Work-life balance is addressed via our hours-based workload model combined with attention to workflow and restrictions of meetings to core hours [AP 5.21; AP 5.23].

Staff of all genders generally find that they are treated on their merits regardless of gender (Q 2, Figure 5.5), at 80% supportive for women and 90% for men. Opportunities are well-provided (Q3, Figure 5.5: 100% F 95% M agree), but the overall career progression is not well discussed at appraisal (Q1, Figure 5.5: 60%F, 67%M). This may be related to professorial staff's view that the formal process is too heavy for years without promotion or increment aspirations and so usually prefer lighter touch appraisals. The latter suggests that a modified appraisal design might achieve better engagement. [AP 5.9] The more troubling responses to Q7, Q9, and Q10 will be discussed thoroughly below.

The University is implementing a new approach to PDR which allows continuous tracking of objectives and progress as well as timely feedback throughout the year. This process involves regular check-ins, tracking progress, conversations within the different career stages and support for individual ownership and reflection, and appraisal training.

FIGURE 5.5: STAFF SURVEY (PERCENT AGREE OR STRONGLY AGREE)		
Statement:	F	M
1 My career progression is always usefully discussed in my appraisal.	60	67
2 In the Department of Economics, staff are treated on their merits irrespective of their gender.	80	90
3 I am encouraged and given opportunities to participate in influential committees either inside or outside the department.	100	95
4 The workload allocation in the Department is fair and transparent.	80	95
5 I am recognised for my contributions and achievements for teaching, administrative / non-academic tasks.	80	81
6 The Department has a good culture around flexible working.	100	90
7 The Department of Economics makes it clear that unsupportive language and behaviour are not acceptable.	60	90
8 Work related social activities in the Department of Economics are welcoming to both women and men.	100	90
9 During my time in the Department of Economics, I have experienced a situation(s) where I have felt uncomfortable because of my gender.	40	14
10 I am confident that my Head of Department would deal effectively with any complaints about harassment, bullying or offensive behaviour.	60	95
11 New staff are informed of the University's family friendly policies (e.g. flexible working, maternity/paternity leave) during the induction process.	80	76
12 The Department of Economics allows my views to be heard.	100	95
Number of respondents	5	21

**AP 5.9: Streamline PDR process in line with University revisions.**

### **(iii) Support given to academic staff for career progression**

Probationary staff receive a lighter than average workload to allow for moving adjustments, new teaching preparation, and training while continuing with their research. They are supported by termly (often more frequent) meetings with a mentor with whom an academic probationary agreement is developed and in which development needs are a priority. Probationers are integrated into a research cluster, which provides informal seminar opportunities, comments on their research papers, advice on grant applications, and preferential funding. Other new members of staff receive similar support, including fixed termers.

Probationers can select a female or male mentor, who is normally an experienced academic undertaking cognate research. All but one female probationers have selected a female mentor. All probationers report having developed a rapport with their mentor; no-one has requested to change. At the same time, feedback indicates that some mentors are more proactive than others. [AP 5.2] Overall, the system works well, and all probationers have achieved permanency in three years, a few earlier.

*“I appreciate having [a female] mentor... she gave me advice from the “gender perspective” which I hadn’t considered. I think it’s helpful to have people who are aware of potential issues and even actively researching them. I think we can highlight this more...”* – probationer (female)

For early career researchers the REO provides a range of activities relating to all aspects of a research career. Take-up is high. The University’s Network for Early Career Researchers offers sessions on career development and opportunities to network but there has been no take-up. Feedback suggests that, with limited time, subject-specific mentoring and networking, including incorporation into external networks and departmental networking, is preferable; however, we will continue to publicise available alternatives. [AP 5.10]

#### **AP 5.10: Publicise University networking offer as an addition to subject-based networking.**

We have a good record of putting people forward for promotion, with a higher proportion of women going forward and being supported for promotion than men (Figure 5.4). Candidates are actively supported with training (as detailed above and the University’s Coaching for Success service) and the composition of duties is adjusted to provide opportunities for administration and leadership within the overall workload. [AP 5.7] Deputy directorships promote shadowing and mentoring for mid-career staff and have contributed to our good promotion record.

### **(iv) Support given to students (at any level) for academic career progression**

#### Undergraduates

Students learn research methodology and critical thinking from the outset in our “research led” teaching. This culminates in an individual year-long final research project involving a literature review, oral presentation and an 8,000-word dissertation. A series of lectures provides practical guidance and students are invited to present their work at the Essex Social Sciences Conference. UROP placements supplement this with practical research training.

Each student is allocated a peer mentor and a personal tutor for face-to face academic and pastoral support. The project supervisor typically serves as the student’s tutor in the final year as this involves regular meetings. Supervisors are required to discuss career progression and provide reference letters.

The University’s SPRINT programme is aimed at helping women take realistic steps to develop their careers and build self-confidence. We invite past students to give talks in our departmental



employability seminar series, to mingle with current students, and to serve on our employability advisory board. In 2019/20 we had talks from two women and four men and have increased our advisory board membership to four women and eight men. [AP 5.11]

**AP 5.11: Further publicise the SPRINT programme and increase female representation in employability seminars and employability advisory board.**

Our undergraduate focus groups reveal that students are not well integrated into formal networks, preferring to obtain guidance from friendship groups. [AP 5.12] They also indicate that women aspire to higher-paying careers such as accountants or in other financial services, suggesting that if we wish to encourage them towards academic careers we would need to address earnings as well as other features such as flexible working. [AP 4.10]

**AP 4.10: Actively promote PGT programmes to undergraduate students.**

**AP 5.12: Use the peer mentor group more actively to address career planning.**

### PGT and PGR students

PGT students receive research-led teaching and complete an individual research dissertation under supervision. An evening workshop on pursuing further study and supervisory discussions provide support for career planning. Both PGT and PGR students are invited to welcome events and to departmental seminars, and women are invited to join the WN.

Our post-graduate focus group indicates that PGT students find the course very demanding, which limits time for networking, but they are pleased with the equality content and the overall academic approach. They prioritise preparation for the next stage and a substantial share progress to doctoral training (Figure 4.13). While there is a strong preference to stay at Essex, funding is often a barrier. [AP 4.9] [AP 4.11]

**AP 4.9: Actively work with the University to create targeted funding opportunities, specifically for students on the MRes.**

**AP 4.11: Organise information meetings for our PGT students to strengthen our pipeline to PGR.**

PhD students complete two advanced modules in their first year. The department suggests supervisors who have appropriate experience and expertise. All supervisory staff receive training in building good supervisor/supervisee relationships. The student's feeling of "rapport" can act as a "tie breaker" to assign supervisors. One-to-one supervisory guidance, feedback from presentations at the student-run Research Student Seminar, and participation in departmental seminars build research skills. The department also provides extensive training for the job market which includes assistance in preparing the job-pack and mock interviews. PGR students are also supported in publishing working papers and submitting to journals. Financial support is provided for field work, submission fees and presentations at national and international conferences.

Further PGR training is offered through Proficio, the University's unique professional development scheme, which includes events on academic profile-building, effective communication, finding funding and employability. A training needs analysis is implemented each year to identify any gaps in the student's research skills and professional development. The University also provides a budget of £2,500, which can be spent on courses, conferences and academic visits.

A University-wide Student Voice Survey (now delayed due to Covid-19) will gather feedback to help shape the future of the Essex PGR experience. [AP 5.13]

AP 5.13: Review the results of the Student Voice Survey when available, with a focus on emerging issues relevant to AS principles.

### Graduate Teaching Assistants

PGR students obtain financial support and gain teaching experience as GTAs. They attend a centrally organised two-day event that introduces effective, active approaches to student engagement. Departmental induction includes teaching and assessment requirements and tips. Most students also attend the (external) Economics Network, a two-day training and networking event, with support from the department.

GTAs are guided by module leaders and undergo termly teaching observation. The feedback from this has been uniformly positive. Head GTAs coordinate teaching and marking in the larger modules, learning management skills, observing other GTAs and giving feedback. In keeping with the overall percentage of women in our programme, 27.2% of the head GTAs have been female for the past three years and we have received commendation on this system in our 2020 Periodic Review.

The department also supports GTA applications for HEA Fellowship with online resources, drop-in mentoring sessions and writing days, all of which is work-loaded. Like all academic staff, GTAs are invited to all our academic events including our Annual Education Conference and, in some cases, present their own good practice.

No post-doctoral research positions are currently offered, although our own students often stay to teach on a fixed-term contract. In the past five years, all have obtained high-quality posts after this additional training.

### **(v) Support offered to those applying for research grants**

For the past two years, grant applications have been a requirement in probationary agreements and for those taking research leave. Job applications must include a plan for grant applications; grant activity also forms part of applications for promotions and increments. Collaborative applications are encouraged and have improved the success rate.

The REO regularly advertises new grant opportunities and assists with identifying sources, application-writing, budgeting and where unsuccessful, re-drafting and targeting. Departmental research cluster leaders provide encouragement in the form of general advice and topic-specific review, while the faculty coordinates interdisciplinary applications. There are significant workload incentives for those who apply and financial incentives for those who succeed.

Grant income has risen steadily under this system. Women have done particularly well with almost all senior ASER women now holding external funding. Our survey backs this up: 80% feel that they are positively encouraged to apply for grants and that the help offered is useful.

[AP 5.14]

AP 5.14: Build on existing success by structuring department-level encouragement to apply for research funding.

## D. Flexible working and managing career breaks

### (i) Cover and support for maternity and adoption leave: before leave

After pregnancy notice, the member of staff is invited to a meeting with P&C, is given a booklet: 'Pregnancy, maternity and returning to work: A guide for new parents and parents to be', and is guided through the available support (e.g. health and safety, KIT days, nursery provision etc.). The HoD is notified of the person's entitlement and a 'guide for managers' provides essential information on supporting pregnant staff and conducting risk assessments. Arrangements are made for workload cover via fixed-term appointments as needed.

