



**Department Application**  
Bronze and Silver Award



## **ATHENA SWAN BRONZE DEPARTMENT AWARDS**

Recognise that in addition to institution-wide policies, the department is working to promote gender equality and to identify and address challenges particular to the department and discipline.

## **ATHENA SWAN SILVER DEPARTMENT AWARDS**

In addition to the future planning required for Bronze department recognition, Silver department awards recognise that the department has taken action in response to previously identified challenges and can demonstrate the impact of the actions implemented.

Note: Not all institutions use the term 'department'. There are many equivalent academic groupings with different names, sizes and compositions. The definition of a 'department' can be found in the Athena SWAN awards handbook.

## **COMPLETING THE FORM**

**DO NOT ATTEMPT TO COMPLETE THIS APPLICATION FORM WITHOUT READING THE ATHENA SWAN AWARDS HANDBOOK.**

This form should be used for applications for Bronze and Silver department awards.

You should complete each section of the application applicable to the award level you are applying for.

Additional areas for Silver applications are highlighted throughout the form: 5.2, 5.4, 5.5(iv)

If you need to insert a landscape page in your application, please copy and paste the template page at the end of the document, as per the instructions on that page. Please do not insert any section breaks as to do so will disrupt the page numbers.

## **WORD COUNT**

The overall word limit for applications are shown in the following table.

There are no specific word limits for the individual sections, and you may distribute words over each of the sections as appropriate. At the end of every section, please state how many words you have used in that section.

We have provided the following recommendations as a guide.

Department application	Bronze	Silver
<b>Word limit</b>	<b>10,500</b>	<b>12,301/12,500</b>
<i>Recommended word count</i>		
1. Letter of endorsement	500	695/500+200
2. Description of the department	500	491/500
3. Self-assessment process	1,000	1121/1,000
4. Picture of the department	2,000	2128/2,000
5. Supporting and advancing women's careers	6,000	6625/6,500
6. Case studies	n/a	914/1,000
7. Further information	500	327/500

<b>Name of institution</b>	University of Essex	
<b>Department</b>	School of Life Sciences (formally Biological Sciences)	
<b>Focus of department</b>	<b>STEMM</b>	
<b>Date of application</b>	20/05/2020	
<b>Award Level</b>	<b>Silver</b>	
<b>Institution Athena SWAN award</b>	<b>Date: Nov 2017</b>	<b>Level: Bronze</b>
<b>Contact for application</b>		
<b>Must be based in the department</b>	Dr Louise Beard	
<b>Email</b>	Lhbeard@essex.ac.uk	
<b>Telephone</b>	[REDACTED]	
<b>Departmental website</b>	<a href="https://www.essex.ac.uk/departments/life-sciences">https://www.essex.ac.uk/departments/life-sciences</a>	

## 1. LETTER OF ENDORSEMENT FROM THE HEAD OF DEPARTMENT

### 1.1. Recommended word count: Bronze: 500 words | Silver: 500 words

An accompanying letter of endorsement from the head of department should be included. If the head of department is soon to be succeeded, or has recently taken up the post, applicants should include an additional short statement from the incoming head.

Note: Please insert the endorsement letter **immediately after** this cover page.

Athena SWAN Manager

Equality Challenge Unit First floor,

Westminster Tower

Dear Dr Ruth Gilligan

I am extremely pleased to give my strongest support to this Athena SWAN Silver application. Building on the work and achievements from our previous Athena SWAN Bronze award in 2016, we have developed an academic community that provides a supportive culture to enable all staff to reach their full potential, demonstrated by improvements in our Staff Survey that showed **97% of women and 91% of men feel that the School is a great place to work.**

Our Women in Life Sciences (WILS) website has been highly effective in promoting our progressive working culture with information on family-friendly policies, promotion, career development opportunities, fellowships and training to encourage women, particularly after a career break. Following our previous Bronze Award, we have seen a **13% increase in men's awareness of Athena SWAN and women's awareness remains high. 89%M and 83%F (all staff) are now aware of the School's Athena SWAN activities (Bronze AP 1.4, 1.5).**

Since 2016 we recognised the proportion of females was low and we aimed to recruit more women. We **recruited 11 new female academic staff over the last 3 years**; and significantly in 2018-19 we **successfully recruited nearly 50% female academics (7F/8M)**. We achieved this by encouraging applications from females, having senior female academics chairing the panels and promoting our progressive working culture in all recruitment materials (**Bronze AP 3.1, 3.2**). In addition, we identified proportionately fewer women at Senior Lecturer level, so in 2017 we established a Mentoring Scheme (**Bronze AP 4.4**) to encourage and support promotion applications by female staff. This has already had impact, with **five female colleagues achieving promotion to Senior Lecturer or Professor**. Following this success, we extended the School Mentoring Scheme to support individuals across all levels (PGR to Prof with eight active mentoring partnerships) (**Bronze AP 3.8**).


There has been a strong impact seen as a result of the **support given to our PDRAs (Bronze AP 2.10, 2.11, 3.7, 3.10, 4.7); three have recently been appointed as lecturers (1M/1F) or awarded Fellowships (1M)** within our School. However, there is still more to do, and we have developed further actions including identifying opportunities for PDRAs to teach and supervise, plus consistency in induction, training and appraisal (**Action 5.17-Action 5.25**). The impact of our work is highlighted in our case study of a PDRA who was recently appointed as a lecturer in the School, after being supported through two paternity leaves, flexible P/T working, use of parent career fund and mentoring.

We have also improved the workload model to more accurately capture staff responsibilities and ensure parity within committee membership, outreach and recruitment activities (**Bronze AP 5.4, 5.9**). Given the fewer number of female staff in the School and the requirement for females to sit on committee/recruitment panels. **I have personally committed increasing time allocated from 5%FTE to 7.5%FTE for female staff to compensate for this (Action 5.48).**

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University of Essex



However, I also recognise that there is still much we have to do; one our continuing greatest challenges is to recruit more females and our Action Plan has been developed with this in mind (**Action 5.2**).

The information presented in this application (including qualitative and quantitative data) is an honest, accurate and true representation of the School and I am committed to ensuring the continued successful implementation to embed the Action Plan within the School Strategic priorities.

Yours sincerely,

Professor Phil Mullineux (current HoS, Aug 2017-Aug 2020)

Statement from incoming HOS Leo Schalkwyk

It is essential that we sustain these activities and I will continue to champion our Athena SWAN agenda going forward. We will continue to collectively work towards attracting, retaining and developing outstanding female academics. The School of Life Sciences is a collegial and enlightened place to work. Under the current Head, it has made a lot of progress in further improving its policies, procedures and culture in order to offer the best opportunities for success for all staff. As Director of Research over this period I was fully supportive of the measures taken and will actively lead further improvements. I will prioritise two aspects;

1. How we advertise and publicise posts to attract more female applicants.
2. Develop and implement our action plan to make our working practices even more flexible and family friendly (**Action 5.37-5.41**)

Professor Leonard Schalkwyk (incoming HoS, Aug 2020- Aug 2023)

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Word count: 695

## List of Acronyms

Acronym	Description
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
BBSRC	Biotechnology and Biological Sciences Research Council
CDT	Centre for Doctoral Training
CSEE	Computer Science and Electronic Engineering
DCT	Degree Course Team
DHLE	Destination of leavers from Higher Education
DoE	Director of Education
Dol	Director of Impact
DoR	Director of Research
DDoR	Deputy Director of Research
DTP	Doctoral Training Partnership
E&D	Equality and Diversity
ECR	Early Career Researcher
ECRC	Early Career Researcher Committee
ED&I	Equality, Diversity & Inclusion
EEQ	Employee Experience Questionnaire
ESG	Education Strategy Group
FHEA	Fellow of the Higher Education Academy
F/T	Full Time
FTC	Fixed Term Contract
GC	Group Convenor
GLA	Graduate Laboratory Assistant
HEA	Higher Education Academy
HERA	Higher Education Role Analysis
HESA	Higher Education Statistics Agency
HoG	Head of Group
HoS	Head of School
KIT	Keeping in Touch
KTP	Knowledge Transfer Partnership
NewComERs	Network for Early Career Essex Researchers
NSS	National Student Survey
OD	Organisational Development
PDR	Performance and Development Review
PDRA	Postdoctoral Research Associate
PG	Postgraduate
PGR	Postgraduate Research
PGRE	Postgraduate Research and Education
PGT	Postgraduate Taught
PI	Principal Investigator
P/T	Part Time
PYO	Placement Year Officer
RAE	Research Assessment Exercise
REO	Research and Enterprise Office

REF	Research Excellent Framework
RM	Research Manager
RSG	Research Strategy Group
SM	School Manager
SAO	Study Abroad Officer
SAT	Self-Assessment Team
SCS	Staff Culture Survey
SDC	Student Development Centre
SSC	Senior Staff Committee
SSG	School Steering Group
SIL	School Inclusion Lead
SVG	Student Voice Group
STEM	Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics
TM	Technical Manager
TNA	Training Needs Assessment
TSM	Technical Services Manager
UB	Unconscious Bias
UoE	University of Essex
UG	Undergraduate
UKRI	UK Research and Innovation
UROP	Undergraduate Research Opportunity Programme
WLM	Workload Model
WISE	Women in Science, Technology and Engineering
WN	Womens' Network

Data are presented by academic year 2018-19, 2017-18 and 2016-17 and 'current' data comprises the most recent figures at the start of 2019-20 (for staff is April 2020). Surveys refer to the latest Staff Culture Survey (SCS) conducted in July 2019; or SCS 2016 conducted as part of our last Bronze Award. SCS 2016 only surveyed academic staff (33M/12F at the time) which also included staff from Sports Science who have since left to create a new department (hence there were more F academics, but less F overall in 2016 survey). SCS 2019 surveyed, academic, professional services and technical staff (35M/30F) and is more representative of the School as a whole.

The AS Bronze Award refers to the School's last Bronze Award (April 2017). HESA National benchmarking figures (Biological Sciences division) are used for both student and staff data.

Initiatives implemented as a result of **Bronze actions** plus new initiatives established since our Bronze award in 2016 that have led to a substantial positive impact have been highlighted throughout in **bold**.

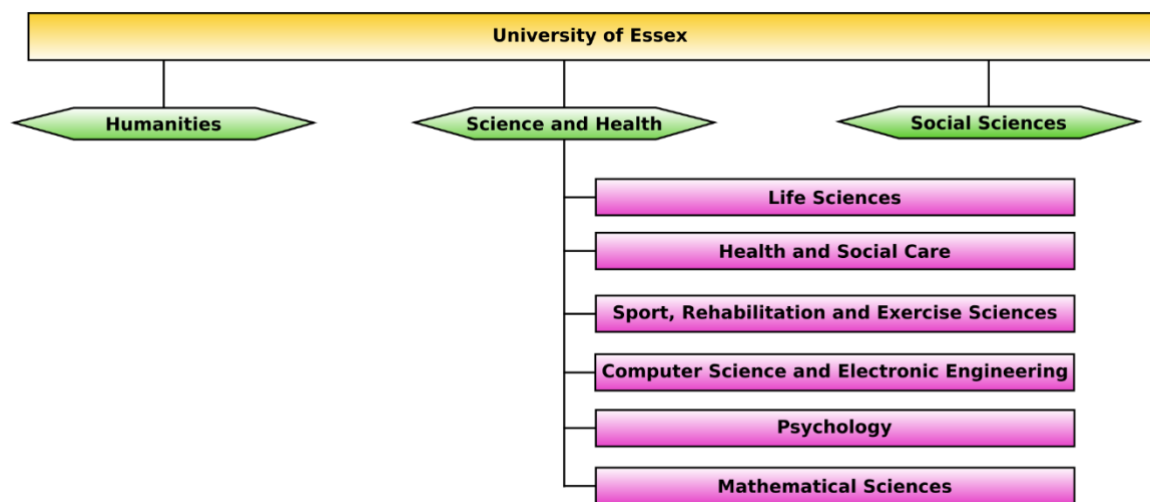


## 2. DESCRIPTION OF THE DEPARTMENT

### 2.1. Recommended word count: Bronze: 500 words | Silver: 500 words

Please provide a brief description of the department including any relevant contextual information. Present data on the total number of academic staff, professional and support staff and students by gender.

The University of Essex is a campus University founded in 1964 with three Faculties: Humanities, Science and Health, and Social Sciences. The School of Life Sciences is within the Faculty of Science and Health (**Figure 2.1**). The School (formerly the School of Biological Sciences), previously included staff working in Sports and Exercise Science (SRES; forming their own School in 2017- SRES staff have been removed from the figures in section 4) and was renamed the School of Life Sciences in 2019 (**Figure 2.1**).



**Figure 2.1: University of Essex Faculty of Science and Health Structure**

In 2018, the University invested £18 million in a state-of-the-art STEM Teaching Facility. Located adjacent to the School, it accommodates a large exhibition space, café/social spaces, generating a strong sense of community. It houses a 200 seat IT learning space and teaching laboratories capable of delivering educational activities to over 180 UG and PG students. In 2019, £50,000 was ringfenced to equip a new 'Biomedical Science' project lab facility as a dedicated space for final year dissertation laboratory research.



**Figure 2.2: STEM Building and teaching lab facilities at the University of Essex**

**Teaching:**

Our UG BSc degrees in Biochemistry, Biomedical Science, Genetics, Biological Sciences, Marine Biology and Human Biology recruit a diverse and balanced student body (Table 2.1); consistently delivering high levels of student satisfaction (90% in NSS, 2018-19).

There are five UG Course Directors (3F/2M- 4 SAT), a Senior Tutor (1F, SAT), four Study Abroad/Placement Officers (1F/3M), and a female DoE. We offer MSc in Biotechnology, Molecular Medicine, Cancer Biology and Tropical Marine Biology and currently have 50 PGTs. We also offer MSD, MPhil and PhDs. We currently have 86 PGRs, (67%F), four PGT Course Directors (3M/1F) and a female PGR Director (SAT).

**Research and Enterprise:**

We have four Research Groups led by Group Convenors, (2F/2M- 3 SAT) who manage PGR/ECR career development, creating a vibrant research environment:

- Ecology and Environmental Microbiology
- Genomics and Computational Biology
- Plant Productivity
- Protein Structure and Mechanisms of Disease

The Essex Plant Innovation Centre (EPIC) is led by a female Director, (SAT), who is also our School DoI and supports REF impact cases. EPIC explores opportunities to engage with industry/stakeholders. The School has an Advisory Board (established 2016) comprising external organisations from Industry, Government/Professional bodies and charities, informing our teaching and research. It has a sense of community and collegiality which has positive impacts throughout the School.

**Table 2.1:** Student numbers at October 2019

	Total	Male	Female	% Female
Undergraduate	748	338	410	55%
Postgraduate Taught	50	24	26	52%
Postgraduate Research	86	28	58	67%

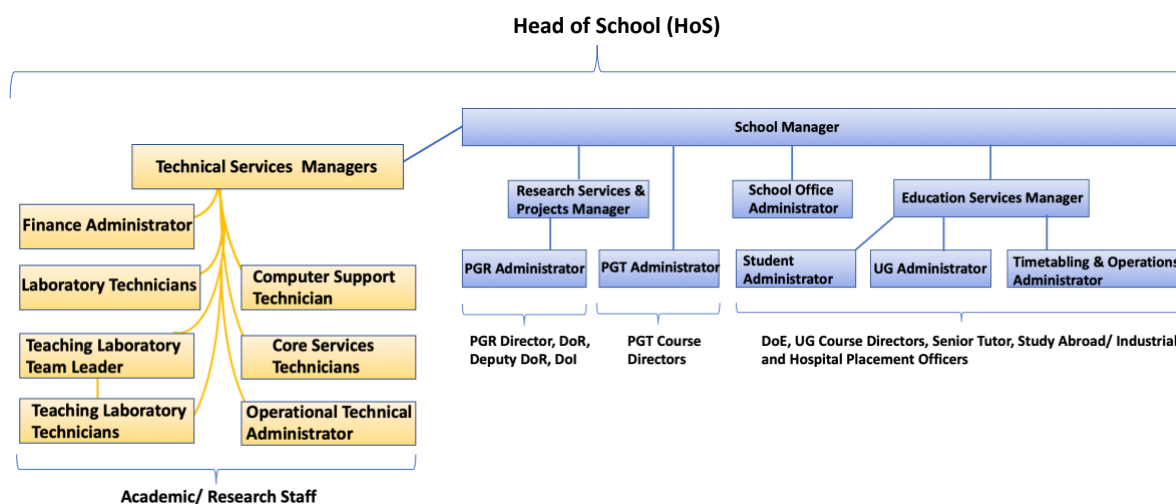
**Staff:**

Academic staff are appointed on either Academic, Scholarship, Education and Research (ASER) or Academic, Scholarship and Education (ASE) contracts. As of April 2020, 29% of lecturers are female; 58 academics (17F/41M) and 21 PDRAs (9F/12M).

**Table 2.2: Staff numbers at April 2020**

Current Staff April 2020	Total	Male	Female	% Female
ASER	46	36	10	22%
ASE	12	5	7	58%
PDRA	21	12	9	43%
Professional Services (Admin)	11	2	9	82%
Technical	28	17	11	39%

Although we have a gender imbalance at senior levels, with more male Professors (9) than females (3), our DoI, DoE and PGR Director are female, and the PVC Research across the University is a senior female Professor seconded from our School. Since 2016, we appointed 11 female academics, promoted 4F to Senior Lecturer and one to Professor. We have nine PS staff, School Manager and Research Manager. We have 28 Laboratory Technicians, 15M/9F support the Research laboratories and 2M/2F support the STEM building.



**Figure 2.3: Structure of how the School's Technical Services (orange), Professional Services and Support Staff (blue) fit into key academic administrative roles.**

WORD COUNT:491

### 3. THE SELF-ASSESSMENT PROCESS

#### 3.1. Recommended word count: Bronze: 1000 words | Silver: 1000 words

Describe the self-assessment process. This should include:

(i) a description of the self-assessment team

SAT has a broad membership (15M/10F) with representation from individuals working F/T, P/T, flexibly and with caring responsibilities (Table 3.1). The SAT comprises UG and PG students (2F/2M), PS staff (1M/3F) and academic staff members of all levels: Professors (4M/1F), Senior Lecturers (3M/3F), Lecturers (4M/1F) and PDRA's (1M).

Some SAT members have recent experience of the School's recruitment/permanency/promotion processes, unconscious bias training and senior management responsibilities. A Core Team (blue), comprises of 2 lecturers (2M) and 2 Senior lecturers (2F). Members are at different career stages, and include probationary (1M) and established staff, those balancing home responsibilities with work (4F/9M), or senior management roles (9F/8M). Membership is reviewed annually. Staff were invited to join by open call, and some were approached based on experiences. From feedback on our previous award, we now include more senior staff. We meet termly to track progress, implement and monitor actions and prepare future applications (Bronze 1.2).

**Table 3.1: Composition of the Self-Assessment Team**

Name	Photo	Job Title	Length of time at Essex	Experience	Role in team
Louise Beard		Senior Lecturer	12 years. Started as 0.6FTE and increased to 1FTE in 2016/17.	[REDACTED] Senior management Promotion. Sits on Senate.	<b>Athena Swan Lead.</b> Coordinated SAT activities, wrote application. Sits on and chairs AS assessment panels.
Uli Bechtold		Senior Lecturer, Director of Recruitment	13 years	Progressed from PDRA to lecturer, to Senior Lecturer. Promotion	Analysed data and wrote the section on student data
Greg Brooke		Lecturer	7 years	[REDACTED]	Core SAT team. Wrote parts of the application, edited the whole application.
Tom Cameron		Senior Lecturer	6 years	[REDACTED]	Wrote the section on promotion and permanency
Alex Dumbrell		Professor, Deputy Director of Research	9 years	[REDACTED]	Wrote the section on School REF submissions and contributed to focus groups.

[REDACTED]		UG student	2 years as UG student (Biomedical Science).	Currently on NHS placement year at Ipswich Hospital	UROP Student. Analysed staff survey and plotted data figures.
[REDACTED]		PhD student	6 months	New to the School, brings the PGR perspective.	Participated in the PGR survey and focus group
Robert Ferguson		PDRA (Senior research officer)	5 years	[REDACTED] Recently progressed from PDRA to Lecturer within the School.	Wrote sections on flexible working and career breaks
Gregor Grant		Technical Services Manager	4 years	[REDACTED]	Wrote the section on HR policies
Denise Green		School Manager	16 years	Experience of working in several departments across the university. Works flexibly and P/T.	Wrote the section on representation of men and women on committees and co-wrote the section on the workload model
Mike Hough		Senior Lecturer, Director of PGT studies	9 years	[REDACTED] Senior management. Promotion.	SAT team member. Wrote the Staff data section
Tracy Lawson		Professor, Director of Impact	21 years	Progressed from PDRA to Lecturer, Senior Lecturer then Professor. Promotion.	Proof-read and edited the document
Antonio Marco		Lecturer, Course Director for Genetics	6.5 years	[REDACTED] Senior management. Sits on Senate.	Ran the UG survey and wrote several sections in the Flexible working and career breaks section
Terry McGenity		Professor	20 years	[REDACTED] Promotion.	Proof-read and edited the document
Dilly Meyer		Research Services and Projects Manager	30 years at the University in a variety of roles	Works part time and flexibly	Proof reading and editing, assistance with data collection.
Phil Mullineaux		Professor, Head of School	16 years	Senior management. Sits on Senate.	Proof-read and edited the document, co-wrote the section on the workload model
Emma Revill		PGR Administrator	19 years	[REDACTED] Flexible working	Professional services representative
Leo Schalkwyk		Professor, Director of Research, Incoming Head of School	6 years	[REDACTED] works flexibly.	As incoming Head of School, oversaw the Action Plan

Ben Skinner		Lecturer	10 months	Recent experience of the Induction process.	Ran the UG survey, wrote the culture section and Action plan, edited document.
Michelle Taylor		Lecturer, Course Director for Marine Biology	2 years	Recently gained permanency Uses flexible working	Wrote the outreach section
Vladimir Teif		Lecturer	5 years	Works flexibly	Wrote the section on flexible working arrangements
[REDACTED]		UG Student	3rd year UG student (Biomedical Science)	Currently in her final year, applying for MScs	UROP Student. Analysed staff survey and plotted data figures.
Corinne Whitby		Senior Lecturer, Director of PGR studies	14 years	[REDACTED]	Wrote a Pen Picture of the School. Previous SAT lead.
[REDACTED]		UG Student	2 years as UG student (Biomedical Science)	Currently on an NHS placement year at Public Health England.	UROP Student. Analysed staff survey and plotted data figures.
Jonathan Worrall		Senior Lecturer, Course Director for Biochemistry	12 Years	[REDACTED]	Wrote the section on support given to students for career progression