The University's parent mentoring scheme links women planning maternity with those who have recently returned, and ad-hoc seminars provide information on University policy, advice and support. The department encourages links with those who have personal experience of career breaks and signposts the mentoring scheme and seminars on its AS pages and bulletin board. [AP 5.15]

**AP 5.15: Ensure that information on support available for maternity, paternity, and adoption leave is communicated effectively to all staff.**

In the past three years, two members of academic staff have taken maternity leave. One was a part-time fixed-term staff member, who subsequently returned to the same post. She found that the university support was directed toward permanent staff. While the department negotiated a bespoke arrangement, this process created considerable stress. The other combined an initial period of maternity leave with a follow-on period of shared parental leave with her spouse (also a permanent academic staff member) before returning to full-time work. The department has found that adopting a flexible, supportive approach has been important because of the unique features of every pregnancy. [AP 5.16]

**AP 5.16: Promote and facilitate best practice in job-sharing and part-time career development at all levels.**

A PS staff member who fell pregnant negotiated a bespoke job share that is serving as a pilot for the University at the individual's (high) grade. She elected not to use the childcare facilities on campus, preferring to care for the child via a reduced hours contract. The pilot has so far been a great success, with several other departments following this model. Staff report that it allows for a whole variety of caring and non-work interests, whilst also providing a partner in a higher-level administrative post. Both these points have been mentioned as important by those who have concerns about serving as HoD. [AP 5.16]

### (ii) Cover and support for maternity and adoption leave: during leave

Staff are encouraged to use up to 10 paid KIT days (with use of the parent-and-baby room) to keep in touch with colleagues and be updated on departmental administrative/research developments. Managers work to a guide, 'How to...support pregnant staff', which includes modes of contact and departmental updates. Staff on maternity/adoption leave can apply for a career break to extend their leave. [AP 5.15]

**AP 5.15: Ensure that information on support available for maternity, paternity, and adoption leave is communicated effectively to all staff.**



**(iii) Cover and support for maternity and adoption leave: returning to work**

Following the guidelines, the HoD conducts a series of meetings before and after return, to ensure a smooth transition and discuss continued career progression. Within the department adjustments are made in the WAM to help staff achieve a suitable work-life balance. Our model of staffing roles with partners (deputies/directors) allows an adaptable design of posts. [AP 5.17]

The University’s comprehensive childcare package for staff and students, with priority booking and reduced rates, is used by four members of staff. Another six utilise the provisions for school-age children during holidays. Details are on our AS website and feedback is provided by an annual survey.

The PN, established following the first Institutional Bronze Action Plan runs monthly seminars in person and online on a range of child-care topics and six staff are current members. The Parent Mentoring Scheme provides a cross-campus advice network, and the additional support provided by the WN for those working at home has been especially valuable during the Covid-19 crisis, including the University childcare voucher scheme.

The internal departmental parents’ network is both extensive and active, as we have considerable accumulated experience on physical and mental health and schooling. Experienced academic parents serve as departmental mentors and often discuss such issues over our shared lunch or coffee. [AP 5.17]

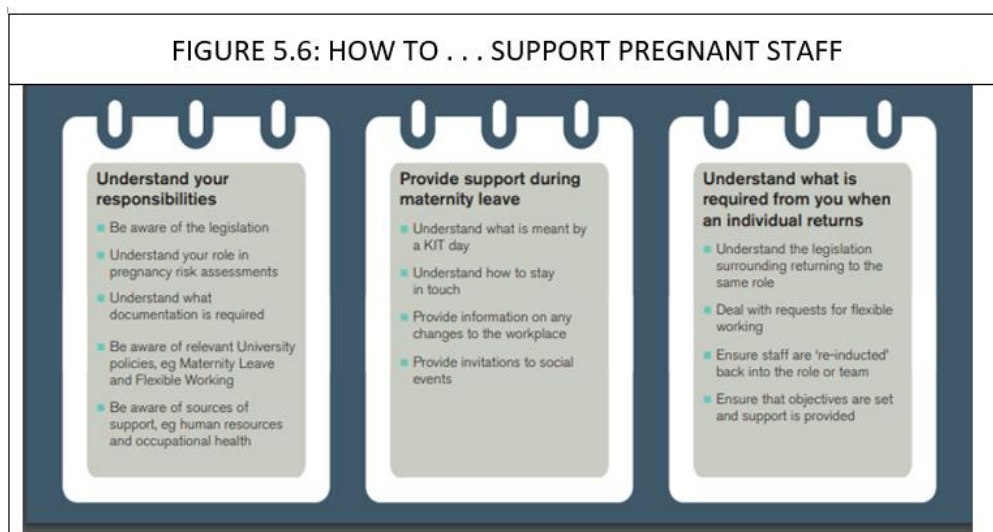
**AP 5.17: Ensure that the return-to-work procedure is informal, welcoming and supportive, and comprehensively followed up with regular debriefings.**

**(iv) Maternity return rate**

The return rate is 100% (2 females), although our PS staff member extended leave for a full year and returned part-time to the bespoke job share that has now been adopted as a model.

**(v) Paternity, shared parental, adoption, and parental leave uptake**

Paternity and Shared Parental Leave policies both provide enhanced pay. The department encourages take-up, provides details on the AS pages, and adjusts the WAM. Individuals are advised that maternity leave can be complemented with shared parental leave. Two staff members took 12 weeks of leave following maternal leave, and those fathers who have had children have all taken paternity leave, although only one has done so in the past three years. [AP 5.15]



**(vi) Flexible working**

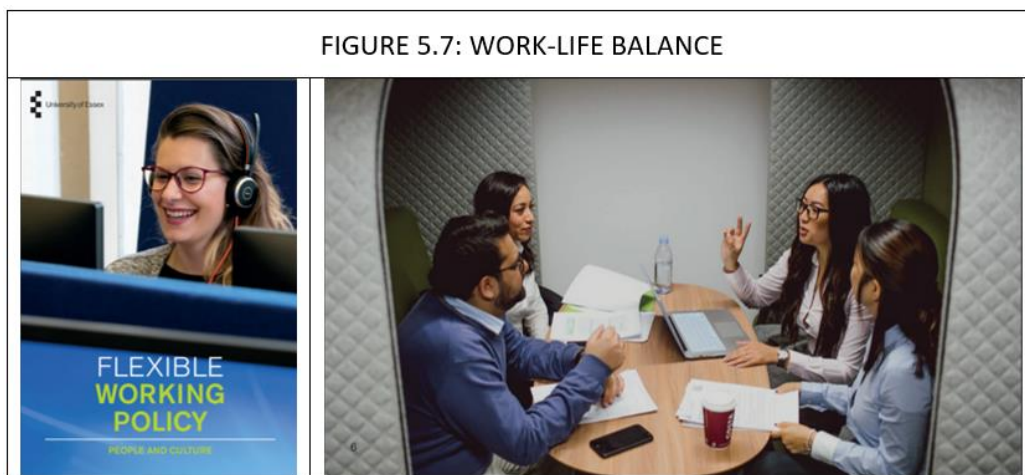
The University’s Work-Life Balance policy comprises a range of formal flexible-working options in a recently simplified process. Academic staff can submit a formal request to avoid work that clashes with personal or family responsibilities. The department adopts informal arrangements where duties can be scheduled by agreement. Our survey (Q 6, Figure 5.5) indicates that 100% of women and 90% of men responding (5 women, 21 men) felt that the department had a good culture around flexible working. Thus, the formal mechanism is little used. Some, perhaps wrongly, felt that there was an undesirable label attached to flexible working. [AP 5.18]

*“As for formal flexible working, I never took it up. I don’t like the idea of placing myself in a different category.”* – mid-level member of staff (female).

**AP 5.18: Ensure all staff are aware of the Flexible Working Policy and understand how it works.**

The department is committed to the University’s People Supporting Strategy of increasing awareness of flexible working options at every stage from recruitment to retirement. Our approach is to listen to the needs of the individual and respond as positively as possible. We recently, and in response to Covid-19 demands, instituted departmental advance notice and agreement protocols to avoid negative impacts of short-term scheduling of ad hoc work on home life. [AP 5. 18]

*“I always felt it was quite easily possible to combine children and work partly because of the department’s flexible attitude and partly because of the childcare facilities (nursery) on site.”* – full time member of academic staff (female).



**(vii) Transition from part-time back to full-time work after career breaks**

The Work Life Balance policy was extensively updated in 2016 to include a career break scheme and an option to temporarily reduce working hours for up to a year. One part-time fixed-term staff member has now transitioned to full-time fixed-term, while others with young children have remained part-time.

## E. Organisation and culture

### (i) Culture

Our department strives to maintain a friendly and inclusive atmosphere. A decision-making process that emphasises consultation in a standing weekly informal meeting, involvement of staff at all levels (including the workload committee), regular rotation of posts and a practice of social inclusion within and outside the work environment all contribute to this, encompassing all groups from PhD students to fixed term staff to PS staff. For example, all these groups are invited to the Rentrée workshop, the holiday conference, and all informal activities around these events. Responses from the 2020 staff survey underline the success of these policies:

*“Diversity in Essex has been and is a prominent feature both in the senior and junior level.”* – probationer (female).

*“I feel very comfortable...Never felt I am a minority or left behind.”* -- probationer (female).

*“The department being a good place to work for everyone and is inclusive of social activities and meetings. The department treats employees well on merit regardless of the individual’s gender.”* – probationer (female).

On the other hand, the responses to the survey reveal concerns over unsupportive and even bullying behaviour. Two incidents of bullying between one and two years ago were addressed under the University’s bullying framework. There has been no recurrence; however, the responses to questions (7), (9) and (10) in Figure 5.5 and focus-group follow-up suggests that there are still some concerns. These concerns relate to the more-subtle aspects of personal and within-group interactions, which we view as our main weakness in conforming to Athena Swan principles. As one example, we have introduced a new protocol for seminars to ensure that speakers are not overwhelmed by pre-emptive questioning and that everyone has an opportunity to speak. This change emerged from a meeting where AS was a focus. This protocol now forms an integral part of the departmental culture that now needs reinforcement with broader measures. [\[AP 5.19\]](#)

**AP 5.19: Ensure that the zero-tolerance policy for bullying and harassment is locally enforced and publicised.**

### (ii) HR policies

HR policies at Essex are constantly changing. Revisions are publicised on the website in easy to read form with the full set of policies on one page and then each policy with a separate page. The University’s Induction for Managers and Management Essentials includes key information on how policies should be applied, and the Future Leaders and Strategic Leaders courses serve to widen the awareness of existing and evolving policy.

The department seeks to conform to University policies and to implement them in both letter and in spirit. The survey responses indicate that the issues underlying [AP 5.19](#) are the exception. Institutional memory is reinforced within the department by asking previous HoDs to remain DHoDs after finishing their term. Among HoDs, best practice is shared across departments in the monthly HoD’s discussion groups.