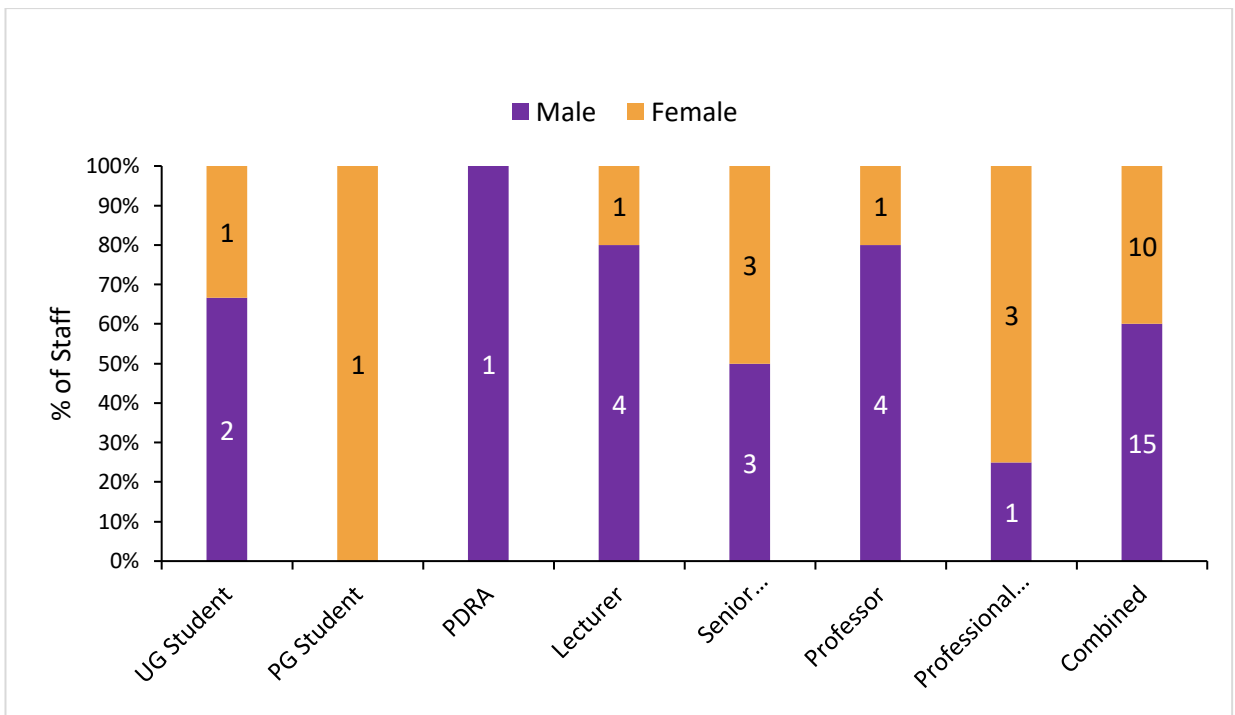
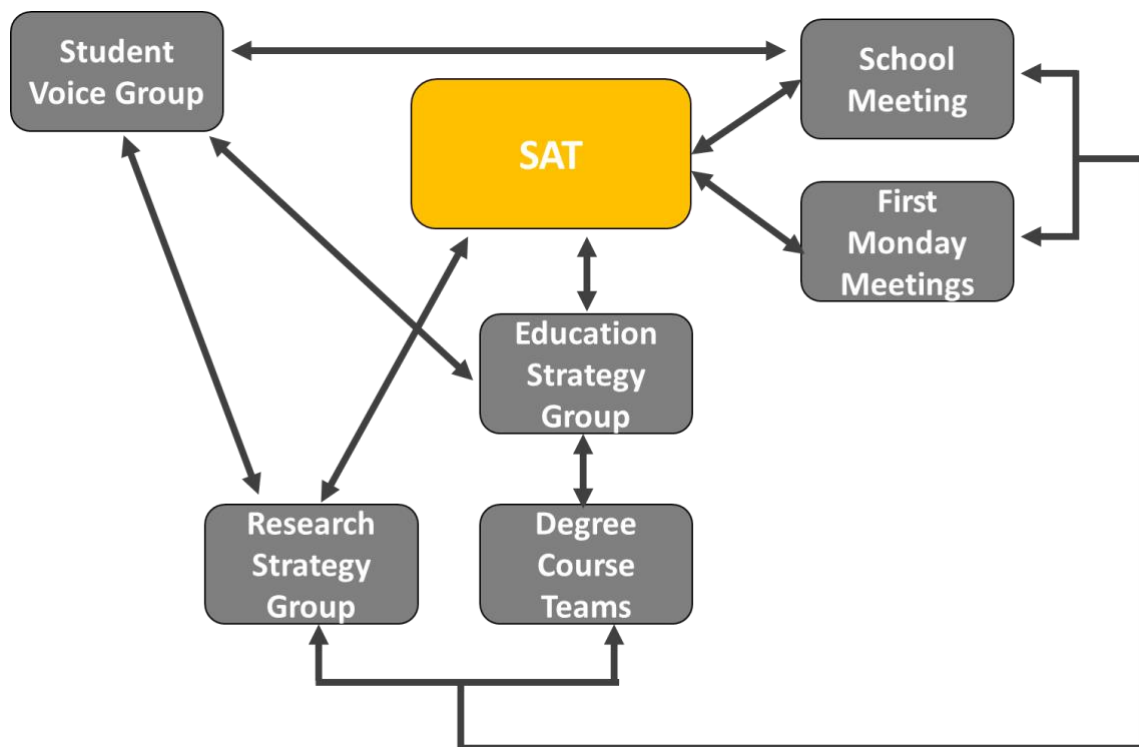


Figure 3.1: Summary of the SAT as a breakdown of career level

(ii) an account of the self-assessment process

The SAT meet termly; Core Team have more frequent meetings as necessary. Following our previous application, we have also incorporated AS into school procedures (AS is a standing item on our termly School meeting agenda). At least one member of the decision-making committees is also a SAT member: HoS (M), DoI (F), PGR Director (F), Director of Recruitment (F) and Director of Employability (M) are all SAT members. This has ensured that all staff are familiar with AS and its philosophy and values are embedded fully, allowing for dissemination and discussion of AS throughout the School (**Bronze 1.4**) (**Figure 3.2**). By using existing communication channels in this way, we have found that Athena SWAN principles have become an integral part of the way we work, supporting real sustainable cultural change (**Bronze 1.5**). Following our previous application, the School introduced recognition of workload hours for the SAT Team. **SAT members have been given 15hr and Core Team 30hr (Bronze 5.4)**. It has been recognised that during writing phase that the workload increases, so going forward we will increase the Lead's WLM hours from 50 to 150 in the year prior to submission (**Action 3.1**). As a result of this increased support, there has been a significant increase in staff engagement in joining the SAT Team. To allow all staff the opportunity to be involved in the current application, the document and action plan was shared throughout the entire process so that colleagues could comment on the data and discuss actions.



**Figure 3.2: Summary of the routes of AS dissemination throughout the School**

We continue to use staff and student surveys to identify improvements in equality (**Bronze 1.3, 2.1**). This encouraged School-wide discussion and raised the AS profile. All staff (academic and PS) were surveyed in July 2019 (82% response rate (75/92), of 38M (51%) and 37F (49%)) and findings presented (Oct 2019), sparking a renewed interest in

joining the SAT. Separate surveys for UG, PGT and PGR students were also conducted. UG students completed the survey at the start of PC lab classes, selected to capture as many students across years as possible. Participation in student surveys was 44% (32% PGT, 42% of PGR, 45% UG). As follow-ups, focus group discussions were held with ECRs (3F/2M), staff taking paternity leave/flexible working (1F/6M) and staff experiencing promotion/permanency procedures (2F/2M).

The SAT Lead (F) is an AS Assessment panel member and Chair (**Bronze 1.1**). We consulted with other departments (Language and Linguistics, CSEE) who had already submitted for awards via the University Peer College. This is a group of individuals across the University who have experience of writing AS applications and/or assessment panels. A draft version of the application and AP was viewed by the University Peer College members, Faculty Dean and several members of Organisational Development. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] Finally, all staff were invited to comment on the application during the external review phase (Feb-April 2020). During the final stages of completing this application, the university was closed due to the COVID19 pandemic, so we convened meetings and shared documents online.

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

The SAT team will become the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion committee (EDIC), with a broader, more encompassing remit (**Action 3.2**). The EDIC will meet termly and AS/EDIC will continue to be a standing agenda item at School meetings (**Action 3.3**). The EDIC will discuss progress and review action points. To continue to broaden membership, it will have rotating tenureship, with members serving for 3-5 years (**Action 3.4**). Staff will be replaced in a phased approach to ensure continuity and all staff will join the EDIC at some point on a rolling basis, giving everyone the opportunity to be involved with the School voice. Senior management (HoS, DoR, DoI, DoE) will have permanent EDIC membership to ensure decisions are supported through to implementation. Minutes of EDIC meetings will be shared with the School and relevant points discussed at School meetings to ensure staff and students are updated.

We will work with the University's central AS team and our peers to share examples of best practice (**Action 3.5**). We will act as AS champions within the University by contributing to the Peer College network (our AS Lead is the Chair) (**Action 3.6**). The staff and student surveys (UG/PGT/PGR) will be repeated annually to allow us to assess the impact of our work and to identify issues to address (**Action 3.7**). Focus groups will be run and will be designed to target areas determined by the EDIC (**Action 3.8**). The results of these surveys/focus groups will be discussed at EDIC meetings and relevant points raised at the School meetings and/or with senior management (**Action 3.9**). We will encourage three EDIC members to put themselves forward to become an Advance HE assessor in order to have a better understanding of the AS Charter and fully embed it into the School ethos (**Action 3.10**).



### SECTION 3 Self-assessment process SILVER IMPACT

- As a result of **Bronze 1.4/1.5**, awareness of AS has increased by 8% from 78% in 2016 (76%M/83%F) to 86% in 2019 (89%M/83%F)

WORD COUNT: 1121

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#### Section 3 Action Point Summary

**Action 3.1:** Increase the WLM hours from 50 to 150 in the year prior to submission for the SAT Convener

**Action 3.2:** Rebrand the SAT team as the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion committee (EDIC) to provide a more encompassing platform and broaden the coverage of our inclusivity work

**Action 3.3:** AS will remain a standing item on the School's termly meeting agenda. The AS Lead will work on implementation of the AP and report to the Senior Leadership Team. Minute meetings, and report summary progress to the Peer College and Deputy Vice Chancellor and generally ensure that progress of the AS agenda is part of the School's strategic plans. This will be facilitated through the Senior Leadership Team (including the HoS, DoE, DoI, & DoR). Minutes will be made available to all staff.

**Action 3.4:** To provide the EDIC with a rotating tenureship of staff serving for 3-5yrs.

**Action 3.5:** Have a bi-annual meeting with the institutional Athena Swan lead and other EDIC members from other Schools to highlight examples of best practice and to discuss university-level action points.

**Action 3.6:** We will act as SWAN champions within the University by contributing to the Peer College network, institutional AS submissions and E&D/SWAN events.

**Action 3.7:** Conduct Staff/Student surveys annually and consider technology such as clickers or Kahoot to increase uptake

**Action 3.8:** Conduct annual focus groups to measure progress against the AS charter principles.

**Action 3.9:** Provide an annual analysis of the AS surveys and focus group data sets for discussion at School meetings and/or with senior management.

**Action 3.10:** To better understand the AS Charter and fully embed it into the School ethos, we will encourage three SAT/EDIC members to apply to become Advance HE assessors.

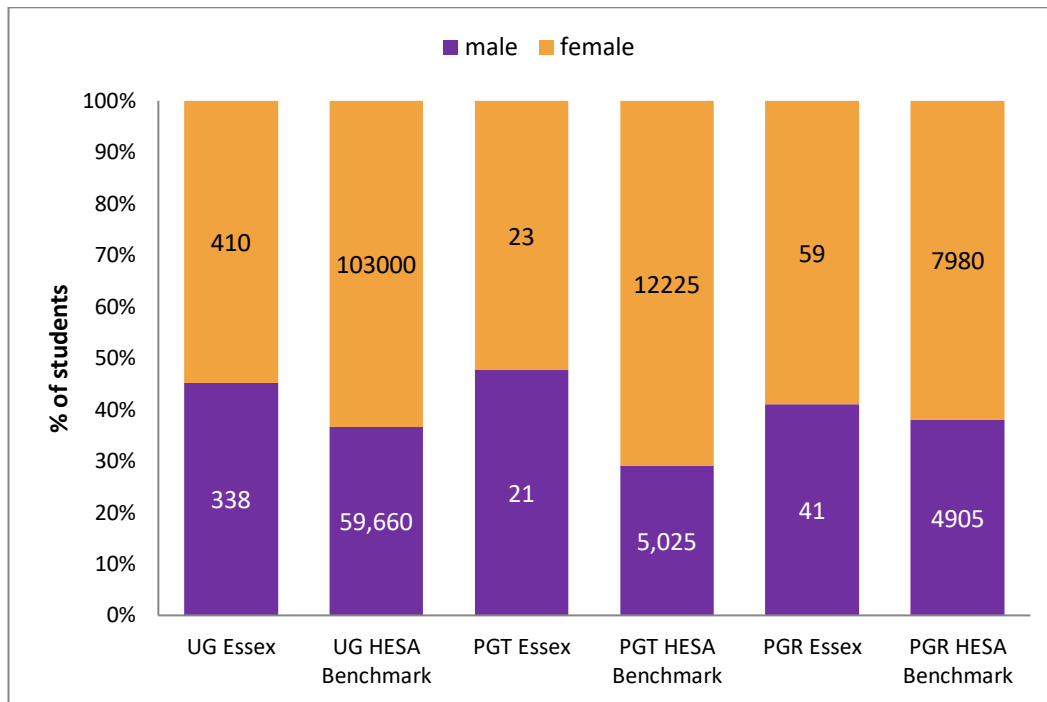
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#### 4. A PICTURE OF THE DEPARTMENT

Recommended word count: Bronze: 2000 words | Silver: 2000 words

##### 4.1. Student data

**Figure 4.1** shows the current student population versus benchmark Institutions. Our UG/PGT/PGR population is 55%/52%/59%F respectively, showing greater parity than the HESA benchmarks of 63%/71%/62%F.



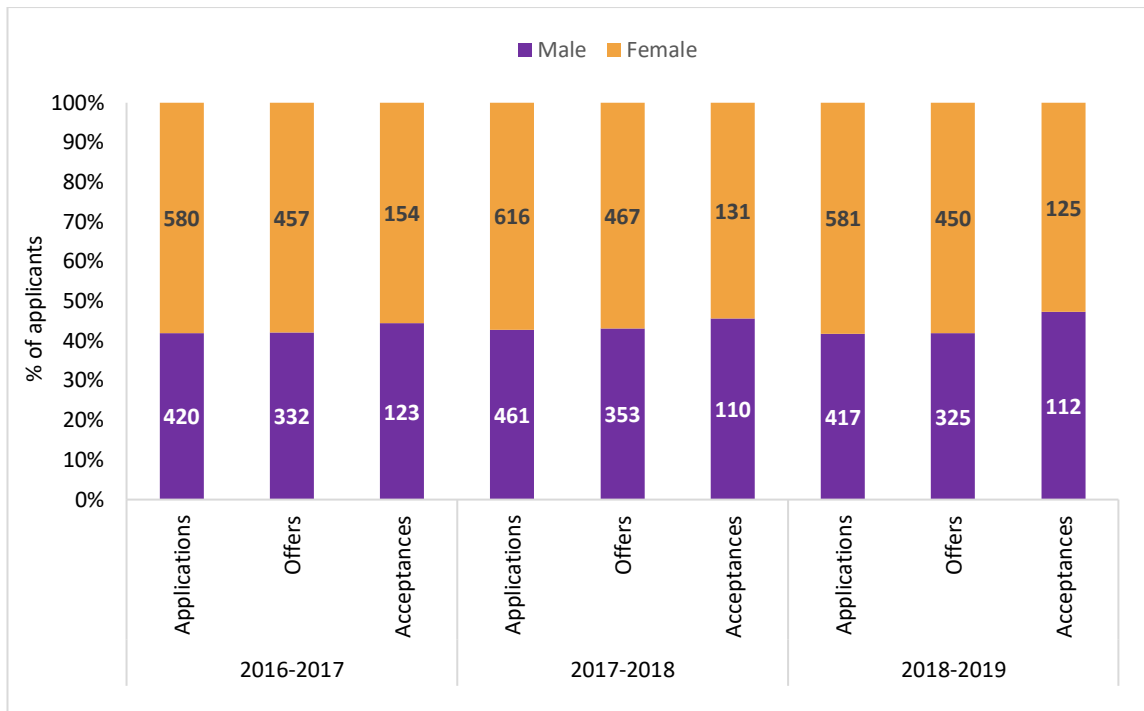
**Figure 4.1: Current student population as of Oct 2019 versus benchmark data (Benchmarking data- against HESA Biological Sciences division)**

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

N/A; these students are covered by Essex Pathways Department.

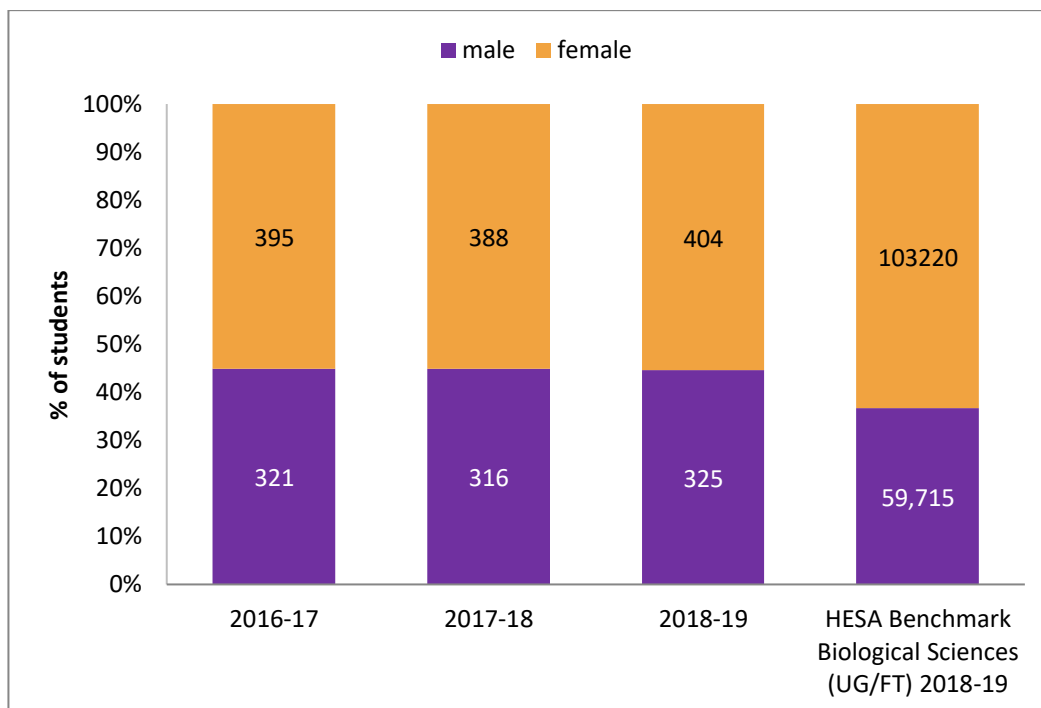
(ii) Numbers of undergraduate students by gender

We have no P/T UG courses. F/T UG student applications/offers/accepts data is shown in **Figure 4.2** and student number data is shown in **Figure 4.3**.



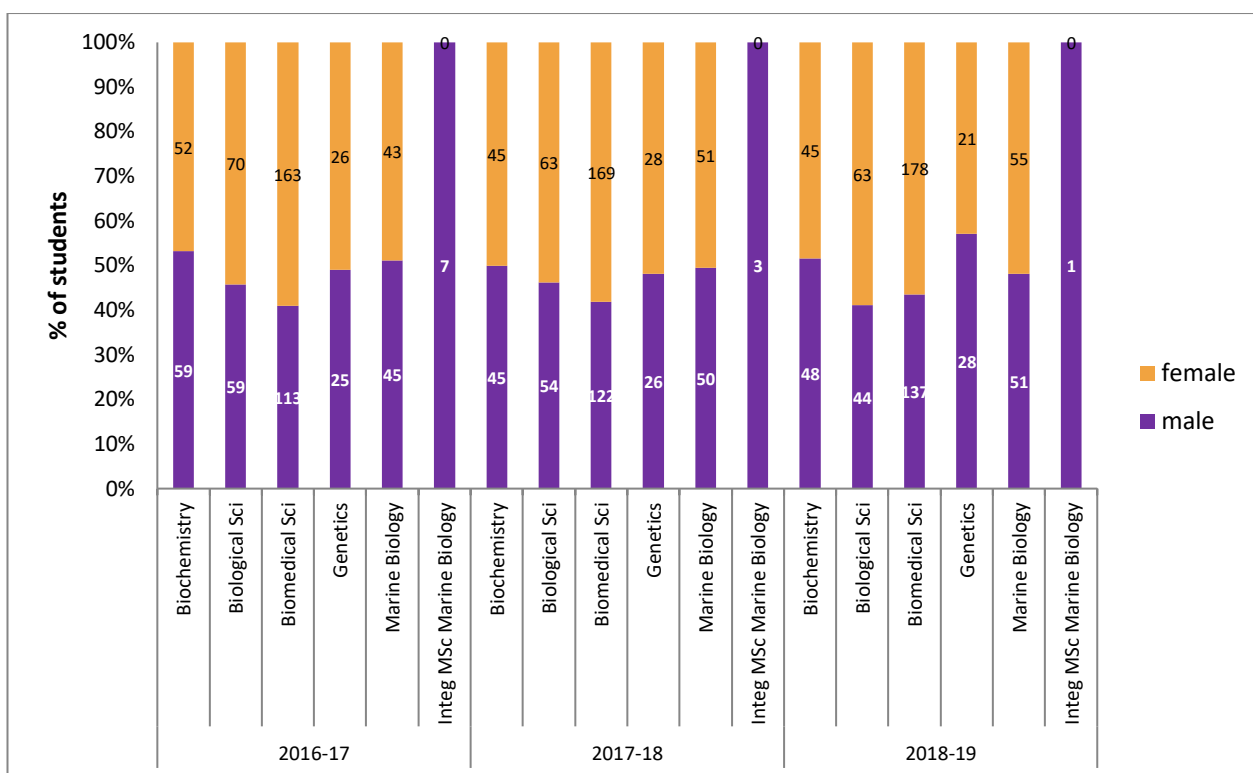
**Figure 4.2: UG applications, offers and acceptances**

The %F applications/offers/acceptances has remained consistent (57%-58% applications, 57-58% offers, 53-56% acceptances). We will continue to monitor this ([Action 4.3](#)).



**Figure 4.3: UG student number by year and gender**

Our UG student numbers have remained consistent over the past 3 years (55%F each year). This is slightly below the HESA benchmark for 2018-19 (Biological Sciences) of 63%F but gender parity is achieved.



**Figure 4.4: UG course enrolment by year and gender (Integrated MSc Marine Biology has been phased out, hence numbers declining).**

**Table 4.1: Number and Percentage UG degree classifications obtained by gender between 2015-19**

Year	Classification	Female Number	% of Fs obtaining classification	Male Number	% of Ms obtaining classification	% students awarded each classification
2015-16	I	46	41%	26	33%	38%
	II(i)	54	48%	37	47%	48%
	II(ii)	12	11%	11	14%	12%
	III	1	<1%	4	5%	<3%
<b>Totals</b>		<b>113</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>78</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>
2016-17	I	53	46%	26	31%	40%
	II(i)	47	41%	42	50%	45%
	II(ii)	15	13%	15	18%	15%
	III	1	<1%	1	>1%	<1%
<b>Totals</b>		<b>116</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>84</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>
2017-18	I	46	47%	30	38%	43%
	II(i)	43	44%	33	42%	43%
	II(ii)	8	8%	16	20%	14%
	III	1	<1%	0	0%	<1%
<b>Totals</b>		<b>98</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>79</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>
2018-19	I	47	38%	19	27%	34%
	II(i)	53	43%	41	59%	49%
	II(ii)	21	17%	10	14%	16%
	III	2	<2%	0	0%	1%
<b>Totals</b>		<b>123</b>		<b>70</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>

Females consistently outperformed males in obtaining 'Good degrees' (**Table 4.1**), with an average of 87% of female students achieving a First or 2.1 degree, compared to 82% of males over the 4 year period.

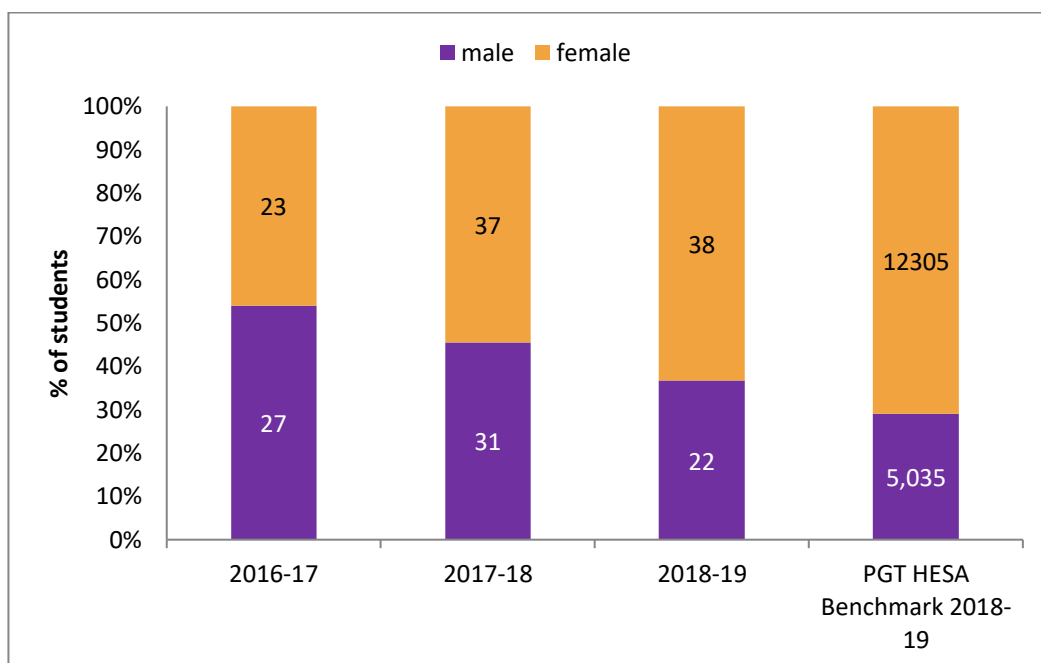
- Average of 43%F achieved Firsts (range 38-47%), compared to 32%M achieving Firsts (range 27-38%).
- Average of 44%F achieved a 2:1 (range 41-48%) compared to 50%M achieving a 2.1 (range 42-59%).
- Average of 12%F achieved a 2:2 (range 8-17%), compared to 17%M (range 14-20%).

Very small numbers of both sets of students achieved a Third (<3%) over the four-year period. We will continue to monitor UG degree classifications and provide more support to students in years 2 and 3 via tutorials/revision classes to improve degree classifications (**Action 4.1**).

We have also piloted interventions ('Unlocking Excellence'- small group meetings and teaching, and peer to peer support) targeted at poorly performing year 1 students (**Action 4.2**).

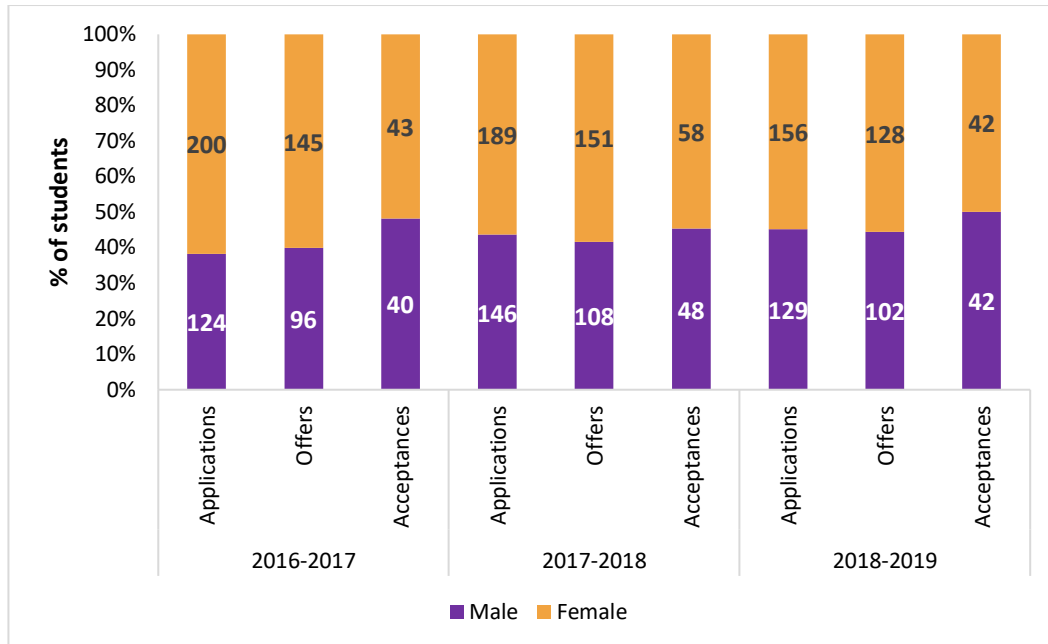
(iii) Numbers of men and women on postgraduate taught degrees

Full- and part-time. Provide data on course application, offers and acceptance rates and degree completion rates by gender.



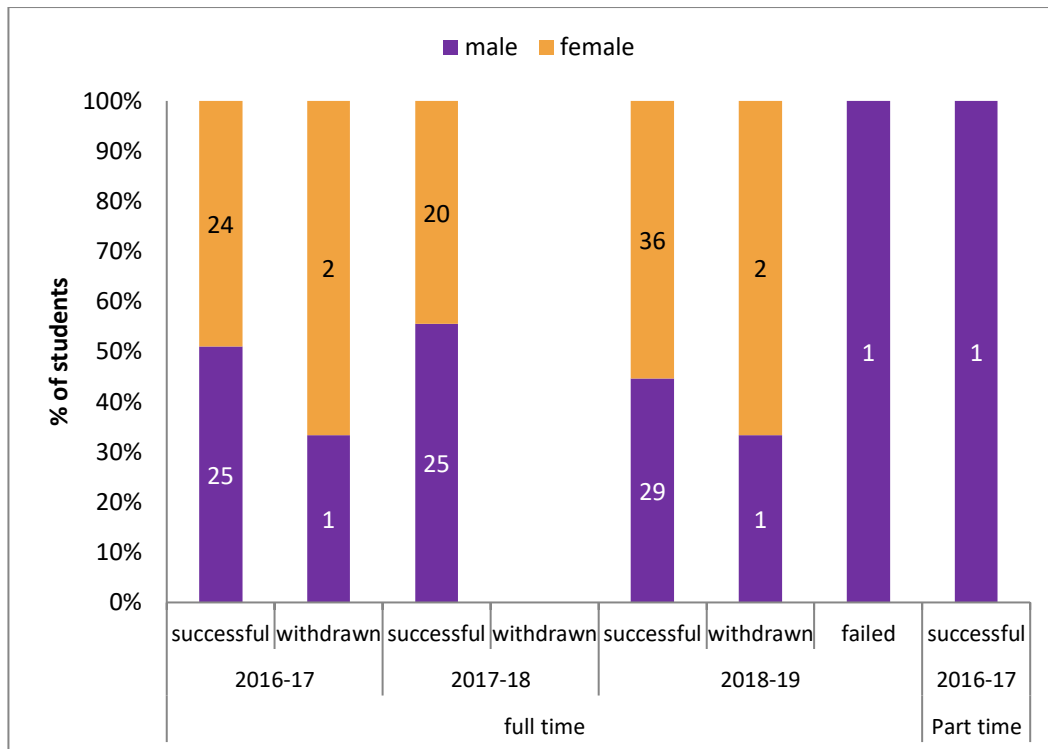
**Figure 4.5: PGT students by year and gender**

As a result of positive actions following our last Award, including updating promotional material (**Bronze 2.2**) and website information to make it more gender balanced, and raising the profiles of female staff and students in the School (**Bronze 2.7**), the number of female PGT students has successfully increased from 46% in 2016-17 to 63% in 2018-19, converging towards the national standard (HESA PGT benchmark: 71%) (**Figure 4.3**).



**Figure 4.6: PGT Applications, offers and acceptances by year and gender**

The %F applications/offers/acceptances has decreased (62%-55% applications, 60-56% offers, 52-50% acceptances). This is moving towards parity and we will continue to monitor this (**Action 4.3**).



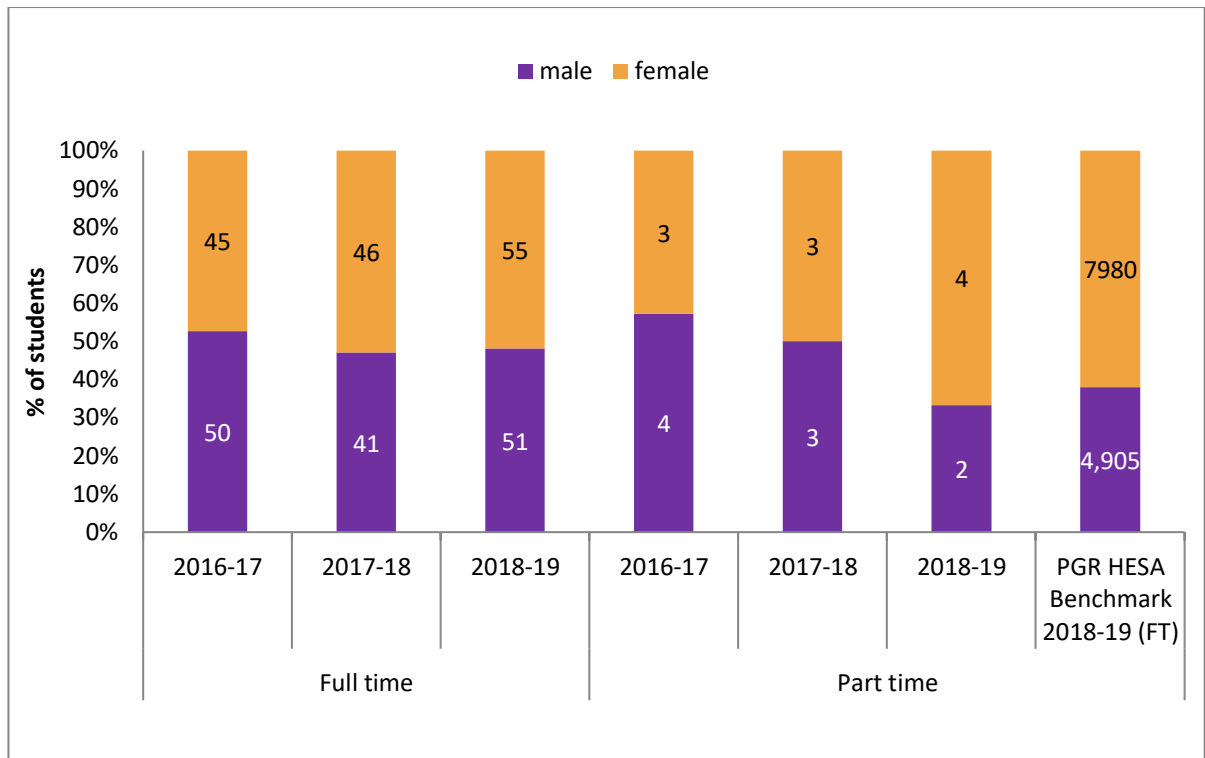
**Figure 4.7: PGT completion rates by year and gender**

The proportion of females completing a PGT course has increased from 49% in 2016-17 to 55% in 2018-19. This may be attributed our updated marketing material (**Bronze 2.2**). We have since restructured our PGT courses to improve cohesion across the different MSc programmes and to give the PGT students a sense of community.

Over the 3 years, 6 students withdrew (4F/2M). We will investigate the reasons for withdrawal in the future, for example requesting an Exit interview (**Action 4.4**).

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

Full- and part-time. Provide data on course application, offers, acceptance and degree completion rates by gender.



**Figure 4.8: PGR students by year and gender, full and part time**

As a result of positive actions following our last Athena Swan application including the appointment of a female PGR Director, updating promotional material (**Bronze 2.2**) gender balanced website information and raising the profiles of female staff and students in the School (**Bronze 2.7**; **Figure 4.8**), the proportion of female PGR F/T students has successfully increased from 47% to 52% (**Figure 4.7**), moving towards the HESA benchmark (62%). Since 2016-17, the proportion of female part time PGR students has increased from 43% to 67%, although numbers are small (4F/2M).



**Lydia's story**

I want to teach a younger generation about how important it is to respect nature and take care of our oceans.



**Kathryn's story**

It's weird, I cannot imagine going to university elsewhere.



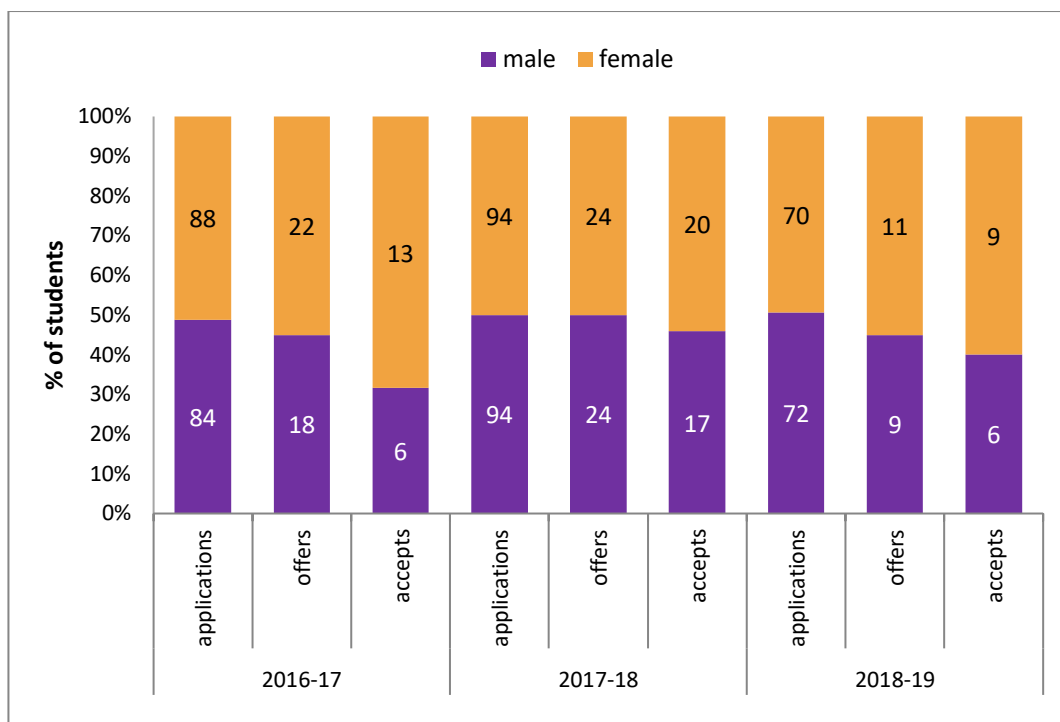
**Megan's story**

It's really friendly; you kind of get to know everyone.



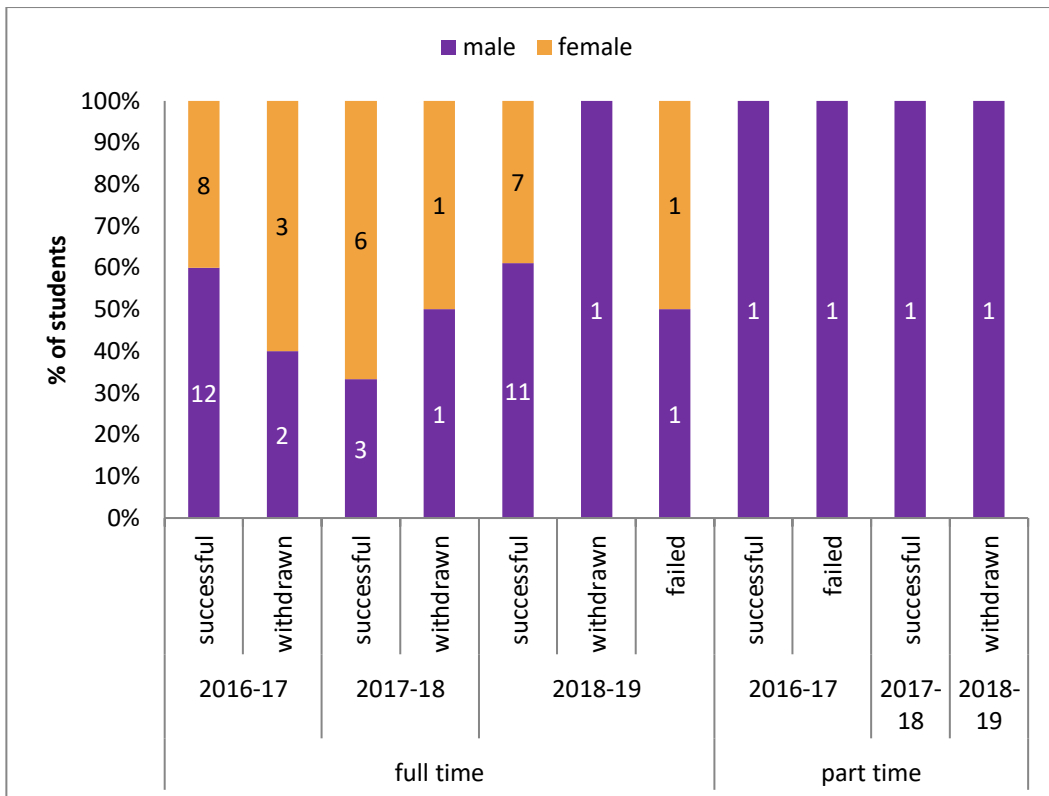
**Figure 4.9: Screenshot of WILS showing student stories**





**Figure 4.10: Number of PGR applications, offers and accepts by gender, 2016-2019**

The total number of applications has fluctuated from 172 in 2016-17, to 188 in 2017-18, then 142 in 2018-19. The proportion of female applications has remained stable (approximately 50%). **Importantly, we have managed to maintain a high conversion rate from application to acceptance in females** (68%, 54% and 60% for 2016-19 respectively). As a result of **Bronze 2.5**, the School hosts annual Open Evenings and encourages all applicants to attend either in person or by Skype to meet the PGR Director.



**Figure 4.11: PGR completion by year and gender, full and part time**

Of the total completing PGR cohort, the %F has fluctuated due to low numbers in some years (20F in 2016-17, 9F in 2017-18, 18F in 2018-19).

As a result of **Bronze action 2.8** which introduced annual Supervisory Boards to improve monitoring of student progress and offer more support, the proportion of full time PGR withdrawals has decreased over the last 3 years, although the numbers are low ( $n < 5$ ). Only two students have failed in the last 3 years (1F/1M).

We had no female part time PGR students completing since 2016. Over this period, two P/T students have been successful, one failed and one withdrew (both M). Following feedback from PGR completion year students, we have implemented a Supervisor feedback monitoring form to ensure the timely return of feedback on the students' draft theses (**Action 4.5**). PGR student reps attend Student Voice Group and can approach PGR Director and Senior Tutor for further support, as well as supervisory boards, which are made up of male and female staff.

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

Identify and comment on any issues in the pipeline between undergraduate and postgraduate degrees.

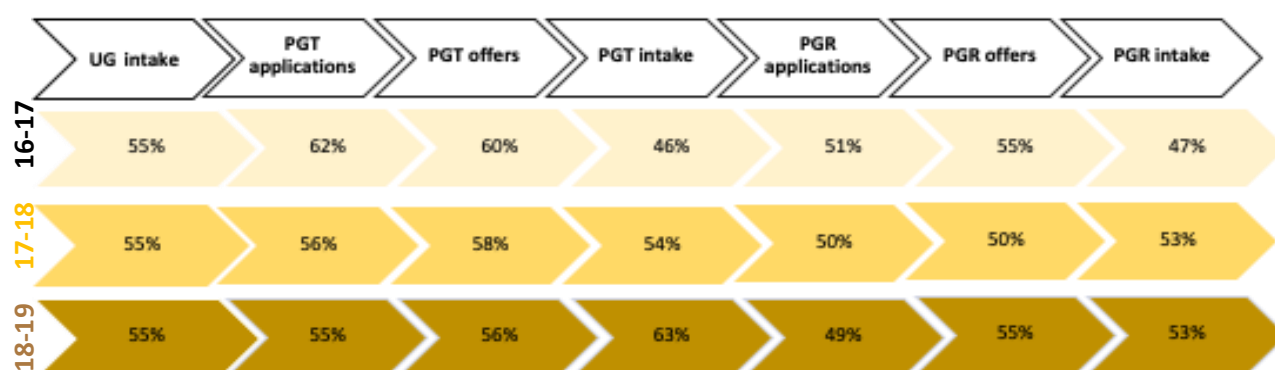
The %F at each level is now at, or higher than 50% (**Figure 4.2, Figure 4.4, Figure 4.7**). At all levels, %F remains consistent (UG 55% each year, PGT 46-63% and PGR 47-52%) suggesting there is no leak in the pipeline from UG into PGR. **Table 4.1** shows that females consistently outperform males at UG level and **Figure 4.6** shows

that PGT completion rates are equal to, or better for females than males. **Figure 4.10** shows that PGR completion rates are also good, with no obvious gender differences.

UG leavers data shows that 38% of our female graduates and 40% of male graduates go onto higher study (DHLE 2017). We offer alumni incentives (such as staged discounted fees on MSc courses) to encourage graduates to continue studying at Essex. **Table 4.2** shows that between 31-41% of our PGT cohort are Essex graduates, F (14-19%) and M (13-25%). We continue to raise the profile of successful Essex graduates, inviting them back to inspire students and include their profiles on our School and WILS website (**Action 4.6**).

**Table 4.2: Number of PGT students that were Essex undergraduate students by year and gender ((% in brackets))**

		2016-17	2017-18	2018-19
Number of PGT students per year by gender	Male	25 (54%)	29 (45%)	20 (37%)
	Female	21 (46%)	35 (55%)	34 (63%)
Number of PGT students who were Essex UG graduates by gender	Male	11 (24%)	16 (25%)	7 (13%)
	Female	8 (17%)	9 (14%)	10 (19%)
Number of PGT students who are Essex UG graduates		19 (41%)	25 (39%)	17 (31%)
Total number of PGT students		46	64	54



**Figure 4.12: Student pipeline from undergraduate intake to PhD intake. Percentages represent the proportion of female students at each stage between 2016-17 and 2018-19.**

Fig 4.11 shows that from UG to PGT and PGR the %F is generally over 50%, with little evidence of any leaks at these stages.

#### Section 4.1 STUDENT DATA SILVER IMPACT

- As a result of positive actions following our last Athena Swan application (**Bronze 2.2, 2.7**), **the number of female PGT students has successfully increased from 46% in 2016-17 to 63% in 2018-19**, exceeding the PGT benchmark
- We have **successfully maintained a high conversion rate from application to acceptance in PGR for females** (68%, 54% and 60% for 2016-19 respectively)
- The **%F F/T PGR students have increased from 47% to 52%** over the last 3 years which we attribute to positive actions made (**Bronze 2.2, 2.7**).

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#### Section 4.1 Action Point Summary

**Action 4.1:** Monitor UG degree classifications and provide more support to students in years 2 and 3 via tutorials/revision classes to improve degree classifications

**Action 4.2:** Roll out 'unlocking excellence' early interventions for poorly performing students

**Action 4.3:** Monitor gender balance of UG/PGT/PGR applications, offers, and accepted places

**Action 4.4:** Request exit interviews if a PGT student withdraws

**Action 4.5:** Monitor the supervisor feedback monitoring forms to ensure the timely return of feedback on the students' draft thesis

**Action 4.6:** Invite successful Essex graduates back to inspire current students and include their profiles on the School and WILS websites.

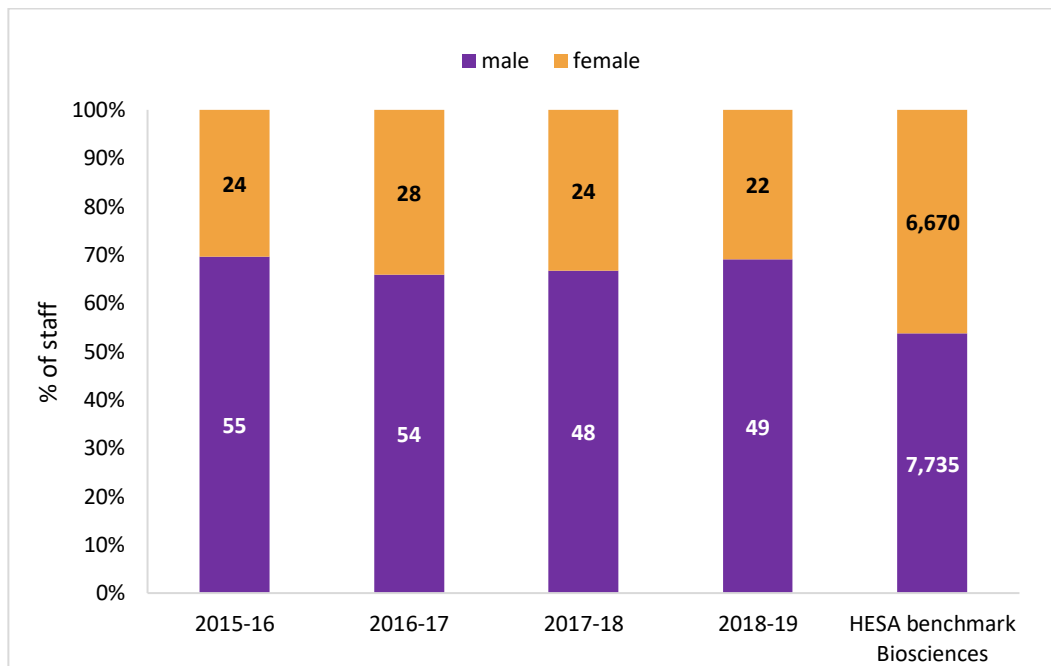
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#### 4.2. Academic and research staff data

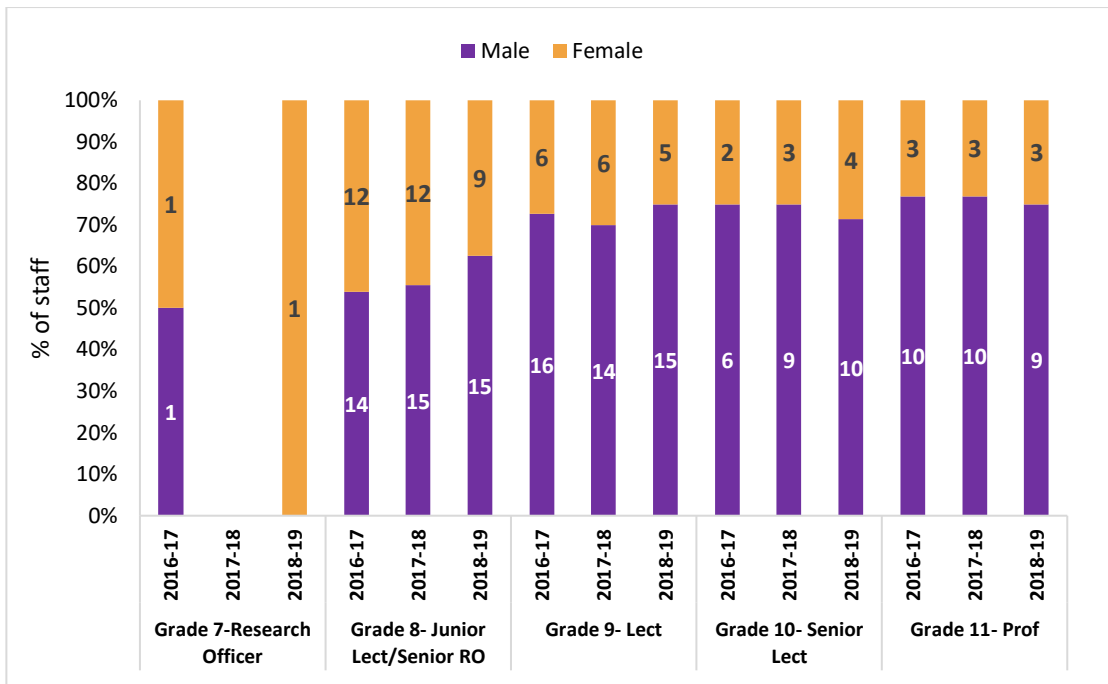
(i) Academic staff by grade, contract function and gender: research-only, teaching and research or teaching-only.