### (iii) Representation of men and women on committees

The department’s decisions are coordinated and overseen by the leadership group. Members are appointed for three years by mutual agreement and as part of the PDR process. There are no lecturers in the leadership roles. Rather, they move up by gaining experience as deputies. In our survey (Q 3, Figure 5.5), 95% of men and 100% of women agree that they are given opportunities to serve on influential committees. During the COVID-19 crisis the leadership group has been advised by a steering group (DSG) comprising three women and eleven men and including one lecturer and four SL/Rs. This is now our most influential committee. [AP 5.20, AP 2.3]

AP 5.20: Evaluate the working and composition of the departmental steering group with a view to formalising it as permanent support for the departmental leadership.

AP 2.3: Re-design leadership roles to incorporate AS principles and responsibility.

	2014/15		2015/16		2016/17		2017/18		2018/19	
	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M
Professor		3		2	2	3	1	3	1	3
SL/Reader	1	1	1	2				1		1
Professional	1		1		2		2		2	
Total	2	4	3	4	4	3	3	4	3	4

Women have been represented on the leadership group in all years (Figure 5.8). Focus group comments indicate that they prioritise their research; their consequent success in research grant buyouts has restricted the available pool. The female quota for hiring committees places additional demands on women although committee work is included in the departmental WAM. [AP 5.21]

AP 5.21: Improve workload allocation model.

### (iv) Participation on influential external committees

Senior University committees have prescribed membership. They include the HoD; other members are elected or co-opted, and the gender balance is centrally monitored. Where it could further the career of an individual, the department suggests applying to the (limited) membership available. In recent years we have had one female member on each of the four eligible committees (Figure 5.9). Committee overload is now better recognised at University level.

Senior staff are reluctant to become HoD because the heavy workload crowds out research. To spread the load and pass on experience we have two deputies: the past HoD and the future HoD. Even so, the HoD role remains unattractively heavy to those with caring responsibilities. So far, we have had only one female HoD. [AP 5.21]

FIGURE 5.9 REPRESENTATION ON SENIOR COMMITTEES										
	2014/15		2015/16		2016/17		2017/18		2018/19	
	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M
	SENATE									
Professor		1								
SL/Reader			1		1		1		1	
	COUNCIL									
Professor		1								
SL/Reader			1		1		1		1	
	EDUCATION COMMITTEE									
Professor		2	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
SL/Reader										
	FACULTY STEERING GROUP									
Professor		1	1		1		1		1	
SL/Reader										

#### (v) Workload model

The department’s WAM recognises education, research, administration, outreach, leadership, and pastoral care. Following University guidelines, a gender and seniority balanced committee conducted the initial time allocation studies in workload burden of each task. This is updated yearly by the committee. Each person’s balance of duties is discussed alongside the PDR to accommodate individual circumstances and career progression.

The WAM totals indicate no disparity between men and women. Workload totals and the model itself are available department-wide on the department’s Moodle website. Individual workload calculations are available to all staff but are complex. [AP 5.21] Workloads exceed contracted hours, however, and post-Covid-19 arrangements further increase loads, with potential implications for carers and for careers. Our system of role rotation and deputies has not fully resolved this problem, although additional staffing in recent years has improved matters [AP 5.22].

*“I feel the information flow/transparency could be improved...for the workload model (which I think is a good idea),” – probationer (female).*

**AP 5.22: Ensure that the HoD’s supporting statement for applications for promotion and increments takes excess workloads into account.**

#### (vi) Timing of departmental meetings and social gatherings

All seminars have now been scheduled to accommodate those who must leave at 5pm. Speakers are entertained at lunchtime and some seminars are brown bag lunches. DSG meetings are scheduled within core hours, and others including most University committees occur between 10am and 4pm, with notice well in advance and no meetings held in half-term. Meetings relevant to PT staff are scheduled accordingly. Minutes are posted for those who cannot attend. Recent concerns about non-timetabled meetings have led us to a new scheduling policy, which we are monitoring. [AP5.18, AP 5.23]

AP 5.23: Ensure that all timetabled meetings take full regard of part-time staff and those with caring responsibilities.

**(vii) Visibility of role models**

We aim to have a gender balance in role models in all our publicity, events, and responsible roles. As role models for students, our employability seminars featured four female and seven male speakers in 2018/19 and two women/four men in 2019/20. The 2019/20 external seminars, which are organised by a gender-balanced pair of staff, included one third female and two thirds male speakers. [AP 5.24] Although junior female staff would like to see more senior female representation as role models within the department, this small group is already very stretched. [AP 5.25] Our AS bulletin board and webpage showcases the role models we have.

AP 5.24: Implement policy of inviting at least 40% women to speak at external seminar series.

AP 5.25: Monitor female presence as staff role models; ensure fair representation in group and individual roles without overburdening women.

**(viii) Outreach activities**

Outreach is part of the workload and counts towards probation and promotion. Our open/applicant days are led by the (male) DEd and our efforts to ensure female representation are reflected in the composition of participants in 2019/20, although in earlier years we have had more female speakers (Figure 5.10). [AP 4.1] The department also sends members overseas for recruitment, visits and lecture series at partner institutions. In the past two years 60 percent have been female, with no detected feeling of gender imbalance in focus groups.

FIGURE 5.10: APPLICANT AND VISIT DAYS		
<i>Applicant Days</i>		
Role	M	F
Interviewers	1 Professor 1 Reader 5 Lecturers	5 lecturers
Ambassadors	3 (students)	2 (students)
Speakers and activity leaders	1 Professor (Director of Education) 2 Lecturers	
Organiser	1 Professional Services	
<i>Open Days</i>		
Role	M	F
Desk Q&A	1 Professor 1 Reader 11 Lecturers	1 Professor 5 Lecturers
Ambassadors	3 (students)	2 (students)
Speakers	1 Professor (Director of Education)	
Organiser	1 Professional Services	



## SUMMARY OF ACTION POINTS

AP 5.1: Increase the visibility of our commitment to EDI in staff recruitment materials.

AP 5.2: Monitor Essential Training as part of Annual Review and increase uptake to 95%.

AP 5.3: Increase contact with potential female candidates for professorial positions via seminars/conferences and encourage members of the department to publicise our vacancies.

AP 5.4: Provide improved guidance at induction.

AP 5.5: Improve the support package for unsuccessful promotion candidates.

AP 5.6: Revise and implement improved departmental support for PIP.

AP 5.7: Improve visibility of leadership programmes for women (i.e. Chrysalis and Aurora).

AP 5.8: Increase visibility of the departmental training offer for recruitment purposes.

AP 5.9: Streamline PDR process in line with University revisions.

AP 5.10: Publicise university networking offer as an addition to subject-based networking.

AP 5.11: Further publicise the SPRINT programme and increase female representation in employability seminars and employability advisory board.

AP 5.12: Use the peer mentor group more actively to address career planning.

AP 5.13: Review the results of the Student Voice Survey when available, with a focus on emerging issues relevant to AS principles.

AP 5.14: Build on existing success by structuring department-level encouragement to apply for research funding.

AP 5.15: Ensure that information on support available for maternity, paternity, and adoption leave is communicated effectively to all staff.

AP 5.16 Promote and facilitate best practice in job-sharing and part-time career development at all levels.

AP 5.17: Ensure that the return-to-work procedure is informal, welcoming and supportive, and comprehensively followed up with regular debriefings.

AP 5.18: Ensure all staff are aware of the Flexible Working Policy and understand how it works.

AP 5.19: Ensure that the zero-tolerance policy for bullying and harassment is locally enforced and publicised.

AP 5.20: Evaluate the working and composition of the departmental steering group with a view to formalising it as permanent support for the departmental leadership.

AP 5.21: Improve workload allocation model.

AP 5.22: Ensure that the HoD's supporting statement for applications for promotion and increments takes excess workloads into account.

AP 5.23: Ensure that all timetabled meetings take full regard of part-time staff and those with caring responsibilities.

AP 5.24: Implement policy of inviting at least 40% women to speak at external seminar series.

AP 5.25 Monitor female presence as staff role models; ensure fair representation in group and individual roles without overburdening women.

Wordcount: 5769



## F. Further information

### i. Curriculum and syllabus

This online tool can assess how gender balanced bibliographies and syllabi are:

<https://jsumner.shinyapps.io/syllabustool/>

- ii. Note on figure 4.14, final two columns: we are aware of an inconsistency in the central data source file used to build this table. Hence, we do not rely on the specific figures in the last two columns for our conclusions but instead base them on the general sense of the figure.
- iii. Booth, A., Cardona-Sosa, L., and Nolen, P. (2019) "Gender Differences in Risk Preferences: Do Single-Sex Environments Affect Their Development?" *Journal of Economic Behavior and Organization*, 99, pp. 126-154. (Research conducted at the University of Essex by current and former members of staff.)

Wordcount: 113

## G. Action plan

Description of the Department						
Ref	Action	Rationale	Key outputs and success indicators	Timescale for completion	Responsible person/team	Related actions
2.1	Participate in any new building layout design to ensure staff needs are met and encourage interaction.	<p>Our current accommodation fosters frequent interaction and exchange between people at different levels/grades and with different roles.</p> <p>Our occupational health reviews show that isolation of those located in remote offices has serious detrimental career and mental health effects.</p> <p>Follow-up to office transfers confirms that this is the case, with significant well-being improvements.</p>	<p>Action: Require acknowledgement and action from the Estates group that specifically target and resolve our concerns including from women and carers.</p> <p>Action: Consultation of regular formal meetings and surveys/focus groups to provide feedback on interaction and layout benefits and potential risks 2021.</p> <p>Target: Supportive consensus in the department and in consultation with Estates.</p> <p>Target: Achieve an integrated, cohesive, and</p>	<p>Prior to COVID-19, consultation on the design was well underway on a schedule dictated by construction and design milestones, set to complete the building in 2021/22.</p> <p>This timescale has now been paused.</p> <p>Our timescale will, therefore, need to match the updated university building timescale, which is currently subject to change.</p>	Our departmental new building team (HoD, DHoD (Rockett), DMan, and a female junior member of staff) feeds into central process.	