Look at the career pipeline and comment on and explain any differences between men and women. Identify any gender issues in the pipeline at particular grades/job type/academic contract type.

Academic staff at Essex are employed on the national grading scheme from Grades 7-11. Most ASER appointments are made at Grade 9. There remains a lower proportion of females occupying grades 9-11 (**Figure 4.13** and **Figure 4.14**). While overall staff numbers at grades 10 and 11 in particular are small, the gender balance is consistent across these grades, i.e. there does not appear to be a particular attrition of academic staff based on gender at grade 9 and above. Grades 7 and 8 (PDRA) have a higher %F than the higher grades. The gender balance amongst academics at different grades has remained stable.



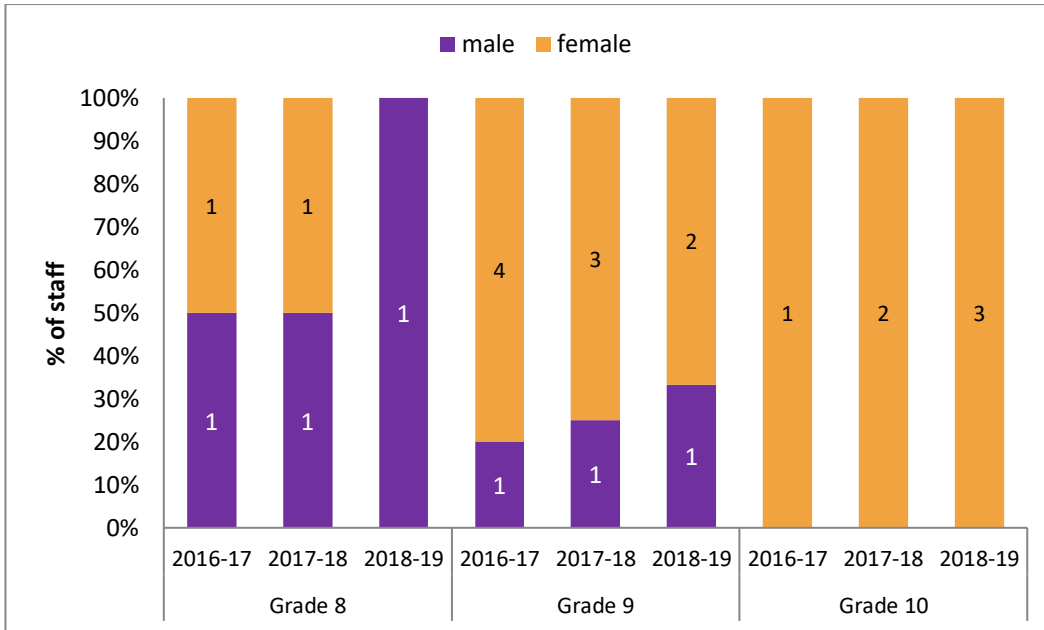
**Figure 4.13: Proportion of academic staff by gender, 2015-19, versus HESA benchmark data (raw number on bars)**



**Figure 4.14: Academic staff by year and gender (raw number on bars)**

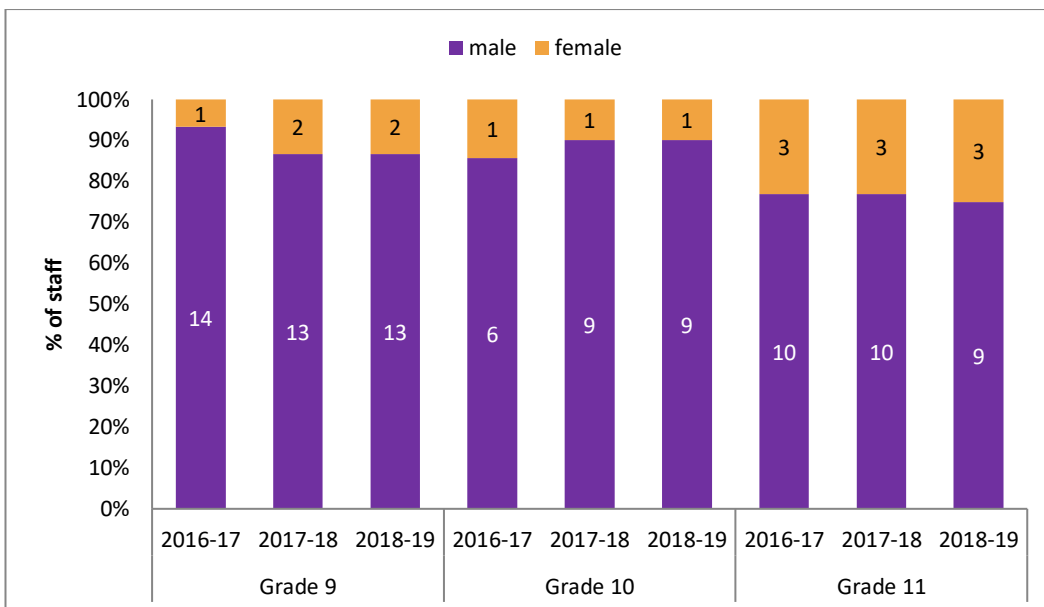
Representation of females at professorial level remains a challenge, however our F:M ratio of 0.25 is close to our F:M ratio of all lecturing staff (grades 9-11 above; 0.26). As a result of the 'Professorial Mentoring System' (**Bronze 2.9**) a female successfully gained promotion to Grade 11 but in the same year a female Professor retired. We have maintained initiatives to attract female applicants to vacancies including using the AS logo, positive action statements and links to WILS website in all recruitment material (**Bronze 2.2**). All staff are encouraged to apply for promotion; we publicise the promotion criteria and process and ran a training event in 2019, 'demystifying the promotions procedure'. The HoS, DoR, DoI and DoE identify females at all grades for promotion through the PDR and encourage applications (**Bronze 4.1**). Mentoring for all staff is available through the Mentoring Scheme to provide career support.

The overall proportion of females has remained stable over the period, fluctuating slightly from 33% in 2016-17 to 31% in 2018-19, (Figure 4.10). The %F is still below the HESA benchmark of 46%F. Since our last award we have implemented a programme of actions to address gender imbalance such as positive statements and use of AS logo in job packs, two females on interview panels and all recruiting staff trained in UB, plus revisiting single sex shortlists in academic staffing (see Section 5.1(i) Recruitment, **Action 5.1** and **Action 5.2**).



**Figure 4.15: Permanent ASE staff by year and gender (raw number on bars)**

Most permanent ASE staff are female at Grade 9 (1M/2F) and all-female at Grade 10 (3F). Of the 2M ASE staff, one is Grade 8 and one Grade 9. Both are being supported through the mentoring scheme for promotion and we will monitor this (**Bronze 3.6**) (**Action 4.7**). Although the numbers of male ASE permanent staff are low, we successfully recruited two male fixed term ASE staff since 2018-19. We are unable to address this imbalance as the University Academic Appointments policy is that all new permanent staff must be appointed on ASER contracts as we are a dual intensive Research and Teaching Institution.



**Figure 4.16: Permanent ASER staff by year and gender (raw number on bars)**

ASER staff data show a slight increase in the %F from 14% (2016-17) to 16% (2018-19) but numbers are small. During this period, one female was promoted to G11 (Professor) (**Bronze 2.9**) but one retired in the same year. We have made changes to our recruitment

and selection processes since our last award (see [Action 5.1](#), [Action 5.2](#)) and this will result in improvements in these data going forward ([Action 4.8](#)). 3F ASE staff were P/T, one 0.5FTE and two 0.8FTE, one has since become F/T and the other has now retired.

**Table 4.3: Summary of permanent Academic staff (lecturers) by contract type and gender (at end of Academic Year 2018-19)**

<i>Contract type</i>	Female	Male	Totals	%F	%M
ASE	5	2	7	71%	29%
ASER	6	31	37	16%	84%

#### SILVER APPLICATIONS ONLY

Where relevant, comment on the transition of technical staff to academic roles.

One technician (F) is currently undertaking a P/T PhD and there are several examples of technicians already holding PhDs but choosing to pursue the technical route rather than the academic route. There are no examples of staff transitioning from technical to academic roles. The University Technician’s Commitment (see section 5.4 iii) is being developed to support technicians, for example; ringfenced budget for CPD, inclusion on research papers and opportunities for networking, mentoring and chairing committees.

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

Comment on the proportions of men and women on these contracts. Comment on what is being done to ensure continuity of employment and to address any other issues, including redeployment schemes.

ASR staff, predominantly PDRAs on fixed term contracts are almost entirely employed at Grade 8. The gender parity since 2016-17 has fluctuated slightly, but numbers are small. We found no gender differences.



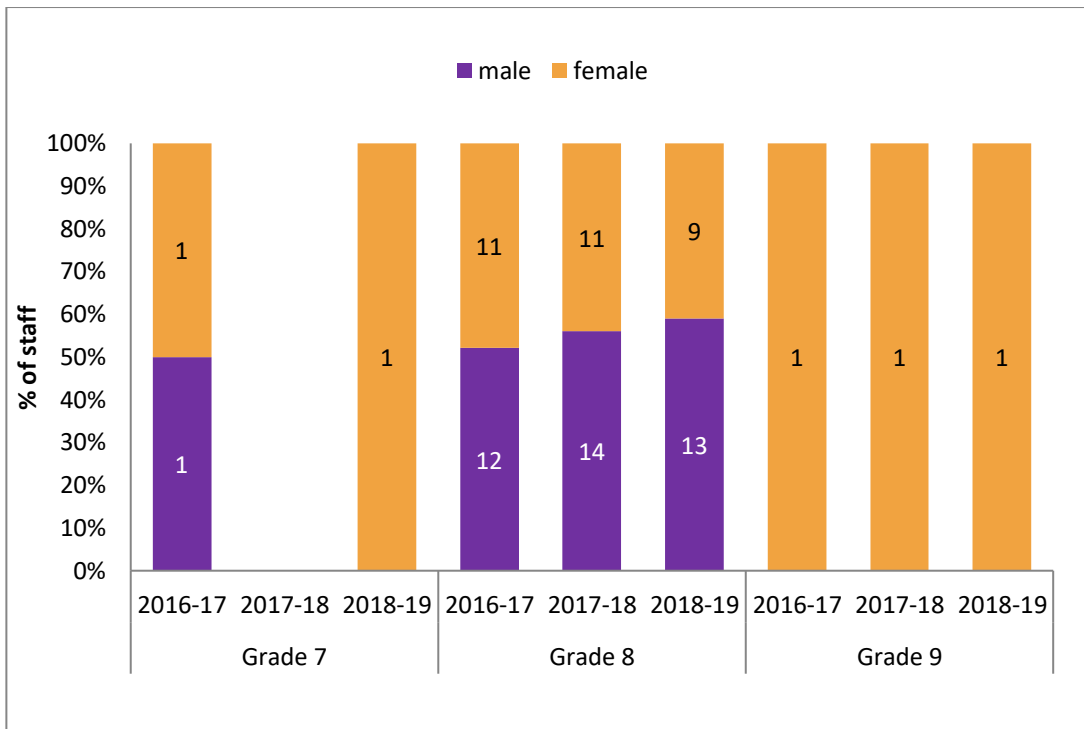


Figure 4.17: ASR staff by year and gender (raw number on bars)

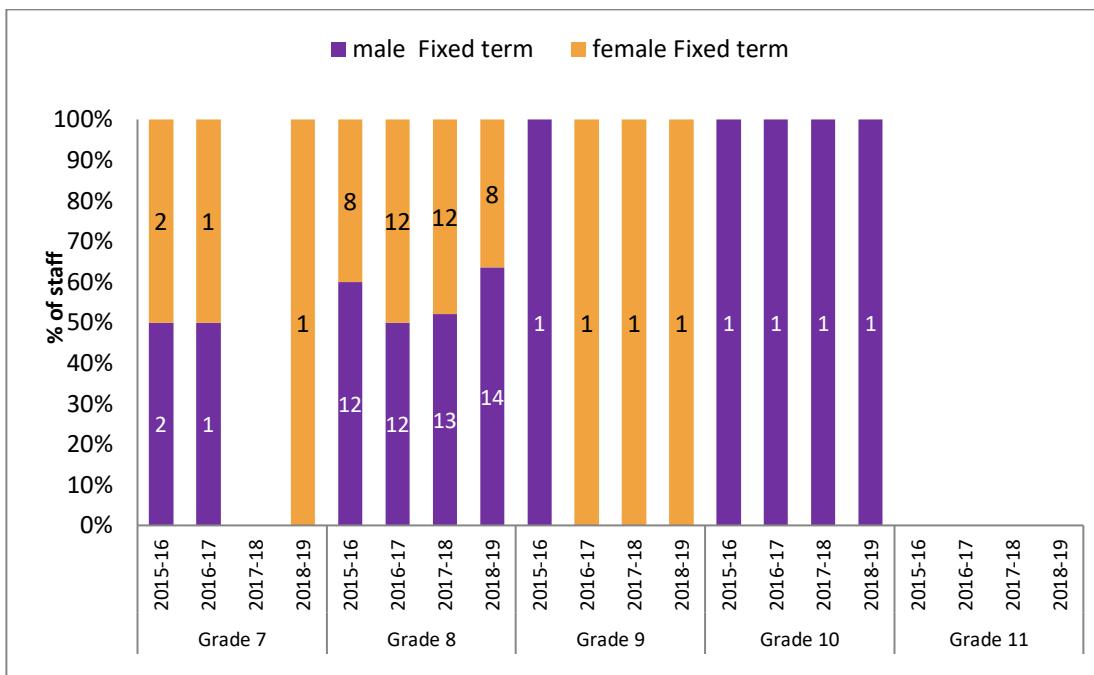
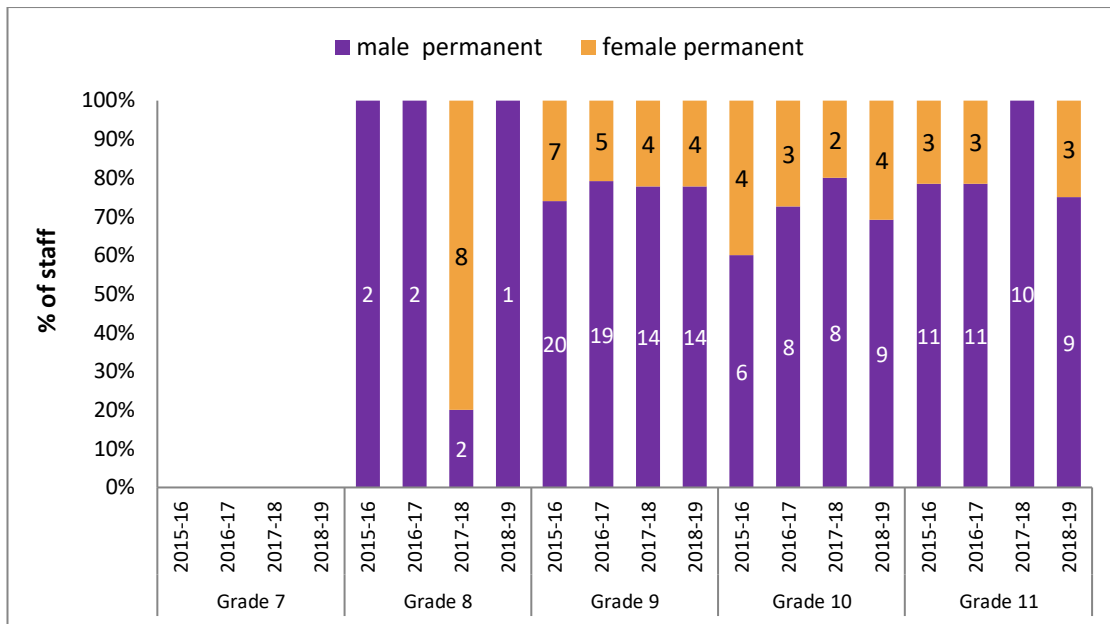


Figure 4.18: Staff on fixed term contracts, by grade and gender (raw number on bars)



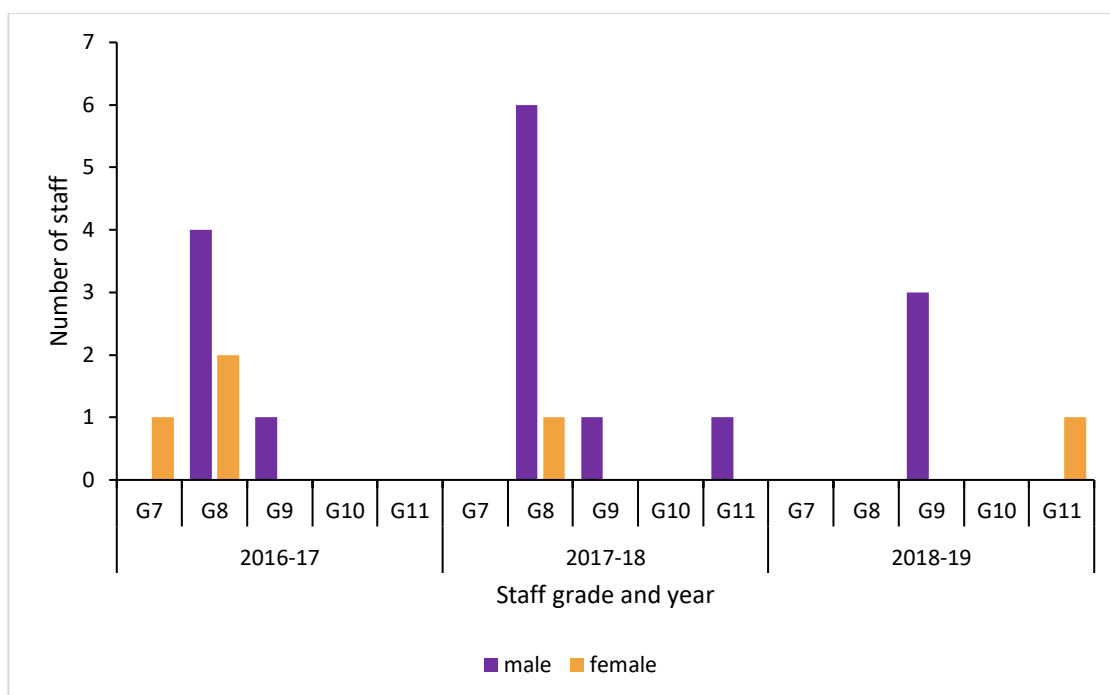
**Figure 4.19: Proportion of staff on permanent contracts, by grade and gender (raw number on bars)**

Gender balance is good amongst staff on fixed-term contracts at grades 7 and 8. Only one academic was employed at each of grades 9 and 10 (**Figure 4.18**) The School does not employ staff on zero-hour contracts. Generally, staff on fixed term contracts are externally (grant) funded. There are a few cases of teaching-only staff appointed on fixed term contracts to cover an immediate teaching need, or sabbatical buy-out. There has also been a wider policy shift within the University away from employing temporary staff in favour of employing open-ended/permanent staff. This initiative emerged from the University's Institutional Bronze Award and is regularly reviewed at Faculty level. It is University policy that staff who are employed on fixed-term contracts, with four years continuous service, may be deemed as open ended unless there is an 'objective justification' (such as external grant funding) for the FTC. Such staff are included in the annual PDR process, but more support could be provided about future career options, such as a 'forward-looking' PDR meeting in the final year of the FTC (**Action 4.9**).

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

Comment on the reasons academic staff leave the department, any differences by gender and the mechanisms for collecting this data.

Academic turnover is low. At Grade 11, a male retired in 2017-18 and a female retired in 2018-19. At Grade 8 and below (PDRA), 14 staff left due to the end of fixed term contracts (4F/10M). At Grade 9 in 2018-9, three males resigned; one for personal reasons to return to his home country, one was headhunted by another HEI and a third moved to another HEI with an attached Medical School, which aligned better with his research.



**Figure 4.20: Academic leavers in the period 2016-2019**

The destinations of leavers are not centrally collected; we will improve this ([Action 4.10](#)). In 2018 the University updated its leavers questionnaire; from a paper form to online to help increase completion rates and improve statistical analysis. This questionnaire is sent before the employee leaves and allows them to have a 1-2-1 interview with OD. Following the success of these changes, the University is introducing a standardised Leaver’s Checklist for School use. The School will ensure that managers are aware and trained to use it whilst encouraging leavers to complete the questionnaire to build data for analysis ([Action 4.11](#)).

#### Section 4.2 STAFF DATA SILVER IMPACT

- In response to low levels of females at Professorial levels, we implemented [Bronze 2.9](#). Now, **F:M Professorial ratio of 0.25 is very close to our F:M ratio of all academic lecturing staff (grades 9-11; 0.26)**.
- Changes to recruitment and selection ([Bronze 3.6](#)) since our last award are now beginning to show in our staff numbers, and improved promotion support is resulting in more F being promoted

WORD COUNT: 2128

#### Section 4.2 Action Point Summary

[Action 4.7](#): Monitor mentoring and support to female staff seeking promotion

**Action 4.8:** Monitor effect of changes to female recruitment and selection

**Action 4.9:** Establish a forward-looking PDR meeting for staff on fixed-term contracts

**Action 4.10:** Work with HR to identify trends in leaving destination, wellbeing, flexible working and career progression by gender.

**Action 4.11:** Ensure managers use the standard Leavers Checklist.

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## 5. SUPPORTING AND ADVANCING WOMEN'S CAREERS

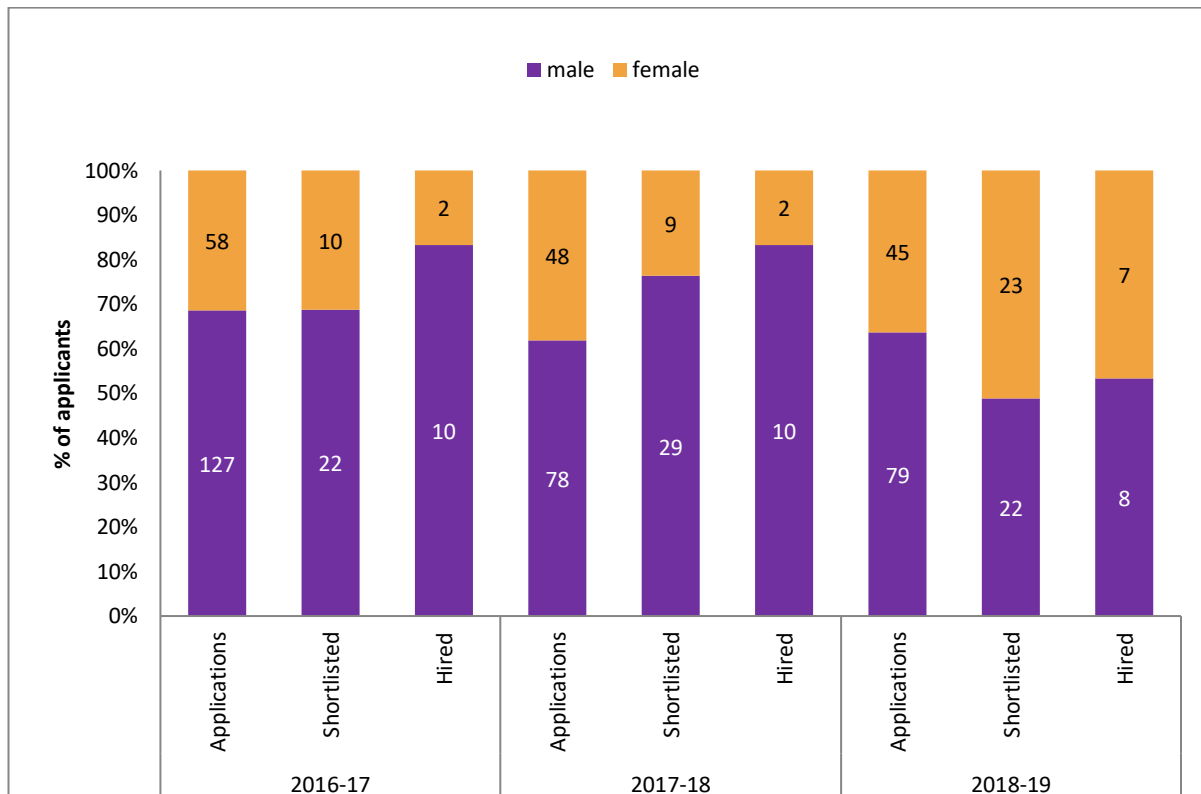
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### 5.1. Key career transition points: academic staff

#### (i) Recruitment

Break down data by gender and grade for applications to academic posts including shortlisted candidates, offer and acceptance rates. Comment on how the department's recruitment processes ensure that women (and men where there is an underrepresentation in numbers) are encouraged to apply.