		<p>This experience suggests that the new layout must address potential isolation and exclusion.</p>	<p>egalitarian design and distribution of offices.</p> <p>Target: Achieve no group feeling left behind, as measured in focus groups and surveys.</p>			
2.2	<p>Maintain EDI web pages to highlight the achievements of women and showcase new research on the economics of gender.</p>	<p>Staff recruitment and retention is a concern as only 29.3% of our academic staff are female and our turnover is at almost 10% per year.</p> <p>Our recruitment has fallen short of targets by 7 posts (occupied by fixed term staff) in the most recent year despite recruitment efforts.</p> <p>Student recruitment is weak (32.2% conversion rate of offers for M and F), forcing us to rely on clearing for 24% of our UG entrants in</p>	<p>Action: Webpages reviewed and updated annually by EDI standing committee, with gender balance in our imaging and selection of material monitored.</p> <p>Action: Responses to staff/student surveys will allow us to monitor effect on awareness of AS, EDI and general university policies.</p> <p>Action: We will monitor traffic to this page in conjunction with Comms to judge appeal.</p> <p>Target: all facets of the department, including research, education, knowledge-transfer and outreach, evenly showcased.</p>	<p>2020/21-2023/24 Review of webpages annually.</p>	<p>EDI standing committee</p>	<p>3.2</p>

		<p>2019/20 and similar numbers in previous years.</p> <p>By improving our web image for women, we hope to attract women at an early stage in their decision process.</p>	<p>Target: Women's multi-faceted work fully showcased on EDI webpage so that extent of representation and commitment of department to them clear.</p> <p>Target: update news items to showcase revolving set of gender-focussed research.</p>			
2.3	<p>Re-design leadership roles to incorporate AS principles and responsibility.</p>	<p>Currently the task list for our leadership roles includes little EDI focus outside of statutory EDI requirements.</p> <p>This means that EDI issues are neither embedded nor a part of our strategic decision-making process.</p> <p>While this action targets role redesign, membership is also an issue, as we currently have only 3 female members of</p>	<p>Action: DHoD, in consultation with EDI standing committee to review and redesign leadership roles to incorporate AS principles and this action plan.</p> <p>Target: WAM points (number to be determined after redesign complete) to fully reflect any increase in the breadth of tasks. Any assignment undertaken only if it has positive career benefits for the individual, considering committee overload.</p> <p>Target: Within overload considerations, achieve a</p>	<p>2020/21: Updated leadership role descriptions.</p> <p>2021/22: Achieve four female members of DSG and maintain this on average throughout period to 2023/24.</p> <p>Maintain 3 female members of leadership group on average for entire period 2020/21-2023/24.</p>	<p>EDI standing committee, HoD, and DHoD (workload)</p>	

		the leadership team and 3 female members of our main advisory body, DSG.	minimum of four female members of DSG in all years from 2020/2021.  Target: Within overload considerations, maintain at least three female members of leadership team in all years from 2021/22.			
<b>Self-Assessment Process</b>						
3.1	Embed SAT (reconstituted as EDI standing committee) into formal structure of department.	The EDI standing committee has the remit of implementing this action plan, championing it, and monitoring continuing adherence to AS principles to ensure that it maintains its place at the top of the department's agenda and strategic planning.  Reporting to the departmental meeting and student voice committees widens consultation, engagement, and accountability.	Action: The Committee to be constituted of 5 members with a remit to lead implementing the action plan and embedding AS principles for the longer term.  Action: Committee to be representative of department and have gender balance – minimum 2 females on team.  Action: Winter meeting to consider resourcing issues and feed into the budgeting and planning round via recommendations to the leadership group in February.	2021/21: EDI standing committee to be constituted in winter, 2020/21 and to begin meeting termly from summer, 2021 and incorporated as standing item in departmental meetings from that date. Any constitution must include the HoD, DoR, and DoE as members.  2021-2024: Action plan to be implemented according to the timescale specified within the plan.	Current SAT to jointly decide on constitution of EDI standing committee.	3.3

		Reporting on the webpages allows dissemination to wider community.	<p>Action: EDI chair to become member of DSG.</p> <p>Target: Full and timely delivery of the action plan as scheduled.</p>	2023-2024: Strategy to embed AS principles well beyond this action plan.		
3.2	Staff/student surveys conducted annually to measure progress against AP.	<p>The department requires an instrument to collect information and analyse perceptions of gender culture among staff and students and for measuring changes over time.</p> <p>Most data collected already on university's Tableau system, but staff/student surveys must be our responsibility.</p> <p>Rigorous analysis of data at the staff and student level is vital to ensuring that successes, with problems and challenges recorded</p>	<p>Action: Yearly monitoring of all data including the annual staff survey, updated and evaluated against AS goals.</p> <p>Action: Monitored by EDI standing committee.</p> <p>Action: Lack of progress to be addressed with help of HoD to keep to the plan.</p> <p>Target: Current survey responses were 44.8% among staff and 16.2% among students. Target consultation of 80% of staff and 25% students for future surveys. We will work with P&amp;C for increasing engagement.</p> <p>Action: Surveys to be repeated in December each year for students and staff to feed into the same meeting and allow</p>	<p>2021/22-2023/24: repeat survey in winter, annually.</p> <p>Monitoring to occur yearly in winter, as other relevant updated data are available at that point.</p>	EDI standing committee	2.2

		<p>and taken into consideration.</p> <p>This progress can contribute to our recruitment goals if disseminated on the website.</p>	<p>discussion in main annual committee meeting schedule.</p> <p>Action: Survey results to be included with comment on the EDI webpages.</p>			
3.3	<p>SAT members (and follow on EDI standing committee) to contribute to Peer College, Institutional submissions and EDI events.</p>	<p>The departmental AS submission will be better supported if it links to the University's continuing EDI agenda and associated AS Silver application.</p> <p>Furthermore, the institutional AS position is strengthened through help by successful departments to those still completing their own AS review.</p>	<p>Target: Member of department to serve as member of Peer College.</p> <p>Target: Member of department to serve as member of institutional AS group.</p> <p>Action: EDI link to attend and publicise all University events relevant to AS agenda.</p>	<p>2020/21: Members joins Peer college and Institutional AS group.</p>	<p>EDI departmental link, OD</p>	3.1

**Picture of the Department**

4.1	Encourage more female participation in Economics by targeted outreach activities at sixth forms.	<p>Presentations by the Royal Economic Society Women's Committee show that the image of economics may be "turning off" women, already at A level, even though areas in which Essex specialises are of interest.</p> <p>Presentations to reflect diversity in subject matter and diverse staff composition may, then, improve recruitment from all genders.</p>	<p>Action: Sixth form ambassadors to begin visits in 2022 (online earlier depending on Covid-19).</p> <p>Action: EDI standing committee to monitor gender balance across roles at open and applicant days.</p> <p>Target: Ensure balanced but achievable representation at 40F/60M over all roles, including speaker roles.</p> <p>Action: To have even representation at each recruitment session, by sharing presentations across a team, rather than delegating to a single person.</p> <p>Action: Feedback from CER to measure progress on view of Economics as a field and department's appeal to women applicants.</p>	<p>2022/23-2023/24: Annual visits (potentially virtually) to sixth forms.</p> <p>2022/23: Modified questions for CER applicant/open day feedback implemented.</p>	EDI standing group	2.2, 4.3
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			Action: EDI standing committee to report back to CER for subsequent year's ambassador recruitment.			
4.2	Actively investigate introducing new modules that provide waivers for professional examinations and titles that diversify our programme.	<p>Growth rates for diversified, newer titles especially in multi-disciplinary areas are growing at well over 100%, including Economics with Psychology, having over 200% growth in 2019/20</p> <p>Female students in our focus groups revealed that they are relatively more interested in professional exam waivers than male students (see section 4.1(ii)), suggesting this as an area to develop to improve appeal to female students.</p>	<p>Action: Review all modules for waiver potential. Revision of any relevant module's syllabus to follow as appropriate in following academic year.</p> <p>Target: Inclusion of at least one module with a waiver in our programme by 2022.</p> <p>Action: Curriculum EDI-based review to include student focus groups, Student Voice committees and feedback from Applicant and Open days.</p> <p>Target: EDI issues, including the appeal of the curriculum to diverse groups, incorporated to appropriate level in all modules and courses, as judged by annual repeat student survey results.</p>	<p>2021/22; Review of the curriculum to occur in 2021/22, with new waiver-granting module reflected in curriculum starting 2023/24 as a minimum.</p> <p>Ongoing focus groups and Student Voice consultation follow-up on introduction of waiver and other modifications of curriculum suggested by survey results.</p> <p>2022/21; New modules with waivers promoted.</p>	EDI standing committee to lead with support from Student Voice committees, DEd, faculty education officer.	4.5

4.3	<p>Communicate the importance of female role models for the purpose of improving gender balance in student recruitment.</p>	<p>Focus groups and Applicant Day “debriefs” indicate that female students did not focus on gender issues at entry.</p> <p>Reflecting on their time with us, continuing students stated that gender issues did matter to them, as female students felt more comfortable speaking up in lectures where the academic was female.</p> <p>Students at all levels (M&amp;F) in our focus groups wished to gain confidence.</p> <p>This set of considerations suggests that female role models may be important at all levels, even if this is not well anticipated by applicants.</p>	<p>Action: Progress on action 4.1</p> <p>Target: Ensure that a female tutor is available to all and that during recruitment this is publicised to students, including the reasons why this might matter to developing confidence and other “soft skills”.</p> <p>Action: EDI standing committee and Student Voice committees to lead on monitoring and feedback on self-confidence across all groups.</p> <p>Target: Steady improvement in participation in lectures and reported confidence by all genders, judged by annual staff and student surveys.</p>	<p>2021/22: Female tutor available to all.</p> <p>2021/22-2023/24: Steady improvement in self-confidence (adjusted for COVID-19 disruptions to face-to-face interactions).</p>	<p>EDI standing committee to lead with support from recruitment chair, Student Voice committees, lecturers.</p>	4.1
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		Perceptions of the departmental culture, reflected in the visibility of role models, may also affect the process of building confidence.				
4.4	Review the employability module with a view to being more valuable women.	<p>Women are over-represented in our placements (30.8%).</p> <p>The employability module has been poorly attended (&lt;30%), however, even though it provides placement preparation and support.</p> <p>Further, the module has not been reviewed with an EDI perspective to ensure that it is catering to the needs of a diverse student population.</p>	<p>Action: Focus groups to determine why women are over-represented in placements and perception of usefulness of supporting module.</p> <p>Action: Findings to inform redesign of employability module.</p> <p>Target: 30% improvement in attendance and 70% satisfaction from all groups.</p> <p>Action: Create new material for employability module dedicated to EDI/AS objectives, including broadening the set of speakers and approaches to appeal to all students.</p> <p>Target: gender balance of speakers. Draw speakers from different professions.</p>	<p>2021/22: Module review and adjustment in speaker composition. New material/speakers to be introduced 2022/23.</p> <p>2023/24; Gender balanced improvement in attendance and satisfaction</p>	DEm, supervisor of employability module	5.12