39 academic staff (PDRAs and lecturers) were appointed 2016-2019, 28M (72%) and 11F (28%). This partly reflects the nature of posts advertised and sub-discipline gender imbalances (e.g. in 2016-17, we were heavily recruiting in the field of computational biology, which is a predominately male discipline). **We have increased the proportion of female applications from 31% in 2016-17, to 36% in 2018-19** and this year we also achieved almost 50%F hires, attributable to our previous recruitment actions (**Bronze 3.1, 3.2**).



**Figure 5.1: Job applications, shortlists and hires, by year and gender**

The School's job pack outlines our strong commitment to diversity and helping staff to balance work and home life. It promotes our flexible working policy and career break scheme and signposts to our E&D staff Networks including Essex Womens Network and

Parent's Network. Our Job packs also highlight that we are an Advance HE member, Stonewall top 100 Employers (2018), Disability Confident, Athena SWAN Bronze Award holder and WISE member. These have been included as a result of our previous actions (**Bronze 3.1**).

All recruitment panels include 2F and all members are required to undergo essential and recruitment training. We will continue to monitor our recruitment procedures, ensuring that School staff complete essential unconscious bias training in addition to Equality and Diversity training (**Action 5.1**) and revisit any single sex shortlists (**Action 5.2**).

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### Section 5.1i Action Point Summary

**Action 5.1:** Continue to monitor our recruitment procedures, ensuring Life Sciences staff undertake unconscious bias training in addition to the University's Equality and Diversity training

**Action 5.2:** Revisit any single sex shortlists.

---

#### (ii) (i) Induction

Describe the induction and support provided to all new academic staff at all levels. Comment on the uptake of this and how its effectiveness is reviewed.

The induction process starts as soon as the appointment is accepted. An introductory email includes a plan of induction activities, information on essential training, start date and who to report to on their first day.

New staff meet with the School Administrator, SM, DoE, Finance Administrator and Health and Safety Officer. Staff are also taken on a campus tour to allow them to meet other key sections (e.g. OD, IT and Estates Management) (**Bronze 6.3, 6.5**).

Academic staff have meetings with the HoS and DoR to discuss expectations and advancement opportunities. The staff go onto the 'Pathways to Permanency' programme. They choose their mentor for this (with HoS support) and agree targets and how to proceed.

From SCS (2019), 10 staff completed the induction, 3F found it very helpful; 7 staff (2M/5F) found it slightly helpful. **Following this, we set up a focus group on new staff induction and based on this, the School induction process has been completely redesigned for 2019-20**. For example, the DoE has introduced multiple targeted training sessions for new staff to explain how the School works, teaching tools and online systems, student support services, projects, exams and assessment. We will monitor the effectiveness of inductions for new staff (**Action 5.3**).

New staff are also invited to join a Slack channel for new starters, which is very useful for sharing support, help and information.

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## Section 5.1ii Action Point Summary

### Action 5.3: Monitor the effectiveness of new induction for new staff

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#### (iii) Promotion

Provide data on staff applying for promotion and comment on applications and success rates by gender, grade and full- and part-time status. Comment on how staff are encouraged and supported through the process.

Academic Staff can apply for promotion annually. Since 2015-16, **27 staff (9F/18M) have applied** (this is in line with the %F in the School/33%), with equal success for both genders (78%). **This has increased from 11 applications (6F/5M) in the previous period and this impact can be attributed to Bronze Actions 3.3-3.6 in our last application (improve feedback on promotion applications, make processes clearer and monitor applications).** We will proactively identify staff for promotion by adding a discussion point in PDRs (**Action 5.4**), to encourage and support them to apply. Promotion applications and success rates will be monitored (**Action 5.5**).

**Table 5.1: Numbers of applications for internal promotion 2015-19. Data aggregated over 4 years to maintain anonymity.**

Promotion to:	Applied		Successful		Unsuccessful	
	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male
Grade 9		2		2		
Grade 10	8	10	6	9	2 (1PT/1FT)	1
Grade 11 Prof	1	6	1	3		3
Totals (% successful)	9	18	7 (78%)	14 (78%)	2 (22%)	4 (22%)

All applications go through several supportive steps within the School, providing opportunities for feedback, including how to improve applications and advice. Decisions about promotion are made by a University appointed ASC. Applicants receive feedback from colleagues (**Bronze 3.4**) and HoS on their application. Applications supported by SSC proceed to the ASC. Unsupported applications receive feedback from the HoS, who meets the applicant to provide support for future applications. Applicants can still submit directly to ASC.

The promotion process is now clearer for 90% of staff overall, compared to 70% of staff in 2016 (Bronze 3.6, 4.3). In 2019 the majority of both F and M staff said they *strongly agreed* or *agreed* with the statement that they “understood the promotion process and criteria”, (SCS 2019; F 86% (6/7), M 91% (21/23)), representing an improvement on 2016 responses (F 83% (10/12), M 65% (21/32)).

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### Section 5.1iii Action Point Summary

**Action 5.4:** Discuss in all PDRs whether staff are ready to apply for promotion, and provide full support to enable promotion.

**Action 5.5:** Monitor staff promotion applications and success rates

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

Provide data on the staff, by gender, submitted to REF versus those that were eligible. Compare this to the data for the Research Assessment Exercise 2008. Comment on any gender imbalances identified.

All ASER staff (100%F) will be submitted to REF2021. Female submission to REF2014 was also 100%, increasing from 50% in RAE2008.

**Table 5.2: RAE 2008 and REF 2014 Returns, by Gender and Eligibility**

		Staff	Gender	
		Total	Female	Male
RAE 2008	Eligible	34	6	28
	Submitted	29	3	26
	% of Eligible Staff Submitted	85	50	93
REF 2014	Eligible	30	5	25
	Submitted	23	5	18
	% of Eligible Staff Submitted	77	100	72



#### SECTION 5.1 SUPPORTING AND ADVANCING WOMEN'S CAREERS SILVER IMPACT:

- In 2018-19, nearly 50% of newly appointed academics were female (7F/8M). We attribute this to previous actions to improve job packs and website info regarding AS policies, and increased recruitment and UB training for staff on panels (**Bronze Actions 3.3-3.6**)
- **Promotion applications have increased from 11 (6F/5M) to 27 (8F/18M) and success rates are 78% for both F and M**, plus a measurable increase in staff understanding of the promotion criteria since 2016 (90% vs 70%), as a result of previous actions (**Bronze 3.6, 4.3**).
- In 2008 only 50%F ASER submitted to RAE. A staff Mentoring Scheme was piloted for our first Bronze award (2014) and as a result, **all ASER staff (100%F) were submitted to REF2014 and will be for REF2021.**

## SILVER APPLICATIONS ONLY

### 5.2. Key career transition points: professional and support staff

#### (i) Induction

Describe the induction and support provided to all new professional and support staff, at all levels. Comment on the uptake of this and how its effectiveness is reviewed.

The induction process is the same for professional services staff as it is for academic staff (see section 5.1.ii) and essential online training is the same. PS staff also learn through on-the-job training.

New administrative staff spend the first few weeks shadowing current staff. New technical staff spend time in each of the lab areas where they will be based and will also undergo risk assessment and specialist training where necessary.

#### (ii) Promotion

Provide data on staff applying for promotion, and comment on applications and success rates by gender, grade and full- and part-time status. Comment on how staff are encouraged and supported through the process.

As with most other UK universities, there is no promotions process for PS staff. Within each grade, there are spine points to progress through and additional increments can be awarded. There is a formal process for regrading of a post if responsibilities increase (known as HERA). In 2017-18 there were 2 HERA re-gradings of technical staff (2M), both were successful (**Action 5.6-Action 5.8**).

If PS staff wish to progress, they will apply for a higher-grade job, often (but not always) in another department. In 2017, our SM (M) and then in 2018, our RM (F) both progressed to higher grade roles in other departments at the University. They were subsequently replaced by internal candidates from other departments, each progressing up a grade when joining our School.

The University is currently developing a 'Technician's Commitment' Action plan (see 5.4 for more), with actions targeting four key areas; ensuring greater visibility (V), recognition (R), career development (C) and sustainability (S) for technicians across all disciplines. Within this, the University is reviewing the role description, pay scale and grading structure for all technical staff. Standardised role descriptions have been drafted and are being reviewed by OD. Due to the specialist nature of a technician's role, there is less opportunity for individuals to move across departments and up within the University, enhancing the importance of HERAs for technicians.

## Section 5.2 Action point summary

**Action 5.6:** Identify PS staff that meet the criteria for a regrading application and encourage and support them in their application

**Action 5.7:** Set up a regrading support committee (led by SM) to support staff through the regrading process

**Action 5.8:** Monitor application numbers and success rates of regrading applications

### 5.3. Career development: academic staff

#### (i) Training

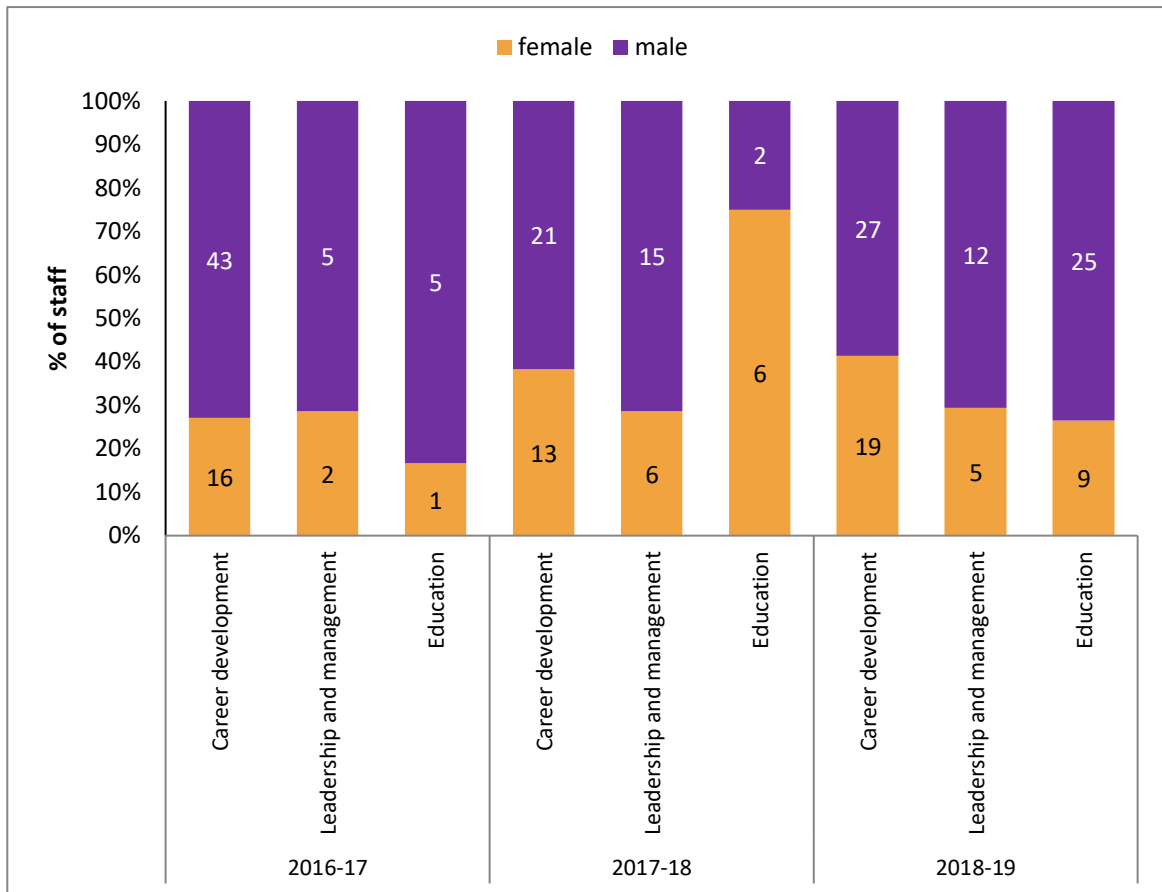
Describe the training available to staff at all levels in the department. Provide details of uptake by gender and how existing staff are kept up to date with training. How is its effectiveness monitored and developed in response to levels of uptake and evaluation?

All staff and PGRs complete the University's essential training including EDI and UB. **Up to April 2020, 70% (52/74) of staff completed the UB training (Bronze 5.7). This is an increase from 4 staff (2M/2F) in 2016. Action 5.1** will continue to monitor this.

The University also offers professional development events (**Table 5.3, Figure 5.2 and Figure 5.3**) and Mental Health First Aid, Bystander Intervention Training and Management/Leadership Programmes, all bookable online.

**Table 5.3: Number of female and male Academic staff and Professional Services staff (Administrative) attending Staff Development courses from 2016-17 to 2018-19, showing proportion of courses attended per person.**

		2016-17		2017-18		2018-19	
		F	M	F	M	F	M
Academic staff	Number of courses completed	19	53	25	38	33	64
	Total number of academic staff eligible to complete courses	15	39	12	33	12	34
	Courses per person	1.26	1.35	2.08	1.15	2.75	1.88
PS staff (admin)	Number of courses completed	16	4	36	22	43	7
	Total number of PS staff eligible to complete courses	9	2	9	2	9	2
	Courses per person	1.77	2	4	11	4.7	3.5



**Figure 5.2: Academic staff completing training, by gender (raw number on bars)**

Table 5.3 and Figure 5.2 show that uptake of training courses by both genders has increased by 35%. The number of education courses shows a 4-fold increase from 6 (5M/1F) to 34 (25M/9F). Career development course uptake has remained steady for females but decreased for males (from 43 to 27 events). Action 5.9 is to encourage all staff to attend career development training. The School requested a specific training session on ‘demystifying permanency and promotions’ in 2019, and 6 academics attended (5M/1F).

The School has access to all of its training data so managers can regularly review participation (Action 5.10). Academic/PS staff are nominated by the HoS to attend the University’s ‘Future Leaders’ and 4M/2F have completed it. The VC invites Senior Staff onto ‘Strategic Leaders’ and two staff (1M/1F) have completed this. Both leadership programmes are accredited by the Leadership Foundation of Higher Education. We will monitor the gender balance of staff on these programmes (Action 5.11) and eligible staff will be encouraged to participate by the HoS (Action 5.12).

The School WILS website signposts staff to training courses and are discussed during PDRs. The University invites external providers to deliver leadership courses such as

Diversifying/Stonewall leadership programmes and leadership training for females such as Aurora, and since 2016, 3F have completed this.

All staff who sit on staff recruitment panels complete the Recruitment and Selection training and all academic staff and new probationers are expected to complete our in-house teaching course 'Cadenza', which is approved by the HEA. One F has supported 6M/1F through their Cadenza applications. Up to 2019, 80%F (8/10) and 60%M (23/38) have HEA Fellowship.

From the SCS (2019), 63%F and 55%M feel extremely/reasonably encouraged to take part in career or personal development training, and only 23%F and 33%M feel not at all encouraged. **Anecdotally some staff feel that high workloads may prevent them from attending training so to combat this, 5% FTE per year for CPD has been built into the new WLM (Action 5.13).**

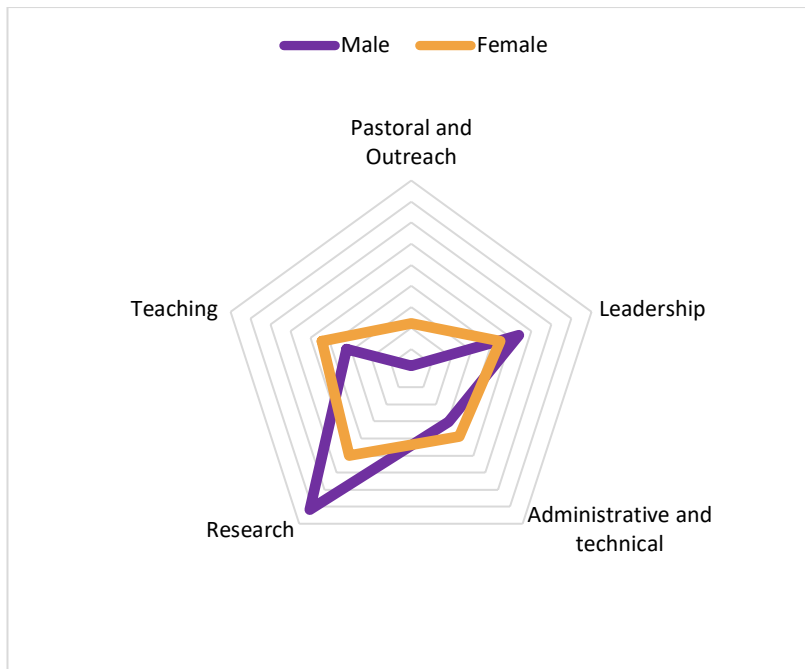
(ii) Appraisal/development review

Describe current appraisal/development review schemes for staff at all levels, including postdoctoral researchers and provide data on uptake by gender. Provide details of any appraisal/review training offered and the uptake of this, as well as staff feedback about the process.

The annual PDR process for ASE/ASER at Grade 8 or above is conducted by HoS and discusses achievements, progress, objectives, CPD and workload. PS staff have an annual PDR with the SM and Technical services staff have PDRs with the TSMs. PDRAs (Grade 7 or 8) have PDRs with their supervisors (PIs).

All appraisal managers have training as part of their induction into their roles. (**Bronze 4.2**). Online refreshers are conducted to ensure that best practice is maintained. We have introduced a 'PDR checklist' (**Bronze 3.6**) for the HoS to use to prompt discussion on training, promotions, WLM and work-life balance. **Uptake of academic PDRs is 100%.**

From the SCS (2019) only 43% of staff (18M/9F) described the advice given in the PDR as 'very good or satisfactory' and 35% (14M/8F) described it as 'poor or non-existent'. To address this, we will hold a focus group to identify what staff would like to achieve in their PDR (**Action 5.14**). A feedback form on the PDR will also be used (**Action 5.15**).



**Figure 5.3: SCS responses to the question 'My School values which skills and experiences the most when considering promotions and carrying out performance development reviews'. Each of the categories was graded; strongly agree:4, agree:3, disagree:2, strongly disagree:1. The further away from the centre of the spider web, the higher the value given.**

**Figure 5.3** demonstrates that M perceive research and leadership to be the most important skills when considering promotions and PDRs, whereas F feel that all skills (including teaching/admin/pastoral/outreach) are valued more equally ('pastoral/outreach is valued': 71%F vs 61%M). This could be attributed to greater %F on ASE contracts (with different promotion criteria) (Table 4.3) and greater %M on ASER contracts. To increase recognition of outreach, the WLM will be updated to include this (**Action 5.48**).

In 2016 the University commissioned a review of PDRs which the School fed into as 1F is on the Institutional PDR Working Group. The University is finalising this in 2020 and the School will feed into this as appropriate (**Action 5.16**).

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

Comment and reflect on support given to academic staff, especially postdoctoral researchers, to assist in their career progression.

PDRA PDRs are conducted by PIs and can be subject to variation. To identify gaps in support for PDRAs, a focus group was held, comprising representatives from all research groups. Several issues were identified and explored (**Table 7.1**).

As a result of previous actions supporting PDRA Fellowship applications (**Bronze 2.10**), one PDRA/M has recently gained a Fellowship within the School. Another PDRA/M has

been supported to work flexibly [REDACTED] (Case study 1) (**Bronze 4.7**) and has since been appointed as a lecturer within the School.

A third PDRA/F has been supported throughout five years on FTC, with research funding, training/teaching opportunities, mentoring/support with her application, and was recently appointed as a lecturer in the School.

PDRAs are included in the staff mentoring scheme but we will ensure this is advertised regularly to increase uptake. Of the existing mentor partnerships (**Bronze 4.4**), 2/8 are supporting PDRAs but this could be increased (**Action 5.25**).

New members of staff (at Lecturer) are assigned a mentor. Within the first six months of probation they start 'Pathways to Permanency' which outlines the expectations and objectives to be achieved. The HoS ensures that the probationer:

- Is given a light workload (i.e. 50% less teaching and administration)
- Meets at least once a term with their mentor
- Is aware of the requirement to become a FHEA
- Has their training and development needs regarded as a priority

The probationary guidance is to be reviewed in 2019-20 to ensure probationers are aware of requirements and are supported both before and after applying for permanency (**Action 5.26**).

The University has recently launched our NEwComERs forum which supports ECRs. We will promote this to all ECRs, ensure content is relevant and monitor uptake (**Action 5.27**).

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

Comment and reflect on support given to students at any level to enable them to make informed decisions about their career (including the transition to a sustainable academic career).

UG students are assigned a personal tutor and peer mentor and have timetabled tutorials when transferable skills are developed, and employability skills are embedded. Exposure to employment starts in year 1 through a work-based learning module. In year 2 employability initiatives are embedded in a skills module and a careers day featuring external speakers. 'Hot Topics' seminars are given by external speakers (industry and academia). Second year placement students receive support from the School's placement officer and the industrial placement team. In final year, mock interviews are conducted by tutors.

Further support:

- UROP; a bursary for students to undertake placements on a staff research project. Since 2013, 40 students have been awarded a UROP placement (22F/18M).
- Students are notified of opportunities with Societies, UKRI and charities for paid summer placements in research laboratories. Since 2016, 8 students (6F/2M) were awarded a summer placement.

“The UROP scheme is a fantastic opportunity work to alongside academics and researchers, while giving insight into what academic researchers do.” **2<sup>nd</sup> year UG (M).**

- SPRINT is a personal development programme for female students; workshops to help participants develop skills and confidence. In 2018-19, five female students completed the programme.
- UG Frontrunners scheme provides paid placements aimed at developing employability skills. Since 2016, the School has hosted nine Frontrunners (9F).
- Incentives for Essex graduates to pursue PG studies here is given through discounted tuition fees on completion of an Essex UG degree. These range from 33% to 10% depending on degree classification.

In the student survey (2020), 88%F (146/165) and 93%M (104/112) UG students agree/strongly agree that the School offers advice/coaching/mentoring/support on progression from studying into a career or higher qualification. This is an increase from 2016 (88%F/89%M).

**Table 5.4: Number of UG students undertaking placements by gender**

	<b>Students on Hospital Placements</b>			
	<b>2016/17</b>	<b>2017/18</b>	<b>2018/19</b>	<b>2019/20</b>
<b>Female</b>	16 (67%)	13 (62%)	24 (77%)	15 (54%)
<b>Male</b>	8 (33%)	8 (38%)	7 (23%)	13 (46%)
<b>Total</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>28</b>
	<b>Students on Industrial Placements</b>			
<b>Female</b>	5 (71%)	5 (63%)	7 (78%)	5 (71%)
<b>Male</b>	2 (29%)	3 (37%)	2 (22%)	2 (29%)
<b>Total</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>7</b>

UG Placement year numbers are consistent, and average 65%F on hospital placements (BMS) and 71%F on industrial placements.



PGT students have a personal tutor and all courses have employability skills embedded. Students are encouraged to participate in mentoring/volunteering/student societies and entrepreneurship activities. Career-oriented events are organised, plus opportunities for external industry placements and internships.

For PGRs, the University provides £2,500 via Proficio for attending training courses/workshops and scientific conferences. 90 PGRs have accessed Proficio funds for professional development; 34%F (49/146) and 29%M (41/142). We will continue to monitor the use of Proficio and develop new courses as demand arises (**Action 5.28**).

Students are encouraged to identify gaps in their training through TNA forms. PGRs can influence the availability of training courses via the PGR SVG. (**Bronze 4.7**) and this has been acted upon; new courses have been introduced at the request of students.

"I used Proficio to visit the Swiss Light Source, where I received unique extensive hands on training in specialist experimental methods from facility staff." **2<sup>nd</sup> year PGR (F)**.

PGRs participate in an introductory Doctoral Conference and all PGRs are invited to School seminars and encouraged to join the Women's Network. In previous actions (**Bronze 2.4**), the ECRC was established (chaired by PDRA/M and PGR/F), organises regular informal meetings for ECRs to facilitate exchange of information, offer support and networking opportunities.

To support PGRs in developing teaching skills, the School employs individuals as GLAs, following a two-day central induction event and School gives a local induction. GLAs attend our annual Education conference and our Good teaching Practice conference.

"Being a GLA has allowed me to gain invaluable teaching experience which is otherwise difficult to come by." **PhD/M, GLA from 2016-2019**

(v) Support offered to those applying for research grant applications

Comment and reflect on support given to staff who apply for funding and what support is offered to those who are unsuccessful.

The DoR and the Research Group convenors encourage ASER staff to apply for funding. Together with REO and RM, they scan for funding opportunities and provide support for applications, including advice on budgets, feedback on applications and developing impact. A SIFT process reviews all grant applications >£100K and gives feedback.

The School encourages and supports PDRAs to write grant proposals and recognises their contribution and grant writing workshops are run centrally.

### SECTION 5.3 CAREER DEVELOPMENT ACADEMIC STAFF SILVER IMPACT

- **Uptake of training courses by both genders has increased by 35%.** The number of **education courses shows a 4-fold increase** from 6 (5M/1F) to 34 (25M/9F).
- **UB training completion rates were previously low- 8% (4/49) (2M/2F) in 2016. We introduced Bronze 5.7 to address this and have successfully increased this to 70% (52/74).**
- **80%F (8/10) and 60%M (23/38) have achieved HEA Fellowship.**
- Since **Bronze 2.10** supporting PDRA fellowship applications, one **PDRA (M) has recently gained a fellowship** within the School.
- **Two PDRAs (1M/1F) have been appointed as lecturers-** M supported to work flexibly since the birth of his child (see case study 1) (**Bronze 6.2**) and F supported with research funding, training/teaching opportunities, mentoring and with her application.
- Of the existing mentor partnerships, 2/8 are supporting PDRAs.
- **88%F/93%M UG students feel well supported in their career progression.**

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#### Section 5.3 Action Point Summary

**Action 5.9:** Encourage all staff to attend career development training, and include this in the PDR process

**Action 5.10:** Managers to regularly review participation in training and individually encourage completion

**Action 5.11:** Monitor gender balance of staff nominated to participate in Leadership programmes

**Action 5.12:** Ensure that staff are encouraged by HoS to participate in Leadership programmes

**Action 5.13:** WLM to include 5%FTE to allow for CPD by all academic staff. Monitor the impact of staff training uptake as a result.

**Action 5.14:** Arrange a focus group to determine what staff would like to achieve during PDRs

**Action 5.15:** Feedback form on PDR process to be completed by appraisee

**Action 5.16:** The School to feed into the central review on appraisal

**Action 5.17:** Provide opportunities for PDRAs to gain teaching/supervisory experience; the School Manager will collate a list of PDRA expertise to provide to module supervisors. PDRA staff could submit a list of topics they can lecture in and RM will work with module supervisors to identify lecturing opportunities

**Action 5.18:** To ensure consistency of PDR process for PDRAs, introduce a PDR checklist for discussion of development needs and how PDRAs can access training and support

**Action 5.19:** The Research Manager will monitor annual completion of PDRs by PDRAs, ensuring the checklist has been used

**Action 5.20:** Provide training opportunities to allow PDRAs to gain HEA fellowship

**Action 5.21:** Support for PDRAs in identifying and applying for fellowships. Engage with REO to get further support on this.

**Action 5.22:** Provide a welcome pack and proper induction process required for all new PDRA starters

**Action 5.23:** Establish an ECR committee and create a new admin role of 'PDRA liaison officer'

**Action 5.24:** Raise awareness of options such as flexible working (dependent on funding body) and Parent Career Development fund, taking paternity leave or shared parental leave

**Action 5.25:** Regularly advertise the mentoring scheme to PDRAs and monitor uptake

**Action 5.26:** Feed into the central University review on probationary guidance

**Action 5.27:** Explore the content of the NEwComERS Research week and ask staff in Life Sciences if it addresses our needs. Advertise and encourage training opportunities for ECRs more widely

**Action 5.28:** Continue to monitor the use of Proficio, and develop new courses as demand arises

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## SILVER APPLICATIONS ONLY

### 5.4. Career development: professional and support staff

#### (i) Training

Describe the training available to staff at all levels in the department. Provide details of uptake by gender and how existing staff are kept up to date with training. How is its effectiveness monitored and developed in response to levels of uptake and evaluation?

The School encourages PS staff to undertake training courses, bookable online. Technicians have access to specialist training such as Gas cylinder and cryogenic training. A new fund (£300) has been made available to the Faculty to be used for specialist training as requested, as part of the Technicians Commitment (see Section 5.4 iii).

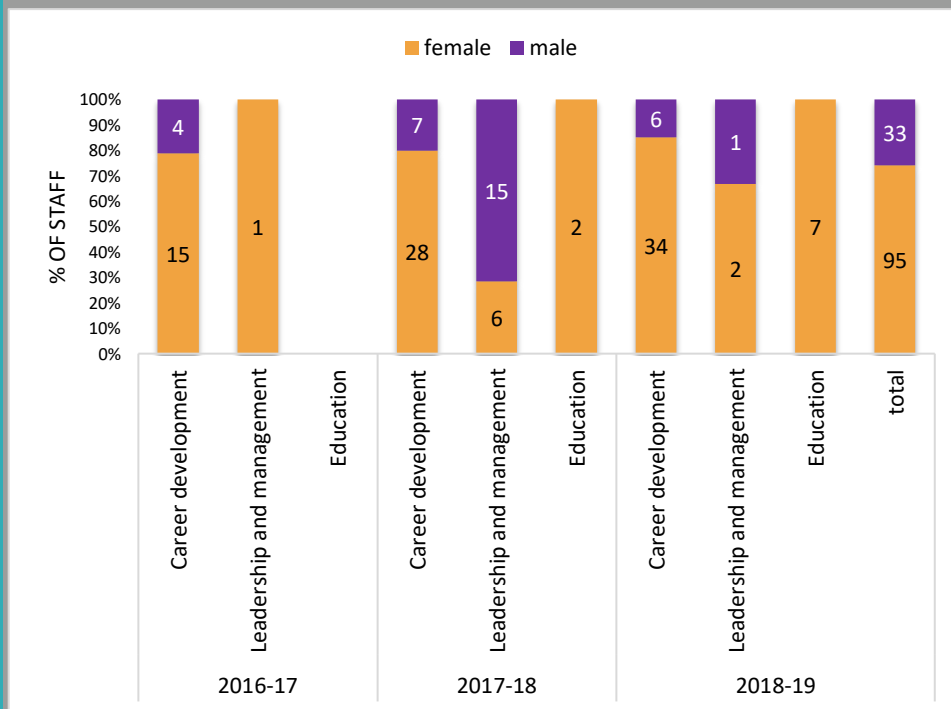


Figure 5.4: Professional services staff completing training, by gender

All PS staff training has increased 2.5-fold, with an emphasis on career development training.

#### (ii) Appraisal/development review

Describe current appraisal/development review schemes for professional and support staff at all levels and provide data on uptake by gender. Provide details of any appraisal/review training offered and the uptake of this, as well as staff feedback about the process.

All PS staff have annual PDRs; the SM completes the administrative staff PDRs and TSMs and the TSMs do the technicians PDRs. Completion rates for technical staff is 100% and for PS staff; 75% (9/10F completed but 2/2M not completed). This is most likely due to series of sickness-cover and temporary P/T SMs in the past 3 years, we now have a permanent F/T SM in post. We will ensure that the 2M TSM PDRs are done annually (**Action 5.29**).

(iii) Support given to professional and support staff for career progression

Comment and reflect on support given to professional and support staff to assist in their career progression.

The University is currently developing a 'Technician's Commitment' Action plan, including establishing a TM group, encouraging the inclusion of technicians on publications, representation on University Committees, training and networking workshops, ringfenced budget for CPD and increments in PDR process for technicians who gain professional registration (**Action 5.30**). Job descriptions are being rationalised across the University to give clarity on what constitutes a higher-grade position, allowing technicians to map out career progression.

Section 5.2 (ii) contains **Action 5.6** to identify PS staff that meet the criteria for a regrading application and encourage and support them in their application.

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#### Section 5.4 Action Point Summary

**Action 5.29:** Ensure that all technical and professional support staff have an annual PDR with their Line Manager

**Action 5.30:** Provide development opportunities for PS staff to allow career progression, for example secondment opportunities or chairing committees

**Action 5.31:** Introduce mentoring and shadowing of senior colleagues including in other departments, for both Admin and tech staff

**Action 5.32:** Monitor uptake and effectiveness of mentoring

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## 5.5. Flexible working and managing career breaks

Note: Present professional and support staff and academic staff data separately

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

Explain what support the department offers to staff before they go on maternity and adoption leave.

When staff notify the School that they are pregnant, they meet OD and are provided with the University's 'Pregnancy, maternity and returning to work' booklet and discuss support (e.g. health and safety, KIT days, nursery provision) and return options e.g. flexible working.

The School follows University guidelines on maternity/adoption leave and conducts risk and workplace assessments to identify adjustments. The HoS and employee identify cover for teaching and administrative duties. Temporary maternity cover is formally advertised.

The School mentoring programme connects women planning maternity leave with those who have recently returned. The School signposts the mentoring scheme and the seminars via WILS webpages ([Action 5.33](#)).

"I was very pleased with the maternity leave and flexible working hours I got. My line manager and university were very supportive for this." **Senior Research Officer (F)**

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### Section 5.5i Action Point Summary

**Action 5.33:** Links to maternity and adoption leave policies will be placed in the annual School Staff Handbook, and OD will provide an annual briefing to the senior management team on changes to OD policy.

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

Explain what support the department offers to staff during maternity and adoption leave.

Staff are encouraged to keep in touch with the School during their leave by using paid KIT days (up to 10 per period). These provide a valuable means for staff to stay in touch with the research/teaching environment, attend training and development activities, remain updated about School changes or finish projects. New babies are announced in the weekly newsletter and parents are invited to bring their baby in ([Action 5.34](#)).

“It is great being able to slowly adjust to both working and looking after a child and I'm sure it'll make to transition back to fulltime work much easier.”

**Laboratory technician (F)**

Managers have a ‘How to support pregnant staff’ guide, including guidance on agreeing how a member of staff will be contacted during leave and the need to let staff know about changes that will affect them when they return. All staff on maternity/adoption leave have the opportunity to apply for a career break to extend their family leave should they wish. In addition, the parent-and-baby room can be used during KIT days and upon their return for breastfeeding and expressing. During maternity/ or adoption leave, staff continue to receive their annual pay increments.

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### Section 5.5ii Action Point Summary

**Action 5.34:** Hold regular lunches for those returning from leave in order to create a more welcoming and supportive environment, where staff were able to discuss any issues concerning returning to work. Helps to make staff feel valued during their leave.

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

Explain what support the department offers to staff on return from maternity or adoption leave. Comment on any funding provided to support returning staff.

Employees meet with the line manager to discuss changes to workload or working pattern, plus any special requirements (e.g. private place to express breastmilk). There is a parent and baby room on campus for feeding, changing and resting and six fold-down baby changing tables have been installed but were not on the interactive map (**Action 5.35**).

The University has a nursery on campus open from 8am-6pm on weekdays; recently rated ‘Outstanding’ by Ofsted and 98% of the parents who use it would recommend it to colleagues/friends (Annual Satisfaction Survey 2019 (<https://www.wivenhoeparkdaynursery.co.uk/>)). Staff have reduced rates and booking priority at the nursery and along with the University Sports Centre, provides multisport holiday clubs for children over holiday periods (10 staff use the nursery and 6 use the holiday club). Childcare provision information is available on WILS and communicated to staff during the return to work meeting.

To help staff to achieve a suitable work-life balance, and in consultation with the WLM, lecturing staff receive a temporary period (6 months) of lower workload/reduction in teaching commitments upon return to enable them to re-establish their research. The School offers support to current staff on maternity leave and new staff joining us whilst on maternity leave from another Institution.

“As a new starter who happened to be returning from a maternity period, I was very happy with the relevant support I received from the School and the University as a parent-friendly university” **New Lecturer (F)**

Care leave and time off for dependents are available and staff may be granted up to 5 days (pro rata for P/T) of care leave with full pay within any 12-month period on a rolling basis. They may also be entitled to a further 5 days unpaid care leave/year. Parents are entitled to a total of 18 weeks’ (4 weeks per year) unpaid parental leave per child, which can be taken before their child’s 18<sup>th</sup> birthday. 1 staff has taken unpaid parental leave (8 weeks) in the year after returning from paternity leave.

In addition, a Returning Parent Career Development Fund established during our Bronze Award (**Bronze 6.7**) is available for all staff to help with the additional caring costs incurred as a result of attending conferences/training/networking events. This has been used by 2 staff (1M/1F) and will continue to be promoted (**Action 5.36**).

“The ‘Career Development Fund’ allowed me to attend the biggest International Conference in my field and I could not have attended without the fund.” **PDRA (M)**

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### Section 5.5iii Action Point Summary

**Action 5.35:** Ensure updates on the paternity/maternity supporting documentation include the location of the new (under development) baby rooms, and liaise with IT services to make them included in our Campus Interactive Map

**Action 5.36:** Ensure all staff are aware of the Returning Parent Career Development Fund.

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(iv) Maternity return rate

Provide data and comment on the maternity return rate in the department. Data of staff whose contracts are not renewed while on maternity leave should be included in the section along with commentary.

Number of staff taking maternity leave is very small (**Table 5.5**), three PDRAs (2017-18) two technicians and 1 administrator (2018-19).

**Table 5.5: Maternity leave rates, 2016-19**

	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19
<i>Number of Academic/Research staff</i>	0	3	0
<i>Number of Professional Services staff</i>	0	0	3

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Provide data and comment on the proportion of staff remaining in post six, 12 and 18 months after return from maternity leave.

Two PDRAs had finished their contracts when they went on maternity leave and one returned for 3 months to complete the rest of the contract.

One technician returned for 12 months then handed in her notice, the other technician and administrator are due to return (P/T) in 2019-20 after taking the full 12 months leave entitlement.

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

Provide data and comment on the uptake of these types of leave by gender and grade. Comment on what the department does to promote and encourage take-up of paternity leave and shared parental leave.

Ten staff have taken paternity leave (**Table 5.6**), increasing from five in the previous period. Standard paternity leave and shared parental leave is not recorded separately here, but our previous SM/M took 14 weeks shared parental leave.

**Table 5.6: Paternity leave rates, 2016-19**

	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19
<i>Number of Academic staff</i>	2	4	1
<i>Number of Professional Services staff</i>	2	1	0

The School follows the University Paternity and Shared Parental Leave policies which provide enhanced pay in both cases and provides information on this provision on WILS (**Bronze 6.1**) and at recruitment and induction. The School encourages staff to take paternity leave and supports the individual by reallocating work where appropriate. **In the SCS (2019), 100%F and 91%M (30F/32M) would agree (or not disagree) that the School ‘actively supports men to take paternity leave or consider flexible hours’**; this is largely unchanged from 2016. Individuals are advised that they can take further time after paternity leave by using shared parental leave (**Action 5.37**).

" I have taken two paternity leaves. The HoS was always supportive, authorizing leaves during term time to extend the initial leave period, and allowing flexible working."  
**Academic (M)**.

“The School were incredibly supportive and encouraged me to take 14 weeks' paid shared parental leave which was brilliant for my family. The experience was so beneficial that I also took extended parental leave with my second child too and was fully supported by the School.” **Former SM (M)**

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### Section 5.5v Action Point Summary

**Action 5.37:** Continue to promote family-friendly policies and ensure all staff are aware of any updates or changes

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#### (vi) Flexible working

Provide information on the flexible working arrangements available.

In the SCS (2019) **no M and only 10%F disagreed that the School has a good culture around flexible working**. In 2016, this was no F and 6%M.

Our Work-Life Balance policy includes P/T working, compressed hours, term-time working, job sharing and homeworking (**Bronze 6.2**). All requests came from female staff (**Table 5.7**) and all were approved, increasing from zero requests in the previous period.

**Table 5.7: Flexible working requests, 2016-19**

	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19
<i>Number of staff requesting flexible working</i>	3 (F)	2 (F)	4 (F)

This encompasses only formal flexible working requests (**Bronze 6.4**). A number of informal arrangements are also in place locally and the HoS supports this. Academic staff can also submit a Teaching Availability Approval Form requesting their teaching is not scheduled at particular times should they need flexibility.

Senior staff lead by example and promote how they make use of this flexibility to others in the School. For example, the HoS encourages ASER to take one day/week to work from home for writing papers or grants. (**Action 5.38**).

The University's People Supporting Strategy 2015-19 sets out an aspiration to increase the use of flexible working across the University and the School is committed to helping achieve this by making staff aware of the flexible working options at recruitment, induction (**Bronze 6.5**), during PDRs and via the publication of case studies highlighting individuals who have benefitted from working flexibly (**Action 5.39**, **Action 5.40**, **Action 5.41**).

Our Open Days for prospective students are run on Saturdays which can present difficulties for those with caring responsibilities and can be problematic for religious reasons. Facilitating an enabling environment will be a key theme running throughout our Institutional Athena SWAN work and as part of this review, open days and other outreach events will be considered (**Action 5.42**).

"I requested flexible working to help with my caring responsibilities. My line manager and HoS couldn't have been more supportive. The University approved these changes to my working pattern and I now have a far better work-life balance." **PS staff (F)**.

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### Section 5.5vi Action Point Summary

**Action 5.38:** Promote the availability of flexible working options to staff, which could be a day working from home, or a day of non-teaching per week

**Action 5.39:** Develop case studies of women and men who have developed their careers while working part time.

**Action 5.40:** Monitor the uptake of flexible working in units/groups/teams.

**Action 5.41:** Incorporate flexible working policy into new staff induction pack and ensure the Annual School Calendar of meetings and important dates is circulated to all staff.

**Action 5.42:** Review timing for open days, institutional meetings and outreach events to not only weekends

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

Outline what policy and practice exists to support and enable staff who work part-time after a career break to transition back to full-time roles.

The University Work Life Balance policy includes a career break scheme and the option to reduce working hours for a short time before returning to F/T hours after a year. The career break scheme allows employees to request an unpaid extended period away from employment to meet their personal needs.

The School has had two staff (F) take up the career break scheme.

1. An ASE (F) on a 0.8 FTE contract had a six-month career break from January to June 2019 and returned to full time in July 2019. A teaching buy-out was implemented. They have returned to F/T employment without any lead in time, however, this was at their request.
2. An ASE (F) on a 0.5 FTE has taken a career break for 12 months from January 2020. A fixed term member of staff was appointed.

As a result of these cases, all staff are now more aware of this process and the policy documents are easily accessible on the web (**Bronze 6.5**).

#### SECTION 5.5 FLEXIBLE WORKING AND MANAGING CAREER BREAKS SILVER IMPACT

- **Shared parental leave (2M) and unpaid carers leave (1M) has been taken, compared to zero in 2016.**
- As a result of **Bronze 6.7**, Returning Parent Career Development Fund was used by two staff (1M/1F).
- **In 2016 only 5 paternity leaves were taken. After raising awareness of polices (**Bronze 6.1**), 10 paternity leaves have since been taken.**
- **No M and only 10%F disagreed that the School has a good culture around flexible working.** In 2016, this was no F and 6%M. All official flexible working requests were granted.
- **In 2016, there were zero requests for a career break. In 2018-19, one ASE (F) took one which raised awareness of this as an option to staff. Since then, another ASE (F) has taken a career break in 2019-20.**

## 5.6. Organisation and culture

### (i) Culture

Demonstrate how the department actively considers gender equality and inclusivity. Provide details of how the Athena SWAN Charter principles have been, and will continue to be, embedded into the culture and workings of the department.

**91%M (32/35) and 97%F (28/29) feel the School is a great place to work** (question was not asked in SCS 2016). **Students also agree it is a great place to study; UG: 99%F/98%M** (comparable to SCS 2016;100%F/99%M), **PGT: 100%F/100%M; PGR: 80%F/70%M**. Mondays we have staff coffee mornings, also annual Christmas parties where the HoS contributes food and drink. **(Figure 5.5)**. We hold staff/student family-friendly BBQs on campus. Partners and children are encouraged to attend, and the numbers have increased. **83%M (29/35) and 93%F (28/30) agree or are neutral that social events are at appropriate times.**

Meetings are held within core hours of 10am-4pm **(Bronze 5.5)** where possible and SCS **2019 indicates that 89%F (25/28) and 94%M (33/35) agree (or are neutral)**. In 2016 the responses were similar but from a smaller number of staff, 100%F (12/12) and 97%M (32/33). We plan to reduce core hours to 10-3pm **(Action 5.52)**.

SCS will be undertaken every year and Student Surveys every two years **(Action 3.7)**. Awareness of EDI could be improved: in 2016, 78%M and 83%F agreed that they are kept informed of gender equality matters, in 2019 this decreased marginally to 71%M and 77%F so our rebranded EDIC should result in broader remit and increased awareness.

We celebrate successes in a weekly School e-newsletter to share important information e.g. publications, grant awards, invited speakers and seminars, births and promotions.



**Figure 5.5: Social events in the School of Life Sciences. Left, Christmas party 2019. Middle and right, staff and student summer BBQ 2019.**

" I received emails from staff stating they were looking forward to working with me. Once I had started many colleagues would knock on the door and to say how pleased they were I had joined. In my first week there was a social to introduce me. **Academic (F)**

#### (ii) HR policies

Describe how the department monitors the consistency in application of HR policies for equality, dignity at work, bullying, harassment, grievance and disciplinary processes. Describe actions taken to address any identified differences between policy and practice. Comment on how the department ensures staff with management responsibilities are kept informed and updated on HR policies.

Negative incidents are rare. Where an incident is reported to a line manager, the SM and HoS are notified; issues can be quickly escalated to OD via the School's employee relations advisers. We also have a School Union Rep who is a senior academic (M).

SCS (2019) shows that 91%M (32/35) and 83%F (25/30) agree/or are neutral that the School makes it clear that unsupportive language and behaviour is not acceptable (PGT: 92%F/100%M; PGR: 86%F/80%M) (**Bronze 5.6**). However, 12% of all staff disagree with this statement (3M/5F), an issue to be addressed. 2M/4F (/ 65) have felt uncomfortable because of their gender, 7%F (2/30) stated that they have experienced sexual discrimination and 9%M (3/35) say they have witnessed or heard of sexual discrimination against others. It should be clear that any unsupportive language and behaviour is not acceptable (**Action 5.43**). We will introduce 'Bystander Intervention' training for all EDIC members initially, then roll out across the School (**Action 5.44**).

**There is a zero-tolerance policy to sexual violence, harassment and hate crime.** The University has setup a system called 'Report and Support' in which reports of bullying and harassment can be made. This has been publicised to the School via email (**Bronze 5.8**). **We will introduce an anonymous 'post box' system to facilitate this (Action 5.45).**

Changes to OD policies are publicised to the School via the HoS/SM. Senior managers attend training courses highlighting the application of OD policies. We will set up an email group of line managers to contact or disseminate important information more easily (**Action 5.46**).

There are no incidences of differences between policy and practice. The University's 'Future and Strategic Leaders courses seek to increase the confidence of our leaders in taking decisions on the basis of our policies.

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### Section 5.6ii Action Point Summary

**Action 5.43:** Strengthen our current practice to further ensure that all staff are aware that unsupportive language and behaviour is not acceptable in the School.

**Action 5.44:** Introduce 'Bystander Intervention' training for all EDIC members initially, then rolled out across the School.

**Action 5.45:** Introduce anonymous 'post-box' for reporting of unacceptable behaviour

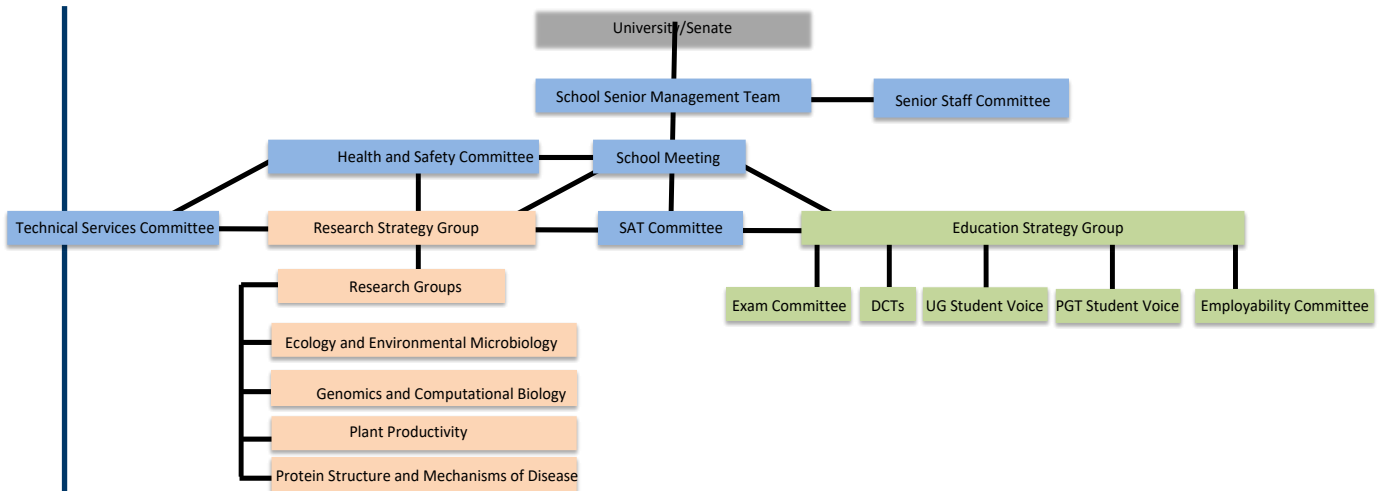
**Action 5.46:** Set up an email group of staff with line management responsibilities in order to be able to contact, or disseminate important information to these individuals more easily

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

Provide data for all department committees broken down by gender and staff type. Identify the most influential committees. Explain how potential committee members are identified and comment on any consideration given to gender equality in the selection of representatives and what the department is doing to address any gender imbalances. Comment on how the issue of 'committee overload' is addressed where there are small numbers of women or men.