4.5	Diversify MA/MSc to be more inclusive of women and other groups.	<p>Female students in our UG focus groups said that they are relatively more interested in the “practical” than the men, suggesting that we should investigate increasing certification or exam waivers where we can, including at PGT level.</p> <p>Based on strong student numbers for our newer degrees at PGT level (15.7% of our registrations in 2019/20) and enquiries from applicants, we know that student response to new (interdisciplinary) programmes is positive but not what appeals by gender.</p>	<p>Action: Review of all modules for waiver/certification potential.</p> <p>Target: Inclusion of at least one module with a waiver/certification in our programme by 2022 and one new course to broaden appeal to wide audience</p> <p>Action: Student Annual surveys/focus groups and student registration data review to reflect improvement in cross-gender appeal from waivers and course introductions.</p>	<p>2021/22: Review with student voice and focus group support to occur yearly starting in 2021/22, with new modules and courses to appear in 2022/23.</p> <p>Evaluate uptake and student reaction in 2023/24 via focus groups of the new enrolees and student registration numbers.</p>	directors of studies (UG, PGT) to lead with Student Voice Committees and EDI standing committee as support.	4.2, 4.6
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4.6	<p>Increase diversity content in the marketing of master's programmes.</p>	<p>Previous PGT marketing targeting women from 2017, saw the proportion of women progressing to our PGT increase from 38.9% to 46.4% and remain high.</p> <p>PGT marketing to external women in the same year resulted in a jump in our applications from 40% female to 46.5% female, with slow reductions in the following years when the programme was discontinued.</p> <p>We infer from this that a diverse marketing mix will serve to attract women to our programme.</p>	<p>Action: Obtain marketing support to undertake a similar campaign to the past successful campaign on a more permanent basis. Track female application rates to detect impact and adjust message as necessary.</p> <p>Action: Request feedback from our international agents on female perceptions of our programme abroad and any needs that are distinct from men's that could be incorporated into both marketing and courses (see AP 4.5).</p> <p>Target: Improved gender balance in applications</p> <p>Target: Surveys and feedback to show improved perceptions of marketing and role models.</p>	<p>2021/22 meetings with Marketing to obtain feedback from agents to improve our case for support for this campaign.</p> <p>2022/23: Implement campaign (post-Covid-19 finances permitting) with feedback on impact from focus groups and surveys.</p> <p>2023/24: Admissions figures review to judge success and adjust approach.</p>	<p>PGT director to lead with support from DEd.</p>	4.5, 4.7
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4.7	Reduce time needed to produce <u>conditional</u> PGT offers by streamlining the process.	<p>Women and men may not react to the delay in offers in the same way if they systematically differ in alternatives or risk aversion (see Essex produced research by Booth et al. (2019); full reference at section 6.iii.</p> <p>We should, then, investigate the possibility that the delay experienced at Essex compared to other universities (due to our distinct offer procedures) may affect both student numbers and diversity of the programme.</p>	<p>Action: Discuss with CER and student groups how to streamline and improve offer process.</p> <p>Target: Conditional offers as a standard response to applications within a week.</p> <p>Target: evaluation based on student numbers and focus group/survey feedback.</p>	<p>2021/22 discussions with CER to review process.</p> <p>2022/23: implementation of new process.</p> <p>2023/24: evaluation based on student numbers and focus group/survey feedback.</p>	PGT director to lead with support from CER	4.6
4.8	Monitor the increasing proportion of good degrees for both gender and standards issues.	The proportion of Merit/Distinction has increased from 41% for both genders in 2016/17 to 83.6% for both genders in 2018/19. This is a very steep rise.	<p>Action: Review external examiner reports for standards issues.</p> <p>Action: Obtain disaggregated figures over five years that allow us to track gender crossed with specific subgroups (such as</p>	2021-2024: Review external examiner reports yearly with performance gaps in mind. Solicit their views on this issue.	PGT director	

		<p>We will investigate changes in standards and in our student population with more disaggregated data to better understand the causes.</p> <p>To ensure we fulfil our educational mission, this analysis needs to identify any subgroups that are falling behind that are obscured in current statistics (for example BAME women vs. non-BAME women) and suggest targeted measures to address any shortcomings.</p>	<p>BAME, international, or other), entry tariffs and socio-economic variables and their relation to performance</p> <p>Action: Identify any performance gaps. If any detected, hold focus groups (sponsored by Student Voice committees) to diagnose why and design remedies.</p>	<p>2021/22: request data for disaggregated study.</p> <p>2022/23: Analyse data and conduct focus groups in.</p> <p>2023/24: Develop actions to implement in 2023/24 with improvement in the performance of target groups.</p>		
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4.9	Actively work with the University to create targeted funding opportunities, specifically for students on the MRes.	<p>Our introduction of a four-year (MRes+3 doctoral years) programme coincided with a drop in female PGR from 40.4% in 2015/16 to 28.9% in 2018/19.</p> <p>The one-year introduction of the Women of the Future scholarship scheme coincided with an increase in female PGR from 40.4% to 45.8% in 2016/17.</p> <p>Focus groups corroborated that lack of MRes funding is the reason for the drop and that targeted female scholarships was the reason for the one-year rise.</p>	<p>Action: Press via Faculty for targeted scholarships based on diversity criteria and measured against programme composition with a goal of increasing the female PGR percentage to 40% by 2023/24.</p> <p>Target: Either a targeted scholarship or, if this is not possible, a strategy to obtain one and tangible progress toward identifying a source of funds.</p>	<p>2021/22: Initiate discussions with Faculty</p> <p>2023/24: one scholarship (or significant progress toward funding for a scholarship).</p>	PGR director to lead, Fees group, Faculty Executive Dean.	4.11
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4.10	Actively promote PGT programmes to undergraduate students.	<p>The proportion of female UGs progressing to PGT jumped from 44 to 71 in 2017/18, a rise from 38.9% to 46.4% of all those progressing.</p> <p>This coincides with an increase in funding availability (national and local). This suggests the importance of funding to females, which was confirmed by our focus groups.</p> <p>Focus groups also indicated that students were not aware of many existing funding opportunities.</p> <p>Our current gender balance of progression to PGT is almost an even split at 49.3 female. We need to consolidate this gain.</p>	<p>Action: Hold annual meeting with UG students in second and third years on funding, Essex PGT offer, and other PGT choices. Aim at 70% attendance.</p> <p>Action: Third year tutors to follow up individually on students' PGT plans termly.</p> <p>Target: Maintain gender balance of 50% in progression.</p>	<p>2021/22-2023/24: Annual meeting to discuss PGT offer.</p> <p>2021/22-2023/24: Provide clear instructions to third year tutors and monitor take-up.</p>	PGT director to lead with third year tutors, DEm to support.	
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4.11	Strengthen pipeline for PGT to PGR for female students.	<p>28.2% females progressed to PGR from PGT in the most recent year of data.</p> <p>A one-year increase to 44.9% in 2016/17 coincided with targeted funding (AP 4.9).</p> <p>Little career support is currently provided at PGT level, making room for better dissemination about the option of an academic-related career.</p> <p>Providing that full information on the Essex programme including on supervisory matches and funding seems a clear first step to strengthen pipeline in support of other measures (AP 4.9).</p>	<p>Action: To hold academic progression and career meetings once per year. Aim to achieve 70% attendance.</p> <p>Action: To follow up meeting via email at least once (from PGT director, PGR director or dissertation supervisors).</p> <p>Action: Identify promising candidates at PGT in January at the latest for funding opportunities.</p> <p>Action: Monitor the contribution of our own PGT cohort to the gender balance at PGR.</p> <p>Target: stable PGT to PGR progression of 40% or more overall with at least 35% female by 2024.</p>	<p>2021/22 -2023/24: Hold successful meetings with follow up.</p> <p>Annual monitoring and analysis of cohort to coincide with AS action plan progress.</p> <p>2023/24: Improved PGT to PGR progression rate.</p>	PGT director to lead with PGR director, EDI standing committee, dissertation supervisors to support.	4.9
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4.12	Establish a forward-looking PDR meeting near the end of the FTC.	<p>Our female success rate on progressing from an Essex FTC to high quality permanent posts is very strong, with all but one female FTC staff progressing to permanent contracts after Essex in the past 5 years and the one who did not progress to a high-quality research post in preference to permanent offers.</p> <p>This success has relied on an informal process, not yet codified and therefore reliant on certain individuals.</p> <p>We have a responsibility to treat all fixed term staff well in order that the role plays the “steppingstone” function that it should in employees’ careers.</p>	<p>Action: Hold exit PDR meetings with all fixed term staff.</p> <p>Action: Continue to monitor exit jobs for quality and progression.</p> <p>Action: Identify and correct any systemic failure to progress to a high-quality job post-Essex using exit destination feedback for our FT population.</p> <p>Target: High quality jobs upon departure for all fixed term employees.</p>	<p>2020:21: Start holding exit PDR meeting with all staff and analyse data collected.</p> <p>2022/23: Review data and update action plan.</p>	DHoD (Staffing) to lead with EDI standing committee to support	4.13, 5.19
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		Establishing a more formal PDR meeting should consolidate the gains we have achieved from the informal process.				
4.13	Ensure that departing staff members complete the standard Leavers Checklist.	<p>Between 2015/16 and 2018/19, 16 permanent academic staff left (3F, 13M) resulting in departure rates of (7.5% F and 8% M). For both women and men this was mainly for reasons of pay and promotion.</p> <p>While the lack of gender differences in departures is reassuring, the high rate makes increasing the percent of female academic staff more difficult.</p> <p>If departures cannot be avoided, we at least need a mechanism to obtain better quality</p>	<p>Action: The checklist should be completed by all (including fixed term staff), and results archived yearly to generate a formal set of leaver data.</p> <p>Target: 100% of leavers from 2020/21 to complete questionnaire.</p> <p>Action: The results over the entire set of leavers to be analysed by the DHod (staffing), with results fed back to departmental meeting and HoD.</p> <p>Target: To identify trends in leaving destination, wellbeing, flexible working and career progression by gender.</p> <p>Action: HoD to progress findings to Executive Dean for action.</p>	<p>2020/21: All departing staff to complete checklist</p> <p>2020/21-2023/24: Annually review data and feed analysis into action plan.</p> <p>2023/24: Reduce departure rate by 5% for men and women.</p>	DHoD (Staffing) to lead with HoD, EDI standing committee.	4.12