Membership of committees is determined by roles in the School and therefore the gender balance of these committees is indirectly determined by the genders of staff in those roles. We allowed co-opted members onto panels to gain further experience (**Bronze 5.2**) - this resulted in ASER/F co-opted onto RSG and ASE/F co-opted onto ESG. This has had positive impacts on both: the ASER is now PGR Director, and the ASE is now Course Director.



**Figure 5.6: Committee Structure in the School of Life Sciences**

SCS (2019) shows that 78%M (18/23) agree that representation of women on committees is either very/slightly fair, but only 43%F (3/7) agree. From this response, it is not clear whether females feel overburdened or underrepresented; in the next SCS we will modify this question to clarify this (**Action 5.47**). To help address ‘committee overload’, this work is included in WLM under ‘annual admin’ and academic staff are given 5% FTE. To address the requirements for gender balance on panels/committees resulting in a heavier workload for the fewer females, **7.5% FTE admin will be allocated to females going forward (Action 5.48)** and gender balance on committees will be monitored (**Action 5.49**).



**Table 5.8: School of Life Sciences - Representation on School committees by gender and staff type (% Females in bold)**

<b>Committee</b>	2016-17 Number of staff on committee by gender	Proportion of total F academic staff in pool	2017-18 Number of staff on committee by gender	Proportion of total F academic staff in pool	2018-19 Number of staff on committee by gender	Proportion of total F academic staff in pool
Athena Swan	25(10F/15M) <b>40%</b>	(5 out of 15F) <b>33%</b>	25(10F/15M) <b>40%</b>	(5 out of 12F) <b>42%</b>	25(10F/15M) <b>40%</b>	(5 out of 12F) <b>42%</b>
Education Strategy Group	15 (5F/10M) <b>33%</b>	(5 out of 15F) <b>33%</b>	14 (7F/7M) <b>50%</b>	(7 out of 12F) <b>58%</b>	13 (7F/6M) <b>54%</b>	(7 out of 12F) <b>58%</b>
Employability & Advisory Group	n/a	n/a	12 (5F/7M) <b>42%</b>	(5 out of 12F) <b>42%</b>	13 (5F/8M) <b>38%</b>	(5 out of 12F) <b>42%</b>
Examination Group meeting	11 (4F/7M) <b>36%</b>	(4 out of 15F) <b>27%</b>	10(4F/6M) <b>40%</b>	(4 out of 12F) <b>33%</b>	10(4F/6M) <b>40%</b>	(4 out of 12F) <b>33%</b>
PGT Term meetings	n/a	n/a	5 (2F/3M) <b>40%</b>	(2 out of 12F) <b>17%</b>	4 (1F/3M) <b>25%</b>	(1 out of 12F) <b>8%</b>
PGT Student Voice	5 (1F/4M) <b>20%</b>	(1 out of 15F) <b>7%</b>	5 (1F/4M) <b>(20%)</b>	(1 out of 12F) <b>8%</b>	4 (1F/3M) <b>(25%)</b>	(1 out of 12F) <b>8%</b>
PGR Student Voice	7 (2F/5M) <b>29%</b>	(2 out of 15F) <b>13%</b>	5 (2F/3M) <b>(40%)</b>	(2 out of 12F) <b>17%</b>	7 (4F/3M) <b>(57%)</b>	(4 out of 12F) <b>33%</b>
Research Strategy Group	8 (2F/6M) <b>25%</b>	(2 out of 15F) <b>13%</b>	8 (2F/6M) <b>(25%)</b>	(2 out of 12F) <b>17%</b>	7 (2F/5M) <b>(29%)</b>	(2 out of 12F) <b>17%</b>
RSPB (Research Probation Supervisory Board)	AUT 5 (2F/3M) <b>40%</b>  SP: 5 (4F/1M) <b>80%</b>	(2 out of 15F) <b>13%</b>  (4 out of 15F) <b>26%</b>	AUT: 5 (3F/2M) <b>60%</b>  SP: 5 (2F/3M) <b>40%</b>	(3 out of 12F) <b>25%</b>  (2 out of 12F) <b>17%</b>	5 (2F/3M) <b>40%</b>	(2 out of 12F) <b>17%</b>
Staff meeting	Open to all academic staff and senior technicians		Open to all academic staff and senior technicians		Open to all academic staff and senior technicians/ professional services staff	
Technical Services Committee	11 (3F/8M) <b>27%</b>	(3 out of 15F) <b>20%</b>	12 (4F/8M) <b>33%</b>	(4 out of 12F) <b>33%</b>	14 (6F/8M) <b>43%</b>	(6 out of 12F) <b>50%</b>
UG DCT BMS/BCH	24 (4F/20M) <b>17%</b>	(4 out of 15F) <b>27%</b>	26 (5F/19M) <b>19%</b>	(5 out of 12F) <b>42%</b>	26 (3F/23M) <b>12%</b>	(3 out of 12F) <b>25%</b>
UG DCT BS/MB	16 (5F/11M) <b>31%</b>	(5 out of 15F) <b>33%</b>	18 (8F/10M) <b>44%</b>	(8 out of 12F) <b>67%</b>	19 (7F/12M) <b>37%</b>	(7 out of 12F) <b>58%</b>
UG Student Voice	4 (2F/2M) <b>50%</b>	(2 out of 15F) <b>13%</b>	5 (1F/4M) <b>20%</b>	(1 out of 12F) <b>8%</b>	7 (3F/4M) <b>43%</b>	(3 out of 12F) <b>25%</b>

### Section 5.6iii Action Point Summary

**Action 5.47:** Modify SCS question on representation of women on committees to clarify whether females feel overburdened, or underrepresented

**Action 5.48:** In recognition of the higher admin burden to female academics, increase allocation to 7.5% FTE in WLM

**Action 5.49:** Monitor gender balance on key decision-making committees, allow for co-opted members to join for development opportunities, e.g. ESG and RSG and identify staff who could be encouraged to apply.

#### (iv) Participation on influential external committees

How are staff encouraged to participate in other influential external committees and what procedures are in place to encourage women (or men if they are underrepresented) to participate in these committees?

Staff are encouraged to participate in external influential committees, for networking, professional development and promotional opportunities. Our SAT Lead is an AS Assessment Panel member and Chair. Membership on such committees is varied, not formally collected and not recognised in the WLM. An action point (**Action 5.50**) to address this will be included (see section 5.6v).

**Table 5.9: Life Sciences academic staff participation in external committees**

		Lecturer	Senior Lecturer	Professor
Research Council panels	Male	1		8
	Female	1	2	1
Senior Editor	Male	1	1	3
	Female			
Editorial Boards	Male	8	5	5
	Female	3		
Advisory Boards	Male	4	7	3
	Female	2	1	
Industrial Panels	Male		1	2
	Female			
Executive of Professional Society	Male	13	10	8
	Female	3	2	
Membership of Professional Societies	Male	3	2	4
	Female	1	1	

#### (v) Workload model

Describe any workload allocation model in place and what it includes. Comment on ways in which the model is monitored for gender bias and whether it is taken into account at appraisal/development review and in promotion criteria. Comment on the rotation of responsibilities and if staff consider the model to be transparent and fair.

The WLM recognises contributions to administration, research, education and leadership, is circulated to all and transparent. Staff are consulted about teaching preferences to accommodate family and other commitments, those who need to work flexibly can submit a request to not teach at specific times.

Course Directors meet with DoE and HoS to plan the teaching for the next academic year and WLM is used to ensure staff are not overloaded. Anecdotally, staff would like outreach to be included in the WLM, as there is a variation in staff participation, and those contributing regularly are often females (**Action 5.50**).

Allocations are made using a typical loading of 1600 hrs/year, with teaching and admin roles quantified in hours. ASER have > 30% of their annual time for research and ASE have <30% time for scholarship. Staff are given 5%FTE annually for CPD and 5%FTE for admin (meetings/committees etc). The WLM was developed following our last award (**Bronze 5.3**) but this year was overhauled by the HoS to more accurately reflect workload. Hours were allocated to the SAT Lead and core team in the year prior to this submission (**Bronze 5.4**). Our WLM template is being shared as good practice (**Action 5.51**).

SCS (2019) shows that 86%F (6/7) and 83%M (19/23) agree/have no opinion that the allocation of teaching and admin loads are very/slightly fair. This is comparable to 2016, when this was 91%F (10/11) and 76%M (19/25). Only one F in each year feels this is unfair.

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#### Section 5.6v Action Point Summary

**Action 5.50:** Update WLM to accurately capture outreach or recruitment activities.

**Action 5.51:** The School will actively participate in the University-wide Athena Swan Review of WLM policy, with a view to developing some consistent guidance for HoSs and senior leadership teams. We have already contributed our latest model as good practice.

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

Describe the consideration given to those with caring responsibilities and part-time staff around the timing of departmental meetings and social gatherings.

Many academics use flexible working and work from home at least one day per week. As a result of our previous award (**Bronze 5.5**), core hours for scheduling meetings are now 10am-4pm and we will work towards an even more family-friendly time of 10-3pm (**Action 5.52**). Minutes are taken and circulated to all staff, and staff can add items to the meeting agenda even if they cannot attend. Dates of meetings are distributed in advance.

SCS (2019) shows 89%F (25/28) and 94%M (33/35) agreed/or were neutral that meetings were scheduled to take caring responsibilities into account. In SCS 2016, this was similar (97%M, 100%F). In response to the statement 'social events are held at times and locations appropriate to men and women' 93%F (28/30) and 83%M (29/35) agreed (or were neutral). In SCS 2016, this was 100% for both (12F/33M). We need to remain aware of this when planning both meetings and social events (**Action 5.53**).

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### Section 5.6vi Action Point Summary

**Action 5.52:** Hold all meetings within new 'core hours', i.e. 10am-3pm, so that those with caring responsibilities can attend.

**Action 5.53:** Ensure School social events are held within core hours where possible so all can attend

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#### (vii) Visibility of role models

Describe how the institution builds gender equality into organisation of events. Comment on the gender balance of speakers and chairpersons in seminars, workshops and other relevant activities. Comment on publicity materials, including the department's website and images used.

We aim to have a gender balance of visible role models across the School, at recruitment/outreach/research events and our marketing material reflects this. As a result of previous Bronze actions (**Bronze 1.4, 1.5**) we developed a webpage showcasing the achievements of female staff and the work of AS: Women in Life Sciences. This contains information on activities of female staff and students, but also information on policies such as flexible working, taking leave and maternity. Following the opening of our new STEM teaching labs in Oct 2018, we commissioned new photos of students working in labs to use in promotional material and these were checked to be reflective of our cohort (**Figure 5.7**).



Figure 5.7: The main School webpage



Figure 5.8: The ‘enormoboard’ displaying the events of Women in Science week 2020.

We participate in regular events such as International Women’s Day and Women in Science week (**Figure 5.8**) and hold weekly seminars given by external speakers and try to ensure a gender balance. The role of seminar organiser is a rotating role and so the collection of data on the genders of speakers is not consistent; there needs to be a more transparent and accessible record of speakers. (**Action 5.54**).

In the UG Student Survey (2019), **90%F (149/165) and 95%M (106/111) agreed that they ‘have access to role models that they can identify with in their School’**. In the Staff survey, (2019), **77%M (27/35)** would agree or are neutral to the statement ‘there are enough female role models in the School’ whereas only **60%F (18/30)** would agree (or neutral). Clearly there is more work to do on improving the visibility of female role models. We have recently installed a display screen in the foyer of the School to highlight female staff (**Action 5.55**).

From our previous award (**Bronze 2.9, 4.4**) we set up a mentoring Scheme in the School and there are **currently 8 mentoring partnerships agreed, 3 of which are with female mentors and 4 with female mentees**. We will aim to increase the number of mentoring partnerships, ensuring that both males and females are encouraged to take up the offer of a mentor and to increase visibility of role models (**Action 5.56**).

" I particularly liked being offered a mentor and I was very pleased to be offered a senior female colleague as my mentor. I feel very valued and supported as a new academic staff member". **New Academic/F**

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#### Section 5.6vi Action Point Summary

**Action 5.54:** Create a more formal, centralised process to record the details of seminar speakers over a longer time period, rather than relying on individual staff records.

**Action 5.55:** Monitor display screen activity and regularly update with information on female staff.

**Action 5.56:** Promote and encourage take-up of mentoring opportunities.

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#### (viii) Outreach activities

Provide data on the staff and students from the department involved in outreach and engagement activities by gender and grade. How is staff and student contribution to outreach and engagement activities formally recognised? Comment on the participant uptake of these activities by gender.

Since 2016, staff and students, driven by a PGR/F, have established a **successful 'Pint of Science' public science event** to help promote PGR research and has been supported by staff 2F/4M- 2018; 2F/5M-2019 involving giving talks in pubs.

Several staff regularly promote science to schools: two SAT members (1F/1M) participated in the Science Escape Room at **'Big Bang at Essex'** and **'Aim Higher' scheme for widening participation; Spectroscopy in a Suitcase (SIAS)** initiative with the Royal Society of Chemistry visited 8 schools in 2019; the **Gatsby Plant Science Masterclass** visited 3 schools in 2019 and 3M/5F are **STEM Ambassadors (Bronze 5.9)**.

Our broad range of outreach and recruitment activities are already acknowledged in our PDR/promotions, however our data collection on staff outreach participation and inclusion in the workload model has been inconsistent. We will collect individual outreach

participation data (**Action 5.50**) and create a repository of outreach activities for shared use (**Action 5.57**).

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### Section 5.6vi Action Point Summary

**Action 5.57:** Develop and maintain a central repository of outreach activities that can be shared for all staff to use

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#### SECTION 5.6 ORGANISATION AND CULTURE SILVER IMPACT

- **89%F (25/28) and 94%M (33/35) agree that meetings are held at core times (Bronze 5.5)**
- **Bronze 5.2** allowed for co-opted members to join panels to gain experience - **1F ASER** joined RSG and **1F ASE** joined ESG. **Positive impacts: the ASER is now PGR Director and the ASE is now a Course Director.** Gaining this senior management responsibility **provided additional evidence to support their promotion applications to SL.** This has resulted in more gender balanced committees
- **Bronze 2.9, 4.4** set up a mentoring Scheme; **currently 8 mentoring partnerships agreed, 3 of which are with female mentors and 4 with female mentees**
- **83%M and 86%F agree that WLM is fair.** This is comparable to 2016 (76%M and 91%F). Only one female in each year feels this is unfair. **We are sharing our WLM template across the University as good practice**

WORD COUNT: 6625

## SILVER APPLICATIONS ONLY

### 6. CASE STUDIES: IMPACT ON INDIVIDUALS

Recommended word count: Silver 1000 words

Two individuals working in the department should describe how the department's activities have benefitted them.

The subject of one of these case studies should be a member of the self-assessment team.

The second case study should be related to someone else in the department. More information on case studies is available in the awards handbook.

#### Case 1: - Transition from fixed term PDRA to lectureship. [REDACTED]

My name is [REDACTED] and I am a PDRA at the School of Life Sciences. I am soon to take up an academic role (lecturer) in the School (June 2020). Over my five years at the University of Essex, the support provided by the School has allowed me to maintain a balance with my family life, ultimately enabling me to secure a position as a lecturer.

I joined the University of Essex in [REDACTED] after the birth of my first child, moving from a PDRA role elsewhere. The University supported the move by delaying my start date, enabling me to care for my child while my partner finished her contract.

The School has been always supportive of me. This support has enabled me to make the transition from fixed term to lectureship. I was able to access the mentoring scheme in the School (implemented for Athena Swan Bronze Award), where I was paired with a lecturer (M) who also has children of a similar age; I also received valuable informal mentorship from my line managers (2M/1F). This mentorship provided valuable advice on things such as workload, time management, prioritizing of work, work life balance, and childcare. The School also supported my career development by allowing me time (alongside my role as a PDRA) to apply for small grants (two successfully) that brought in my first independent research funding. A significant milestone along the road to a permanent position.

My second child was born in [REDACTED]. The School was supportive of my family during this time, allowing me to work flexibly from home. In addition, to ensure my research was not negatively impacted during this period, the School supported me in taking two months parental leave and extending my contract. I have also made use of the 'Returning Parent's Career Development Fund', which paid for childcare so I could attend an international conference. The facilities at the University, such as the excellent on-site Nursery enables me to fit childcare seamlessly around my work and cycling into work with my children is the highlight of the day.



Staff in the School provided guidance and support of my lectureship application, which was invaluable in me gaining this position. Since accepting a role as a lecturer, the School has supported my transition into this new role by ensuring that I have a reduced teaching and admin workload so that I can establish my research. I have also had advice from my previous line managers in applying for grants (3 so far) to help me obtain funding. The School has also nominated me for the internal 'Impact Awards', which if successful will provide additional funding for my research. Going forward, it has been made clear that I can continue to count on the support that I have received already, e.g. mentoring and flexible working, to ensure I can maintain a healthy balance around my family and work.

#### Case 2: Transition from part time to full time; career break and maternity leaves

My name is [REDACTED] for the School of Life Sciences. The School has always supported my flexible working needs. I started as a FT lecturer in 2006 and have had two periods of maternity leave. The first period in [REDACTED] and I returned to work on [REDACTED]. The second period [REDACTED] [REDACTED]. The School was always supportive in my reduction of contractual hours to allow me to balance work and childcare. I used the on-site nursery (OFSTED-rated outstanding) during this time.

In [REDACTED] and continued on this contract until I had a career break in [REDACTED] and the School were supportive in offering this to me [REDACTED] [REDACTED].

Following this career break, I have returned to work full time and taken on a Senior Management role within the School as [REDACTED]. The School has been extremely supportive throughout my employment here in terms of flexible working, childcare allowances, and granting me a career break. This has been as well as encouraging my professional development.

The School put me forward for the AURORA course, which is an Advance HE leadership development course for women, which I completed in 2016. I have also been nominated for the internal professional development course run by our VC, Strategic Leaders.

I was encouraged to apply for promotion, and in October 2017 was promoted to Senior Lecturer. I was also supported in my application for the Excellence in Education award, which I received at graduation in July 2017.

Overall, I feel I have been fully supported throughout my 14 years in the School and I am now in a senior role where I am able to give support to my colleagues to enable them to have a better work life balance. I am compassionate and understand the demands of balancing a career along with family life and I remain strongly supported within the School, despite the changing of headships over the years. The School of Life Sciences is a very supportive and collegiate environment.

Throughout the COVID-19 crisis, the School has been very understanding and communicative in helping us with unusual working hours and encouraging us to take breaks and holiday when possible. The School has also maintained weekly coffee mornings and I

feel closer than ever to my colleagues as we support each other whilst working apart and in challenging circumstances to navigate this difficult path forward through the pandemic.

WORD COUNT: 914

## 7. FURTHER INFORMATION

### 7.1. Recommended word count: Bronze: 500 words | Silver: 500 words

Please comment here on any other elements that are relevant to the application.

#### **Other successes:**

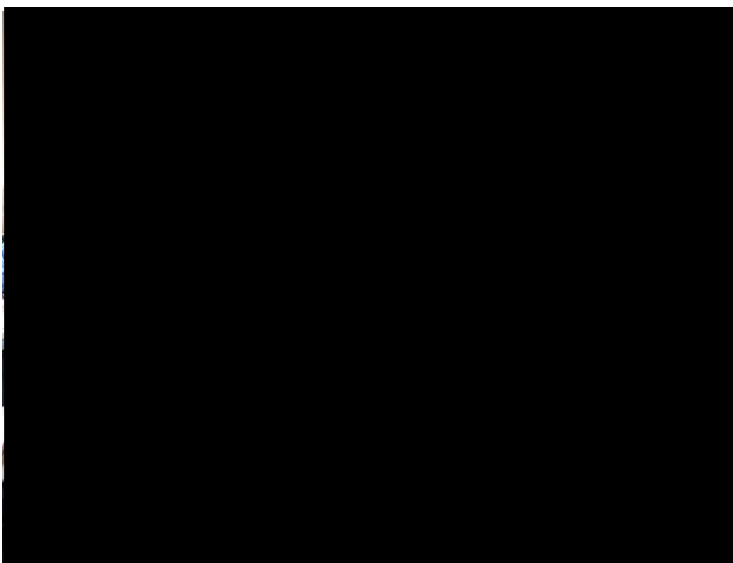
Staff are recognised and rewarded for their activities including excellence in teaching, research and support to students. For example, three academic staff (2F/1M) won the University of Essex 'Excellence in Teaching' and two staff (1M/1F) won 'Excellence in Research' awards. Another female won a regional award 'Institute of Biomedical Science Champion' for support provided to students on hospital placements and this was promoted by the IBMS, across the University and wider blogs.

#### **New approaches:**

A new approach was tested during the writing stage. Each SAT member was assigned a specific section to work on, then on a specific day, SAT members came together to write and discuss their sections with others. This worked well and staff appreciated the opportunity for discussion and time away from their own office to focus on the writing.

In addition, funding was provided for 3 UG UROP summer placement students to assist with data analysis and collection following staff/student surveys.

**Figure 7.1: School SAT members during the drop-in writing session for this document (9<sup>th</sup> Jan, 2020)**



**Focus groups:**

Topics for focus groups were identified following analysis of survey data and included flexible working and paternity leave and support for career progression. We held a number of focus groups across the School from PGT, PGR, PDRA and academic staff.

Following a focus group with PDRAs (see section 5.3 iii) Support given to academic staff for career progression, p 49) several issues were explored, and actions developed.

**Table 7.1: Career development issues raised in PDRA focus group and suggested actions**

Points raised	Actions suggested
<p><b>1)</b> PDRAs want more experience/formal recognition of supervision so they can demonstrate this experience on CVs.</p>	<p>Provide opportunities for PDRAs to gain teaching/supervisory experience and support their contribution as guest lecturers (<b>Action 5.17</b>). Consistency of PDR process to ensure discussion of development needs and how PDRAs can access training and support (<b>Action 5.18, Action 5.19</b>), and obtain HEA fellowship (<b>Action 5.20</b>).</p>
<p><b>2)</b> PDRAs would like more support in transitioning to permanent staff. For example, what fellowships they can apply to beyond the UKRI Future Leaders fellowship, but also opportunities outside the academic path.</p>	<p>More support for PDRAs in identifying fellowships and time allowed to do this. This will be included in the PDRA PDR checklist. (<b>Action 5.21</b>).</p>
<p><b>3)</b> Induction process for PDRAs is ad hoc and not standardised. Further, they are not aware of the training available to them through HR.</p>	<p>Welcome pack and proper induction process required for all new starters- not just lecturers. Booklet to explain who to contact for what services, within School and wider University. A formal introduction to the School, for example to the admin staff (<b>Action 5.22</b>).</p>
<p><b>4)</b> PDRAs work in silos based on research group. Therefore, there is no community, or much awareness of who the other postdocs are across the School. Better representation of PDRA issues and support.</p>	<p>Establish an informal way to encourage the PDRAs from separate groups to meet (e.g. for coffee) together. Create a new admin role of 'PDRA liaison officer'; an academic member of staff who can represent and support PDRA staff and host a termly PDRA Voice Group meeting. Establish an ECR committee to provide formal representation within the School. (<b>Action 5.23</b>).</p>
<p><b>5)</b> Parental leave is hard to handle on fixed term contracts and is dependent on the funder.</p>	<p>Raise awareness of options such as flexible working and parent careers fund, taking paternity leave or shared parental leave (<b>Action 5.24</b>).</p>

WORD COUNT: 327 (not inc Actions)

TOTAL: 12,301

## 8. ACTION PLAN

The action plan should present prioritised actions to address the issues identified in this application.

Please present the action plan in the form of a table. For each action define an appropriate success/outcome measure, identify the person/position(s) responsible for the action, and timescales for completion.

The plan should cover current initiatives and your aspirations for the next four years. Actions, and their measures of success, should be Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant and Time-bound (SMART).

See the awards handbook for an example template for an action plan.