		<p>feedback on the job when people leave to address retention in future.</p> <p>A formal checklist will ensure that we obtain this crucial information while it is still fresh so that it can be collated and archived for higher quality analysis.</p>	<p>Target: Reduce departure rate to 5% for both women and men by 2023/24.</p>			
<b>Supporting and Advancing Women's Careers</b>						
5.1	<p>Increase the visibility of our commitment to EDI in staff recruitment materials.</p>	<p>Our recruitment data shows low female applications, decreasing as one progresses from 39.6% for fixed-term lectureships to 26.9% at permanent L/SL/R level to 6.6% at professorial level.</p> <p>We will aim to improve these numbers by reviewing our materials to ensure we are an attractive destination.</p>	<p>Action: Provide the link in the job advertisement and job pack to both university and departmental policies, as well as case studies and research, presented on the EDI page.</p> <p>Action: Draw attention of candidates to EDI policies, EDI experience and culture, and relevant research during their campus visit.</p> <p>Action: Follow up meeting with new recruits will allow us to judge the impact of this change and adjust to improve our image.</p>	<p>2020/21: Updated recruitment materials.</p> <p>2020/21-2023/24: Conduct follow up interviews to new recruits and analyse data.</p>	<p>DHoD (Staffing) to lead, assisted by EDI standing committee.</p>	2.2

		<p>The job pack already provides a link to significant university EDI resources but little on departmental EDI policies, culture, and research.</p> <p>By including departmental experience of EDI policies (e.g. case studies) and gender-based research - where we have comparative strength - we can improve awareness of the departmental and local environment to women.</p>	<p>Target: evaluation and adjustment yearly.</p>			
5.2	<p>Monitor Essential Training as part of the Annual Review and increase uptake to 95%.</p>	<p>Essential training has historically not been reported effectively, which has contributed to low completion rates: 47% completion of all courses with slightly</p>	<p>Action: Training will be communicated through P&amp;C termly reports to all staff at the University.</p> <p>Action: Information on the new training suite to be circulated to staff so that</p>	<p>2020/21: Encourage staff to complete training both by email and at PDR based on new report.</p> <p>2020/21: Inform all staff at departmental</p>	<p>DMan to lead with support from HoD,</p>	

		<p>higher rates for EDI Training (68%) and Unconscious Bias training (51%).</p> <p>The University is currently in the process of developing a new essential training suite, which will be launched in November 2020 to replace the current training.</p> <p>We aim to increase training under the new suite of modules and new monitoring system.</p>	<p>they know what they must complete.</p> <p>Target: At least 95% completion of department by end of 2021/22.</p>	<p>meeting of new training suite.</p> <p>2021/22: Achieve 95% completion.</p>		
5.3	<p>Increase contact with potential female candidates for professorial positions via seminars/ conferences and encourage members of the department to publicise our vacancies.</p>	<p>We have not been able to hire any female at Professorial level since 2013.</p> <p>Only one female applicant came forward per year for our advertised post in 2017/18 and 2018/19, In the event this one was</p>	<p>Action: Encourage all members of the department to network widely, including through co-authorships, and be “alive” to recruitment possibilities when undertaking external visits/conferences.</p> <p>Action: Ensure that all members of staff know and share any experience of “success factors” in</p>	<p>2020/21: Encourage networking and awareness of resources.</p> <p>2023/24 aim to have 2 more senior female members.</p>	DHoD (Staffing	



		<p>not shortlisted. One applied and was shortlisted in 2019/20 but declined the post.</p> <p>We know from our successful professorial hires and applicants that personal contact is vital to obtain successful recruitment at Professorial level.</p>	<p>recruitment. Discuss success factors in job market organisation meeting yearly, and departmental meeting in autumn.</p> <p>Action: Give research clusters remit to use funds to broaden the network for the cluster as a priority.</p> <p>Target: 2 additional senior female members of staff by 2024</p>			
5.4	Provide improved guidance at induction.	<p>We have a range of introductory meetings, covering a wide set of material.</p> <p>These have grown up in an organic fashion without being reviewed for coordination across meetings or completeness.</p> <p>The few candidates who have joined us mid-year have complained that they have not felt as fully briefed as entrants</p>	<p>Action: The checklist must allocate the full range of tasks formally across the three meetings without excessive repetition (i.e., the meeting with PS staff, the academic staff meeting, and the mentor meeting).</p> <p>Action: Focus groups to gain feedback from new hires.</p> <p>Target: develop the checklist, recording improvements and updating annually.</p>	<p>2020/21: mid-year induction developed and delivered. Continuing as needed after this.</p> <p>2021/22: Develop and use checklist. Updated yearly after introduction.</p> <p>2023/24: Achieve consistent high-quality evaluation of all mentors.</p>	DMan to lead with support from HoD, mentors, DHoD (staffing)	

		<p>at the start of the year.</p> <p>Feedback from new hires suggests a range of potential improvements:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• coordination to ensure full coverage (especially mentoring issues) without repetition;</li> <li>• consistency of coverage across years;</li> <li>• induction of equal quality for those who start mid-year;</li> </ul>	<p>Action: Extend our autumn induction to mid-year on an as needed basis.</p> <p>Target: Provision of an induction for all late entrants of equal quality to the induction at the start of year and adapted to challenges of mid-year entry.</p> <p>Action: DHoD (staffing) to select good mentors to present best practice and pitfalls to new mentors.</p> <p>Target: Feedback in staff surveys confirming high and consistent mentoring quality.</p>			
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5.5	<p>Improve the support package for unsuccessful promotion candidates.</p>	<p>The success rate at promotion is 50% for women and marginally higher for men at 57% (Figure 5.4).</p> <p>We have monitored the reaction of staff to promotion updates over the past four years.</p> <p>Those who were rejected did not find the feedback from Academic Staffing Committee helpful or fair. Three appealed, and two of these were upheld.</p> <p>With one notable exception, staff who have been denied have experienced low morale. In four cases, this led to departure.</p>	<p>Action: HoD to meet with all unsuccessful candidates, interpreting the letter, discussing workload and concrete steps to achieve the promotion.</p> <p>Action: Follow up meeting with Faculty Dean should become standard for those who have been rejected (i.e., “opt out” versus “opt in”).</p> <p>Dean’s meeting to cover not only interpretation of the letter but also verification that the plans developed with the HoD about a strategy for promotion are realistic and sensible (albeit without any guarantee of success).</p> <p>Target: Aim to get 70% satisfaction on feedback for this support package as part of overall promotion process in staff surveys.</p>	<p>2021/22: Staff survey to monitor progress on action, to follow yearly through 2023/24.</p> <p>2021/22: propose and discuss “opt out” system to Faculty Dean.</p>	<p>DHoD (Workload) to lead with support from HoD, Faculty Dean</p>	
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5.6	Revise and implement improved departmental support for PIP.	<p>2 men successfully exited the PIP but found it 'stressful and scary'. No women have been subject to a PIP.</p> <p>This stress has a personal cost and is counter-productive to improved performance. This makes recovery from low performance harder and longer than necessary.</p>	<p>Action: Close monitoring by DoR of employees' "pipeline" to identify those at risk of a PIP at least one year ahead of time when PIP would be initiated.</p> <p>Action: Clear statement of targets for the interim REF deadline at least two years ahead of the deadline to account for workload and accommodate editorial barriers.</p> <p>Target: No PIPs in next REF period.</p> <p>Action: Provide a PIP mentor, ideally a subject specialist.</p> <p>Target: Improved feedback on the PIP in staff surveys.</p>	<p>2021/22: begin monitoring of pipeline with notifications to relevant individuals and meeting with HoD to discuss necessary support. To continue yearly as part of PDR.</p> <p>2021/22: request notification of interim REF targets.</p> <p>2021/22-2023/24: steady improvement in view of PIP from staff.</p> <p>2020/21 – 2023/24: anyone under a PIP to receive a PIP mentor.</p>	DoR to lead with support from HoD, DHoD (workload), mentor	
5.7	Improve visibility of leadership programmes for women (i.e. Chrysalis and Aurora).	The department's uptake of these programmes is low: no one has come forward to take advantage of these so far.	Action: DMan to place announcement of both programmes on the agenda as part of AS item in autumn departmental meeting.	2020/21- 2023/24: publicise programmes yearly in departmental meeting, on board and website.	DMan, EDI standing committee chair	

		<p>Staff reported lack of awareness of programmes and application process.</p> <p>Raising awareness via the department meeting can be a prelude to more targeted suggestions at PDR meetings.</p>	<p>Action: EDI standing committee chair to highlight programmes, follow up, and review uptake as part of overall report.</p> <p>Action: Such programmes to be publicised on the AS board and communications to staff e.g. webpages.</p> <p>Action: Ask future participants to act as a reference on the relevant programme and its benefits.</p> <p>Target: Achieve consistent 100% awareness of these programmes.</p> <p>Target: have member of staff taking part in Chrysalis and Aurora by 2024 (pending Covid conditions).</p>	<p>2021/22: Full awareness to start 2021/22, monitored on staff survey, to continue yearly.</p> <p>2023/24: Economics staff participate in programmes at least by this date and be assigned reference role after attendance (pending Covid-19 conditions).</p>		
5.8	Increase visibility of the departmental training offer for recruitment purposes	Our departmental training and support for both permanent and fixed term staff has increased markedly over the past five years, with corresponding positive reviews	<p>Action: DHoD (Staffing) to assemble the training and career trajectory information into a package to use at all stages of staff recruitment.</p> <p>Action: This package to be publicised to applicants via</p>	<p>2020/21: to prepare the package and have it ready to begin using in 2021/22.</p> <p>Yearly evaluation after 2021/22 in post job market feedback.</p>	DHoD (Staffing)	

		<p>from staff and good success in permanency (100%) and promotion (50%/57%).</p> <p>With the significant exception of our publicity for the probationary agreement, we have not emphasised this as a key selling point in our staff recruitment for both permanent and fixed term staff.</p>	<p>the website, including the AS page.</p> <p>Action: To be evaluated for impact via feedback from candidates who have accepted and those who have refused our offer. Evaluation and any adjustments to be led by DHoD (Staffing).</p> <p>Target: Career progression to be identified as a strong positive in our recruitment package, as judged by feedback from applicants and successful candidates.</p>	<p>2022/23: achieve strong positive evaluation in this year and subsequent years.</p>		
5.9	Streamline PDR process in line with University revisions.	<p>Our success rate is only 50% (57%) in promotions for women and men, respectively.</p> <p>An improved PDR is an opportunity to improve promotion prospects, possibly improving our retention.</p> <p>Current views of the formal PDR are</p>	<p>Action: HoD to revise the PDR process, aided by the DMan, to implement the University revisions that streamline the process.</p> <p>Action: Elicit feedback especially on the way to design and use the PDR to facilitate successful and timely promotions.</p> <p>Action: HoD and DMan to implement and collect</p>	<p>2022-2023: academic year to implement new process.</p> <p>2023/24 to feedback and receive revisions from P&amp;C.</p>	DMan to lead, supported by HoD, P&C.	4.12

		<p>mixed (Q1 of the staff survey; 5.3(ii)). The formal PDR is viewed as too heavy and poorly directed. An informal review is less transparent and structured.</p> <p>No review of the content of the informal reviews has ever occurred to target them better at promotions.</p>	<p>feedback on new process for P&amp;C.</p> <p>Target: All members of staff to take up this service and view it as a benefit to them, measured by annual staff survey responses.</p>			
5.10	Publicise University networking offer as an addition to subject-based networking.	<p>Our staff has not taken up internal networking, stating in focus groups that they prefer to spend precious time on subject-based networks.</p> <p>All but one female probationer has selected a female mentor, suggesting that a larger pool of female mentors could be useful to junior staff and that</p>	<p>Action: Publicise internal networking at departmental meeting closest to networking events and in induction events.</p> <p>Action: Presentation to emphasise the relative advantages of internal and external networking.</p> <p>Action: If any members of staff who take up these opportunities should serve as the reference for those who wish for more information.</p>	<p>2020/21: Promote networking internally</p> <p>2021/22-2023/24: increased mentorship uptake.</p>	EDI standing committee chair to lead.	

		<p>there may be a demand for female mentoring after the probationary period.</p> <p>Promoting the wider network can provide a wider pool of female mentors.</p> <p>Internal networks are important, but we must ensure that staff know the opportunities that exist and their potential benefits for internal progression and practice, particularly for more senior members of staff moving into broader administrative roles.</p>	<p>Target: Increased uptake in mentorship.</p>			
5.11	<p>Further publicise the SPRINT programme and increase female representation in employability seminars and employability advisory board.</p>	<p>The feedback from those running the SPRINT programme is that some economics students have participated (records not available).</p>	<p>Action: Publicise SPRINT in employability module, via peer mentors, and in welcome week.</p> <p>Target: 80% awareness of SPRINT in student surveys.</p> <p>Action: DEm to make every effort to obtain even split</p>	<p>2021/22: Announcements of SPRINT. Target awareness reached by 2023/24.</p> <p>Reinvigorated Employability Advisory Board,</p>	<p>DEm to lead, with support from employability module director, DEd.</p>	



		<p>Our focus group showed lack of awareness.</p> <p>Keeping in mind that they are purely optional, departmental employability seminars get good attendance (21.8% of combined second- and third-year population at the last event) and so are a good showcase for diversity and role models.</p> <p>We do not yet obtain female speakers at half of the events. In 2019/20 we had talks from two women and four men.</p> <p>We have increased our Employability Advisory Board membership to four women and eight men. Obtaining a more even split of</p>	<p>between women and men in employability seminars.</p> <p>Target: Invitations split evenly across genders with target 40% female presentations by 2023.</p> <p>Action: DEm to obtain departmental resources to achieve two board meetings per year.</p> <p>Target: Board membership of 40% female.</p> <p>Action: Include as agenda item at board a report and presentation by an alumni mentor/mentee to support conversion to alumni mentoring duties.</p>	<p>resourced, from 2021/22</p> <p>2023/24: 40% female board membership achieved.</p> <p>40% gender split at employability events on average over entire period</p>		
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		<p>female and male members would be desirable to improve the diversity of views.</p> <p>Further, our board serves as a key recruiting ground for alumni mentors. A more balanced board would allow us to obtain better access to female alumni mentors.</p>				
5.12	Use the peer mentor group more actively to address career planning.	<p>Our student focus groups indicate poor long-term planning, despite high aspirations (particularly in terms of pay).</p> <p>We currently address career and long-term planning in the employability module, which is poorly attended (AP 4.4).</p> <p>If informal networks are preferred, the peer mentors may</p>	<p>Action: Include long term and career planning as peer mentor priority in training.</p> <p>Action: Assign employability module coordinator as peer mentor coordinator to improve career link.</p> <p>Action: Obtain feedback in student voice committees.</p> <p>Target: Peer mentor system improved sustained uptake by students, with full attendance at least twice in year for 50% of students.</p>	<p>2021/22 academic year to assign staff member responsible for action point and get feedback on peer mentor system.</p> <p>Revised system in place 2022/23-2023/24.</p> <p>Sustained uptake by 50% by 2023/24.</p> <p>Employability figures improve by 2023/24.</p>	Peer mentor coordinator to lead with support of employability module director (if different) and careers office.	4.4

		be a pathway into better attention to planning.	Target: steady improvement of employability figures. The precise level of improvement to be determined, as the system of measuring employability is currently changing so we have no “baseline” at the moment.			
5.13	Review the results of the Student Voice survey when available, with a focus on emerging issues relevant to AS principles.	<p>The Student Voice survey is now being extended to PGR students</p> <p>We struggle to recruit talented individuals for the PGR programme (see 4.1(iv)), so improving our offer is a method of recruitment as well as improving the service to our existing students.</p> <p>The survey includes diversity issues.</p>	<p>Action: PGR director to work with EDI standing committee chair to analyse the results of the survey for Economics and the AS implications.</p> <p>Target: To review survey yearly.</p> <p>Action: Any identified issues to be fed into the agenda for action by EDI standing committee chair.</p> <p>Target: evidence of steadily improving PGR satisfaction once figures available.</p>	2020/21: Review survey data and feedback data.	PGR director to lead, supported by EDI standing committee chair.	

5.14	<p>Build on existing success by structuring department-level encouragement to apply for research funding.</p>	<p>The department is below our targets for grant funding per member of staff</p> <p>Almost all senior ASER women now hold funding and many junior women do as well. We need to consolidate this success.</p> <p>Feedback and success rates suggest that research cluster grant review is key. The staff survey showed that 80% of females feel that they are positively encouraged to apply for grants and that the help offered is useful.</p> <p>The successful women have not been debriefed on the key contributors to that success.</p>	<p>Action: Debrief women to establish key inputs to grant success.</p> <p>Action: Disseminate these points to all departmental staff.</p> <p>Action: Reprioritise DoR duties to emphasise grants immediately post-REF.</p> <p>Action: DoR to review grant track-record yearly at the point of workload allocation and target those who have not applied, proposing specific workload time devoted to a grant application.</p> <p>Target: 80% senior staff without managerial roles funded and 30% junior staff funded.</p>	<p>2021/22: Review and reprioritisation to begin immediately post- REF (March 2021).</p> <p>Funding target attained 2023/24.</p>	<p>DoR to lead with support from recent successful grant applicants, research office, mentors, cluster leaders, DHoD (Workload)</p>	
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5.15	Ensure that information on support available for maternity, paternity, and adoption leave is communicated effectively to all staff.	<p>Awareness of parenting policies is high, but not complete at the point of entry (80% F, 76% M felt informed).</p> <p>Raising awareness is important because only two people in the recent past have had any experience of maternity and leave. Combined with high turnover of staff, this means that there is little “departmental know how” to fall back on.</p> <p>Furthermore, our fixed-term staff have found it difficult to identify parenting policies that apply to them (see section 5.4(i)).</p> <p>Staff focus groups indicate that knowing and being able to take advantage of the</p>	<p>Action: Use multiple visible channels to diffuse this information, including a copy of the policy (not just the link).</p> <p>Action: Place the relevant (AS) board in a high traffic area.</p> <p>Action: Repeat information at induction and yearly AS report at departmental meeting.</p> <p>Action: Assign mentor for parenting issues and allocate workload points.</p> <p>Action: Clarify with P&amp;C which policies apply to fixed term staff and which do not, including parenting policies.</p> <p>Action: Ask that an easy-to-read document be prepared by P&amp;C for fixed term staff on these and other benefits that apply to them.</p> <p>Target: 100% awareness and satisfaction with quality of knowledge in staff surveys by 2024.</p>	<p>Populate AS bulletin board fully from 2020-21.</p> <p>Updates at departmental meetings and inclusion in inductions from 2021/22.</p> <p>Document from P&amp;C on fixed term policies and benefits available 2023/24.</p>	<p>EDI standing committee to lead with support from DMan, Departmental Union Rep, HoD, P&amp;C.</p>	
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		policy can make a large difference in wellbeing.				
5.16	Promote and facilitate best practice in job-sharing and part-time career development at all levels.	<p>Our pilot job-share at grade 8, the first at such a high grade at the University, is viewed as a success by the department and the individuals involved and has since been followed by other departments.</p> <p>This job-share has allowed a member of staff who otherwise would have given up work for parenting to continue contributing at reduced hours.</p> <p>Lessons from our job share have not yet been extended to other levels. HoD feedback has suggested it might reduce the reluctance to take up headship.</p>	<p>Action: Develop a case study in tandem with P&amp;C of our grade 8 job share, also including other similar job shares that have followed on our lead.</p> <p>Action: Identify other posts, including HoD, for suitability as job-shares.</p> <p>Target: Develop lessons to improve existing and propose higher grade job-shares.</p>	<p>2021/22: Conduct research and write case studies</p> <p>Develop lessons and revise any relevant guidelines 2022/23.</p> <p>Identify potential pilot at higher grade 2023/24.</p>	DMan (both) to lead with support from P&C, Departmental Union Rep, HoD.	

5.17	<p>Ensure that the return to work procedure is informal, welcoming and supportive, and comprehensively followed up with regular debriefings.</p>	<p>Increasing contact and support during leave can improve retention.</p> <p>Our focus group feedback with both those who have taken parental leave and those who have been on sick leave suggests that the offer of contact and support improves wellbeing and the likelihood of return even if the individual does not take up KIT days.</p> <p>We do not currently have any designated group to design and oversee support: it is purely an <i>ad hoc</i> system.</p> <p>We have lost one high quality employee due to a</p>	<p>Action: Use the “How to...” guide to ensure that eligible staff take up their KIT day allowance and that the mode of contact for those on leave is flexible to allow this to be as easy and seamless as possible.</p> <p>Action: EDI standing committee to identify those who are on leave and advise on best modes of support and evaluate feedback on our support system.</p> <p>Action: EDI standing committee to assign a contact person to lead on this support, during and after return for everyone who is on leave.</p> <p>Target: Departmental guidance on support in place and positive feedback from staff surveys 2021 onwards.</p>	<p>2021/22: Support system guidance available.</p> <p>2023/24: Workload adjustment available.</p>	<p>EDI standing committee to lead with support from P&amp;C, departmental union rep</p>	

		<p>lack of follow-up upon return to work and poor workload assignment, illustrating the importance of this area.</p> <p>Reduced workload rather than simply modified tasks can improve re-integration and re-tooling, as retraining requires time in itself.</p>	<p>Action: Initiate discussions with P&amp;C about reduced workload for returners with consultation within our department and other relevant departments to determine appropriate reductions for leave.</p> <p>Target: Workload accommodation agreed.</p>			
5.18	Ensure all staff are aware of the Flexible Working Policy and understand how it works.	<p>Our survey results indicate that people feel well supported by the departmental flexible working culture (staff survey indicates support at 100% F, 90% M), but focus group comments suggest that perceptions of the formal policy have impaired uptake.</p> <p>The focus group discussions suggested that staff</p>	<p>Action: Publicise the (recently revised) policy itself, include any recently introduced protocols, using a HoD email shot.</p> <p>Action: Collect and publicise cross-departmental evidence of flexible working in practice.</p> <p>Action: Assign flexible working mentors within the faculty.</p> <p>Action: Monitor formal policy up-take.</p>	<p>2021: Promotion of policy</p> <p>2022/23: Case studies prepared, and mentors assigned.</p> <p>2023/24: Positive employee perceptions or clearly identified barriers.</p>	DMan to lead, supported by EDI standing committee, P&C.	5.23



		<p>perception of the “practice” of the policy at university level was the concern, not the policy itself, but little evidence was provided.</p> <p>We revised our advanced notice protocols because staff with caring responsibilities complained about the disruption of <i>ad hoc</i> scheduling during COVID-19.</p> <p>Such <i>ad hoc</i> scheduling creates an intrusion of work into home life that is not consistent with the people supporting strategy at Essex or a healthy work-life balance.</p>	<p>Target: a unanimous understanding that the flexible working system presents no barriers to employees compared to those on standard hours based on annual staff surveys, or alternatively clearly identify barriers and evidence for them.</p>			
5.19	Ensure that the zero-tolerance policy for bullying and harassment is locally	Staff survey responses indicate that the department tolerates some unsupportive	Action: Employees to complete their essential training around bullying and harassment (see AP 5.2).	2021/22: Departmental conversation to follow autumn 2021	HoD to lead with support from (rest of) EDI standing committee.	5.2

	<p>enforced and publicised.</p>	<p>language/behaviour (60% F, 90% M feel such language not tolerated), that they have experienced an uncomfortable situation whilst at Essex (40% F, 14% M have had such an experience) and that there is some uncertainty about how effectively the HoD will deal effectively with issues around bullying and harassment (60% F, 95% M feel that the HoD will).</p> <p>Focus groups indicate that individuals have felt uncomfortable at the department's informal – not formal – interactions.</p> <p>Understanding what the policy means for the department, with illustrations of informal interactions that are or are not</p>	<p>Action: EDI standing committee-led conversation to discuss application of bullying and harassment policy within the department's multi-cultural context, including enforcement.</p> <p>Target: Improvement in assessment of situation by staff in annual staff surveys with 100% support of HoD's effectiveness if any case arises.</p>	<p>presentation of the policy.</p> <p>Target improvement in HoD's effectiveness reached by 2023/24.</p> <p>2023/24: 95% of staff to complete essential training (AP 5.2).</p>		
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		acceptable in a departmental context can help to ensure that people know how to apply the policy “locally”.				
5.20	Evaluate the working and composition of the departmental steering group with a view to this becoming permanent support for departmental leadership.	<p>As our department grows, a mechanism to both spread workload and democratise decisions without slowing them unnecessarily is needed to preserve our inclusive culture.</p> <p>From our surveyed staff, 95% of men and 100% of women agree that they are given opportunities to serve on influential committees.</p> <p>We created the departmental steering group in the spring as a reaction to COVID-19; it has proven a good tool</p>	<p>Action: Delegate member of DSG to assess the type of decision on which DSG views have been and will be needed, supported by Student Voice committee and general departmental meeting feedback.</p> <p>Action: HoD and DHoD (workload) to review the composition of the decision makers to capture diversity in constituencies and enhance decision-making efficiency (e.g. the committee should not get too large).</p> <p>Action: Review how those not on DSG can remain enfranchised.</p> <p>Target: A list of DSG duties, which are viewed as properly work loaded and</p>	2021/22 to implement new composition, duties, and workload with regular reviews for feedback and improvement through 2023/24.	HoD to lead with support from DSG, Student Voice Committees.	

		<p>to achieve our workload and decision-making goals, according to the HoD and department at large (focus group feedback) and has not been a burden.</p> <p>We have not yet optimised this group, however, with EDI in mind. Reviewing its composition, workload points, and potential remit could improve its functioning further.</p>	<p>appropriate by entire department, as evaluated by staff and student survey consensus.</p>			
5.21	Improve workload allocation model.	<p>The staff survey indicates good support for the model (80% F, 95% M view as fair and transparent), but responses plus focus group feedback suggests that it is too complex to be fully transparent. The model is not presented in any depth in the</p>	<p>Action: Reconstitute workload committee with representation from all constituencies for an effectiveness and transparency review and simplification of the workload model.</p> <p>Target: Updated and simplified model available.</p> <p>Action: Review to include HoD role, workload allocation, and mitigations</p>	<p>2021/22-2022/23: WAM revision including external committee review.</p> <p>2022/23: updated and simplified WAM available.</p> <p>2023/24: 100% view the WAM as fair and transparent.</p> <p>2020/21: Review and modification of</p>	<p>DHoD (workload) to lead with support from and members of WAM committee, DMan, former, current and incoming HoDs.</p>	<p>5.16, 5.20, 5.22, 5.25</p>

		<p>induction meeting, resulting in frequent queries by probationers.</p> <p>In practice, a small group shoulders a large workload burden in the department. HoD workload has been a barrier to taking up the role (see AP 5.16). This caused disruption to the department at the last transfer of HoD 2019.</p> <p>Senior staff are reluctant to become HoD because the heavy workload crowds out research and impinges upon caring responsibilities. To spread the load and pass on experience we have as deputy the past HoD followed by the future HoD. Even so, the HoD role remains unattractive</p>	<p>for excess workload (including job-shares, AP 5.16, and modified DSG remit, AP 5.20).</p> <p>Action: Review to include strategic and workload review of departmental use of external committees.</p> <p>Target: No workload-based barriers to HoD role.</p> <p>Action: DHoD (workload) to present and take questions on the model at induction.</p> <p>Target: 100% view that model is fair and transparent in staff survey.</p>	<p>HoD workload and support.</p> <p>2023/24: Achieve no workload-based barriers to HoD role.</p>		
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		due to workload. So far, we have had only one female HoD.				
5.22	Ensure that the HoD's supporting statement for applications for promotion and increments takes excess workloads into account.	<p>The union is working with the University to resolve workload complaints, with an emphasis on increasing staffing to mitigate the problem of excess workloads.</p> <p>This is a long-term solution to workload burden but does not resolve the immediate problem of how excess workloads should be treated in career progression.</p> <p>Our workload model's method implies that excessive workloads (i.e., those that do not leave time for the University-specified and expected number of research days per week) translate into</p>	<p>Action: DHoD (workload) to incorporate last three years of workload into file for promotion committee. This to occur before HoD letter is written for promotions and increments.</p> <p>Target: Constraints on research due to workload demands to be reflected fully in departmental promotion and increment decisions and support statements, as judged by a consensus of staff survey responses.</p>	2020/21: Begin next promotions cycle (2021) and continue annually through 2023/24.	DHoD (Workload) to lead with support from HoD.	5.21

		<p>squeezed research time.</p> <p>Currently, workload totals are not well coordinated with the review for promotion so systematic account of excess workload has not occurred when we evaluate research contribution.</p> <p>This disadvantages some candidates who have contributed primarily in other areas. In practice, this has often been female members of staff.</p>				
5.23	<p>Ensure that all timetabled meetings take full regard of part-time staff and those with caring responsibilities.</p>	<p>We have many individuals with caring responsibilities in the department and in roles that require frequent meetings.</p> <p>These meetings need to be timetabled to allow work not to encroach</p>	<p>Action: Ensure that all timetabled meetings are within the (10-4) window.</p> <p>Target: No meetings outside of this time period and staff survey indicating consensus that the new system is fully supported.</p>	<p>2020/21: Meetings to be within (10-4) window.</p> <p>2020/21-2023/24: Established system of scheduling within hours.</p>	<p>DMan to lead, supported by departmental committee chairs.</p>	5.18

		<p>unduly into personal life in order to maintain work-life balance and well-being.</p> <p>AP 5.18 addresses <i>ad hoc</i> meetings, but timetabled meetings must also consider working hours that accommodate caring.</p> <p>Our approach to this has not been systematic in the past, leading to some inconsistencies.</p>				
5.24	Implement policy of inviting at least 40% women to speak at external seminar series.	To address junior staff suggestions and concerns about role models, we need to plan our seminar around both its role-model function and its other roles of attracting candidates to the department, disseminating research, and providing a focal	<p>Action: DHoD (workload) to supervise and implement this policy with seminar organisers.</p> <p>Report to EDI standing committee for end of year-round-up report at departmental meeting.</p> <p>Target: achieve 40% women speakers by 2022/23.</p>	2021/22-2023/24 with target invitations achieved by 2022/23.	DHoD (workload) with support from external seminar organisers, EDI standing committee	5.25



		point for the entire department. In 2019/20 one third of speakers were women. The role-model function can help address our pipeline of students into academic careers.				
5.25	Monitor female presence as staff role- models; ensure fair representation in group and individual roles without overburdening women.	As role models for students, our employability seminars featured four female and seven male speakers in 2018/19 and two women/four men in 2019/20. The 2019/20 external seminars, which are organised by a gender-balanced pair of staff, included one third female and two thirds male speaker. We also have 3 female members of our leadership team and DSG.  Our junior staff has suggested more	Action: Focus group meeting to find out which roles beyond the seminar do provide the potential for visible role models.  Action: Establish modified job assignment in workload for following (and subsequent) years that does not sacrifice career concerns but does promote a balanced overall exposure of staff to diverse role models.  Target: Review perception of role models in annual staff and student surveys with target of consensus support that role models leave no group behind.	2020/21: Focus groups and census in year  2021/22 -2023/24: implementation of modifications to work assignments from 2021/22, building to 40% overall female representation in visible roles by 2023/24, subject to overburdening with workload.	DHoD (workload) to lead with support from EDI standing committee	4.1, 5.21, 5.24

		<p>female role-models at our seminars.</p> <p>Role models can be found in wider activities than the seminar, including internal and external committees, recruitment, seminar audience and speakers, and an informal departmental presence.</p>	<p>Target: Increased female role models where identified as lacking.</p>			
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