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## LANDSCAPE PAGE



If you require a landscape page elsewhere in this document, please turn on SHOW/HIDE and follow the instructions in red. This text will not print and is only visible while SHOW/HIDE is on. Please do not insert a new page or a page break as this will mean page numbers will not format correctly.

Ref	Action	Rationale	Key outputs (KO) and success measures (SM)	Timescale for completion	Responsible person/team	Related actions
Action 3.1	Increase the WLM hours from 50 to 150 in the year prior to submission for the SAT Convener	Provide sufficient time to organise the submission without overburdening	KO: Hours in LM increased for AS Lead SM: Time to write next successful application	Ongoing 2020-25	AS Lead, HoS	
Action 3.2	To rebrand the SAT team as the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion committee (EDIC) to provide a more encompassing platform and broaden the coverage of our inclusivity work	To make the aims of the group more inclusive and be able to focus on wider issues	KO: SAT team rebranded and all School staff aware of updates SM: increased awareness of equality issues, 89%M and 83%F (all staff) are now aware of the School's Athena SWAN activities- increase this to 95%	Oct 2020	SM	
Action 3.3	AS will remain a standing item on the School's termly meeting agenda. The AS Lead will work on implementation of the AP and report to the Senior Leadership Team. We will minute meetings, and report summary progress to the Peer College and Deputy Vice Chancellor and generally ensure that progress of the AS agenda is part of the School's strategic plans. This will be facilitated through the Senior	Ensure the AS goals and actions are embedded within the School's planning.	KO: AS is a standing item on School meeting agendas. SM: Minutes taken at EDIC meetings and shared with School staff and stored online for all to access.	Oct 2020	HoS, AS Lead and SM	Action 3.10

Ref	Action	Rationale	Key outputs (KO) and success measures (SM)	Timescale for completion	Responsible person/team	Related actions
	Leadership Team (including the HoS, DoE, DoI, & DoR).					
Action 3.4	To provide the EDIC with a rotating tenureship of staff serving for 3-5yrs.	Provide all staff with experience of AS; ensure all voices are heard; ensure EDI work does not fall on a single core group of people	KO: EDIC membership rotated and all staff able to participate. SM: increase in number of different staff participating in EDIC, resulting in >70% of all staff involved an application cycle	Over 3-5 years	HoS, AS Lead, SM	
Action 3.5	Have a bi-annual meeting with the institutional Athena Swan lead and other EDI team members from other Schools to highlight examples of best practice and to discuss university-level action points.	Spread and learn best practices	KO: Attend/ chair Peer College meetings to share best practice across Schools and departments SM; meetings happened; minutes archived	Bi-annually from 2020	EDIC, AS Lead	Action 3.6
Action 3.6	We will act as SWAN champions within the University by contributing to the Peer College network, institutional AS submissions and E&D/SWAN events.	To share good practice and disseminate School initiatives, the AS Lead is the Chair of the Peer College Network	KO: Increase cohesion across departments and work together to promote AS events SM: Increased engagement with Institutional AS events (eg 30 attendees at our Women in Science talk, aim for 60 next time)	Ongoing	AS Lead	Action 3.5
Action 3.7	Conduct Staff/Student surveys annually and consider technology such as clickers or Kahoot to increase uptake	To monitor the ongoing effects of actions	KO: annual surveys completed, trial use of technologies SM: Increase in participation on surveys (Staff from 82%>90%, students from 44%> 60%) Survey results indicating progress toward goals	Yearly each Nov	EDIC	Action 3.8 Action 3.9

Ref	Action	Rationale	Key outputs (KO) and success measures (SM)	Timescale for completion	Responsible person/team	Related actions
Action 3.8	Conduct annual focus groups to measure progress against the AS charter principles.	Identify new EDI issues arising, and solutions for specific topics	KO: focus groups held SM: Evidence of progress towards goals and/or new actions identified. Results will be circulated on School AS webpages and the display screen in foyer to promote transparency and encourage feedback.	Yearly-following completion and analysis of surveys	EDIC	Action 3.7 Action 3.9
Action 3.9	Provide an annual analysis of the AS surveys and focus group data sets for discussion at School meetings and/or with senior management.	Ensure progress towards AS goals and further actions are given attention at senior level. Presenting the data from these surveys to all staff improved engagement and interest in the AS process	KO: HoS commitment to address issues identified in surveys and focus groups. SM: improved feedback in the following surveys (97%F and 91%M feel that the School is a great place to work- increase this to 100%)	Yearly-following completion and analysis of surveys	EDIC / HoS	Action 3.7 Action 3.8
Action 3.10	To better understand the AS Charter and fully embed it into the School ethos, we will encourage three SAT/EDIC members to apply to become Advance HE assessors.	To provide experience for EDIC members on other institutional practices; contribute to AS goals beyond the School.	KO: EDIC members put forward as Advance HE assessors SM: At least one of these successfully applied to be assessor (AS Lead is already an assessor and Chair)	2021-22	EDIC	Action 3.3
Action 4.1	Monitor UG degree classifications and provide more support to students in years 2 and 3 via tutorials/revision classes to improve degree classifications	There are small numbers of students achieving 2.2 or 3rd class degrees but introduce tutorials and further support for all UG students to further improve classifications.	KO: annual monitoring of degree classifications SM: Improvement in attainment/reduction in lower class classifications. Currently 13%F and 18%M achieve 2.2 or lower, reduce this to <10% for both.	Ongoing from 2020-2025	DoE	Action 4.2



Ref	Action	Rationale	Key outputs (KO) and success measures (SM)	Timescale for completion	Responsible person/team	Related actions
Action 4.2	Roll out 'unlocking excellence' early interventions for poorly performing students	Data on early engagement and performance in January MCQ exams can help to identify struggling students. A pilot project was trialled to explore reasons for poor performance in these students	KO: Identify struggling students in Spring term of year 1 and carry out interventions, for example small group sessions organised and inspirational final year students matched up as peer mentors to offer support to these students. SM: Improvements in attainment by tracking these students from first year through to final year, eg moving up a degree class from year 1 to year 3 for 50% of identified students	Jan -July 2021	Peer mentor coordinator and AS Lead	Action 4.1
Action 4.3	Monitor gender balance of PGT applications, offers, and accepted places	Ensure gender balance maintains parity	KO: Gender balance of PGT applications monitored SM: Gender parity maintained. The %F app/offers/acc has decreased (62%-55% applications, 60-56% offers, 52-50% acceptances) Target to increase applications back up to >60%F	Ongoing 2020-25	PGT administrator, PGT Director, HoS	
Action 4.4	Request exit interviews if a PGT student withdraws	Determine the reasons for withdrawal to identify possible AS actions if needed	KO: Withdrawing PGT students have had exit interviews SM: reasons for withdrawing ascertained, actions put in place, fewer withdrawals as a result. 6 students withdrew (4F/2M), aim to reduce this to <4 over 3-year period	Ongoing	DoE, PGT Course Director	
Action 4.5	Implement a Supervisor feedback monitoring form to ensure the timely return of	PGR students complained that feedback was delayed and prevented them	KO: Monitoring of feedback return to ensure timely and consistent feedback, records kept of late feedback.	Ongoing 2020-25	PGR administrator and PGR Director	

Ref	Action	Rationale	Key outputs (KO) and success measures (SM)	Timescale for completion	Responsible person/team	Related actions
	feedback on the students' draft thesis	from timely submission of thesis	SM: Increased timeliness of supervisor feedback to reduce the number of late thesis submissions.			
Action 4.6	Invite successful Essex graduates back to inspire current students and include their profiles on the School and WILS websites.	Students already have vast career development support, but would like to hear from Essex graduates about their career paths and recommendations	KO: Organise annual 'From Bench to Board and Beyond' conference for PGT/PGR students, including careers sessions with Essex graduates SM: improved student feedback on career support- currently 74%F and 50%M PGR agree career support is good- increase to >80% for both	Annually in April/May	PGR Director and PGR administrator, SDC team, all PGT/PGR supervisors	
Action 4.7	Monitor mentoring and support to female staff seeking promotion	Female staff are less likely to seek promotion. Anecdotal evidence suggests it could be due to lack of confidence in meeting the promotion criteria and therefore support from staff who have gone through the process would help to improve confidence to apply.	KO: Regularly promote Mentoring Programme to all staff and ensure it is discussed during induction and at annual PDR. SM: increased uptake of mentoring partnerships (50% increase from 8 to 12) and increase in number and success of promotion applications. Currently 27 staff (9F/18M) applied, 78% success rate. Increase success rate to 85% or more.	Ongoing 2020-25	RM, HoS	Action 5.4 Action 5.5
Action 4.8	Monitor effect of changes to female recruitment and selection	Determine if the approaches to increase the number of female staff recruited are successful	KO: Analyse the data on staff recruitment each year. SM: Proportional increase in female academic staff recruitment. Currently 29% female lecturers; 58 academics (17F/41M), increase to 35%F lecturers	Ongoing-2020-23	EDIC HoS	Action 5.2

Ref	Action	Rationale	Key outputs (KO) and success measures (SM)	Timescale for completion	Responsible person/team	Related actions
Action 4.9	Establish a forward-looking PDR meeting for staff on fixed-term contracts	Staff on FTC are included in the annual PDR process, but more support could be provided about future career options in the final year of the FTC. Support is inconsistent and depends on the Line Manager.	KO: Annual PDR carried out for every member of staff on a FTC, and includes forward-looking discussion on future career plans. SM: Increased satisfaction with support offered (e.g. from focus groups) and improved success in career progression (e.g. fellowships awarded or progression into lecturer posts)	Ongoing but will be monitored annually	RM, Line Managers	Action 4.10
Action 4.10	Work with HR to identify trends in leaving destination, wellbeing, flexible working and career progression by gender.	The destinations of leavers are currently not centrally collected. There is a university online leavers questionnaire sent to the member of staff before they leave to allow the individual to have a one to one interview with HR should they wish. Within the School, we will keep a better record of leavers destinations and monitor reasons for leaving.	KO: A School-held record of leavers; both destination and reasons for leaving. SM: reduction in number of resignations from tenured staff- currently 3M in 3-year period- reduce to <1 resignation per year.	Ongoing 2020-25	School Administrator	Action 4.9
Action 4.11	Ensure managers use the standard Leavers Checklist.	The University is introducing a standardised Leaver's Checklist for School use.	KO: The School will ensure that managers are aware of this list and are trained in using it whilst encouraging leavers to complete the Employee	Ongoing	Line Managers and School	Action 4.9 Action 4.10

Ref	Action	Rationale	Key outputs (KO) and success measures (SM)	Timescale for completion	Responsible person/team	Related actions
			Experience Questionnaire to build leaving data for analysis SM: 100% compliance with leavers checklist completion		Administrator	
Action 5.1	Continue to monitor our recruitment procedures, ensuring Life Sciences staff undertake unconscious bias training in addition to the University's Equality and Diversity training	To ensure that unconscious bias is understood by all members of the School, compulsory UB training will be completed	KO: monitoring of UB training completion rates SM: 100% of academic staff completed training by end of 2020; new staff to complete training within 12 months of start	Ongoing- 2020	HoS	
Action 5.2	Revisit any single sex shortlists.	To increase the number of women recruited we want to ensure that we do not miss any potentially successful applicants	KO: Applications revisited if single sex shortlist SM: continued increase in %F hired- currently 39%F (11/28) over 3-year period, increase to 50%F	Ongoing 2020-25	Interview / shortlisting panels, HoS	Action 4.8
Action 5.3	Monitor the effectiveness of new induction for new staff	Ensure inductions remain relevant and are updated as required	KO: Monitoring of new induction process through SCS and focus groups SM: New staff report satisfaction with the induction process in annual reviews and SCS. Currently 10 staff completed the induction, 3F found it very helpful; 7 staff (2M/5F) found it slightly helpful- increase this to >50% found it very helpful	Ongoing 2020-25	SM	Action 5.22 to include PDRAs
Action 5.4	Discuss in all PDRs whether staff are ready to apply for promotion and provide full support to enable promotion.	To increase the proportion of both men and women applying for promotion	KO: PDR checklist to initiate discussion of promotions used in PDRs. SM: Increased proportion of eligible men and women applying for promotion.	Ongoing	HoS, Line Managers	Action 4.7 Action 5.5

Ref	Action	Rationale	Key outputs (KO) and success measures (SM)	Timescale for completion	Responsible person/team	Related actions
			Currently 27 staff (9F/18M) applied, 78% success rate. Increase success rate to 85% or more.			
Action 5.5	Monitor staff promotion applications and success rates	Ensure all academic staff are applying for promotion at appropriate times	KO: record promotion applications and successes SM: Increased success rates in promotion applications for both genders. Currently 27 staff (9F/18M) applied, 78% success rate. Increase success rate to 85% or more.	Ongoing	HoS	Action 4.7 Action 5.4
Action 5.6	Identify PS staff that meet the criteria for a regrading application and encourage and support them in their application	PS staff feel there are a lack of opportunities for career progression	KO: Relevant PS staff identified SM: Increase in number of regrading applications both submitted and successful- currently 2M applied and successful; increase by 50% and encourage F applications	Ongoing but initial changes seen in 2020-21	TSM, SM	Action 5.5 Action 5.7 Action 5.8
Action 5.7	Set up a regrading support committee (led by SM) to support staff through the regrading process	To increase the number of PS staff applying for regrading	KO: committee set up SM: Increase in the number of successful regrading applications. currently 2M applied and successful; increase by 50% and encourage F applications	Ongoing but initial changes seen in 2020-21	SM	Action 5.5 Action 5.6 Action 5.8
Action 5.8	Monitor application numbers and success rates of regrading applications	Ensure the support provided for PS staff is working	KO: record of applications submitted and successful SM: Increase in the number of successful regrading applications. currently 2M applied and successful; increase by 50% and encourage F applications	Ongoing but initial changes seen in 2020-21	SM	Action 5.5 Action 5.6 Action 5.7
Action 5.9	Encourage all staff to attend career development training,	Some staff feel training is not seen as a priority	KO: record training attendance for staff, discuss in PDRs	Ongoing but initial changes	HoS	Action 5.10 Action 5.13

Ref	Action	Rationale	Key outputs (KO) and success measures (SM)	Timescale for completion	Responsible person/team	Related actions
	and include this in the PDR process		SM: An increase in the number of CPD events attended and logged in the PDR record. CPD now included in WLM. Currently, staff ratio of course completion is 2.75 for F and 1.88 for M-increase this to 3 for both F and M.	seen in 2020-21		
Action 5.10	Managers to regularly review participation in training and individually encourage completion	Completion of training courses has already increased by 35%, but there is a gender difference (see Table 5.3)	KO: records on training course completion SM: Increase in training completion rates to over 3 courses per year for M and F academics	Ongoing	HoS, SM	Action 5.9
Action 5.11	Monitor gender balance of staff nominated to participate in Leadership programmes	Ensure the number of women completing leadership programmes is proportional within the School	KO: records on the gender balance of staff nominated and attending these courses SM: Number of women completing these courses is in line with proportion of female academics (now 29%)	Annually	HoS, SM	Action 5.12
Action 5.12	Ensure that staff are encouraged by HoS to participate in Leadership programmes	Increase overall participation in leadership programmes	KO: records on the gender balance of staff nominated and attending these courses SM: Both male and female staff at the appropriate levels are completing Leadership programmes	Annually	HoS	Action 5.11
Action 5.13	WLM to include 5%FTE to allow for CPD by all academic staff. Monitor the impact of staff training uptake as a result.	Feedback from SCS suggests that staff may not have enough time to complete annual CPD	KO: annually updated WLM data records SM: Proportionate increase in staff completing personal development training courses	Annually	HoS	Action 5.9 Action 5.10

Ref	Action	Rationale	Key outputs (KO) and success measures (SM)	Timescale for completion	Responsible person/team	Related actions
Action 5.14	Arrange a focus group to determine what staff would like to achieve during PDRs	SCS feedback shows that staff satisfaction with the PDR process is low-only 43% of staff found it useful	KO: focus groups held, and data collected and analysed SM: Increase in satisfaction with PDR process (to 70% for M and F) as measured in SCS 2021	Ongoing but initial improvement in 2021 SCS	EDIC	Action 5.15 Action 5.16
Action 5.15	Feedback form on PDR process to be completed by appraisee	To continuously monitor effectiveness of PDRs and improve staff satisfaction	KO: PDR feedback forms completed and analysed, and feedback or suggestions for improvement taken onboard SM: Improved satisfaction with PDR process (to 70% for both M and F) as measured in SCS 2021	Ongoing but initial improvement in 2021 SCS	EDIC to create form then HoS/SM to implement	Action 5.14 Action 5.16
Action 5.16	The School to feed into the central review on appraisal	To share information on PDR effectiveness with other departments and improve the process for all	KO: sharing of good practice in PDRs across the university SM: Improved satisfaction with PDR process (to 70% for both M and F) in SCS 2021	Ongoing but initial improvement in 2021 SCS		Action 5.14 Action 5.15
Action 5.17	Provide opportunities for PDRAs to gain teaching/supervisory experience	Some PDRAs would like to gain formal teaching and supervisory experience that can be attributed to them.	KO: Meeting with PDRAs and DoE to identify areas of expertise. Have 5 PDRAs give a guest lecture across all modules SM: Lectures successfully delivered, PDRAs report in surveys/focus groups that they are satisfied with teaching/development opportunities provided	2023	DoE to identify topics Course Directors Line Managers	Action 5.21
Action 5.18	To ensure consistency of PDR process for PDRAs, introduce a PDR checklist for discussion of development needs and how	PDRs for PDRAs is inconsistent and depends on PI. The process needs monitoring to ensure	KO: new PDR checklist for use in PDRA PDRs and monitoring of its use. SM: Increased satisfaction of PDRAs with career development support,	Ongoing but initial changes seen in SCS 2021.	RM/SM	Action 5.14 Action 5.15 Action 5.16

Ref	Action	Rationale	Key outputs (KO) and success measures (SM)	Timescale for completion	Responsible person/team	Related actions
	PDRAs can access training and support	annual compliance and a checklist to ensure development needs and required support is discussed	measured during annual focus groups and SCS 2021.			
Action 5.19	The Research Manager will monitor annual completion of PDRs by PDRAs, ensuring the checklist has been used	PDRs for PDRAs are inconsistent, so annual monitoring of completion and use of checklist will be carried out.	KO: Annual monitoring shows full compliance of PDRs and use of checklist. SM: Increased satisfaction of PRDAs with career support, measured during annual focus groups and SCS 2021.	Ongoing but initial changes seen in SCS 2021.	RM/SM	Action 5.14 Action 5.15 Action 5.16 Action 5.18
Action 5.20	Provide training opportunities to allow PDRAs to gain HEA fellowship	Some PDRAs would like to gain formal teaching experience, and they would like the opportunity to gain HEA Fellowship	KO: meeting with PDRAs to explain fellowship process and gather interest. Regular support provided to PDRAs to help them do this. SM: Increase in the number of PDRAs gaining HEA Fellowship (currently none)	2022	HoS, SM, AS Lead, OD	Action 5.18
Action 5.21	Support for PDRAs in identifying and applying for fellowships. Engage with REO to get further support on this.	Some PDRAs feel they do not have enough time or support to identify, and complete applications for fellowships.	KO: Training and meetings on identifying suitable sources of funding. Monitor number of fellowship applications per year. SM: Increased number of fellowship applications submitted by PDRAs	2023	RM, HoS, Line Managers, REO	
Action 5.22	Provide a welcome pack and proper induction process required for all new PDRA starters	Some PDRAs feel that their induction is inconsistent and not always fully informative.	KO: Updated welcome pack and full induction provided to all new PDRAs SM: Increase in the satisfaction of the PDRA induction process, measured in the focus groups/SCS 2021.	2021	RM, Line Managers, DoR	Action 5.3 Action 5.41



Ref	Action	Rationale	Key outputs (KO) and success measures (SM)	Timescale for completion	Responsible person/team	Related actions
Action 5.23	Establish an ECR committee and create a new admin role of 'PDRA liaison officer'	To give PDRAs a proper voice in the School, embed ECRC membership into the departmental administration structure and allocate a new admin role to a member of academic staff.	KO: ECR committee established and PDRA liaison officer appointed SM: 20% increase in the satisfaction of PRDA inclusion in the School as measured by SCS 2021 and focus groups	2021	HoS, RM, DoR	
Action 5.24	Raise awareness of options such as flexible working (dependent on funding body) and Parent Career Development fund, taking paternity leave or shared parental leave	PDRAs are not always aware of the support available to them.	KO: ensure PDRAs are regularly reminded about the family friendly policies, point them to WILS SM: Increase in proportion of PDRAs reporting awareness of or taking these opportunities, measured in focus group responses	2021-23	RM, Line managers	Action 5.33 Action 5.36 Action 5.37
Action 5.25	Regularly advertise the mentoring scheme to PDRAs	To improve support for PDRAs, ensure mentoring programme is regularly advertised. In the final year of the FTC, having a mentor to support with the next steps in career development is crucial.	KO: collect feedback on mentoring schemes obtained from annual SCS and focus groups SM: Increase in number of partnerships and improved feedback on awareness and usefulness (currently 8 partnerships- increase by 50% to 12)	Ongoing 2020-25	RM, Line Managers	Action 5.56
Action 5.26	Feed into the central University review on probationary guidance	To ensure that probationary staff are fully prepared for the permanency application, School staff	KO: Meeting with central team to review and update probationary guidance SM: Increased understanding of the permanency process by probationary staff as evidenced in SCS (currently	Ongoing	HoS, SM	

Ref	Action	Rationale	Key outputs (KO) and success measures (SM)	Timescale for completion	Responsible person/team	Related actions
		will feed into the new university guidance.	91%M and 86%F agree that they understand the process- increase to 95% for both)			
Action 5.27	Explore the content of the NEwComERS Research week and ask staff in Life Sciences if it addresses our needs. Advertise and encourage training opportunities for PDRAs more widely	Low engagement from our School, with the University NewComers conference (6/200 registrations). Feedback suggested either poor advertising of event, and/or topics not relevant to our staff.	KO: analyse content of event and engage with organisers to discuss future event content. Better advertising of events. SM: Increased engagement with training events aimed directly at PDRA staff (more than 20 sessions attended by Life Sciences PDRAs).	Next Newcomers conference in Jan 2021.	PDRA liaison officer, Line managers, DoR	
Action 5.28	Continue to monitor the use of Proficio, and develop new courses as demand arises	PGR students have access to £2500 to use for training and conference attendance, but only about one third of students have accessed it	KO: Regular publicity on use of Proficio for PGR personal and career development SM: increase in PGRs using funds (from 35% to 50% of PGRs)	Ongoing, but a noticeable increase by 2022	PGR Administrator, PGR Director, Line Managers	
Action 5.29	Ensure that all technical and professional support staff have an annual PDR with their Line Manager	Compliance rates for PS PDRs all already 100% but we wish to maintain this	KO: records of PS staff annual PDRs SM: 100% compliance	Ongoing from 2020-21	SM, TSM	
Action 5.30	Provide development opportunities for PS staff to allow career progression, for example secondment opportunities or chairing committees	PS staff do not feel able to progress and do not always get opportunities to develop more skills	KO: Greater awareness of PS staff looking for development opportunities, eg from their PDR SM1: Increased satisfaction in availability of PS staff development opportunities, eg in SCS 2021	2022	SM	Action 5.6 Action 5.7 Action 5.8 Action 5.9 Action 5.31

Ref	Action	Rationale	Key outputs (KO) and success measures (SM)	Timescale for completion	Responsible person/team	Related actions
			SM2: increase in regrading applications of PS staff, or progression into higher grade roles			
Action 5.31	Introduce mentoring and shadowing of senior colleagues including in other departments, for both Admin and tech staff	Mentoring has been available for academic staff but not offered to PS staff before	KO: Mentoring programme set up for PS staff SM: Mentoring partnerships established (currently none)	2022	SM RM TSMs	Action 5.32 Action 5.56
Action 5.32	Monitor uptake and effectiveness of mentoring	Mentoring has been available for academic staff but not offered to PS staff before	KO: Record of mentoring partnerships for PS staff kept SM: increase staff satisfaction in SCS 2021	2022	SM RM TSMs	Action 5.31 Action 5.56
Action 5.33	Links to maternity and adoption leave policies will be placed in the annual School Staff Handbook, and HR will provide an annual briefing to the senior management team on changes to HR policy.	To ensure awareness of policies and communicate these effectively to all staff at regular intervals	KO: Regularly remind staff of information on WILS, via Inside Biology newsletter, induction and PDR SM: increase in staff awareness of maternity policies, evidenced in SCS 2021. Currently 100%M and 80%F of new staff were aware- increase to 100% for both.	Ongoing	SM, School Administrator	Action 5.24 Action 5.35
Action 5.34	Hold regular lunches for those returning from leave in order to create a more welcoming and supportive environment, where staff were able to discuss any issues concerning returning to work. Helps to make staff feel valued during their leave.	To support those on maternity leave and to make the transition back to work smoother, invite them into work for lunches or coffee meetings	KO: Engage with staff on maternity leave to arrange informal meetings SM: Increase in SCS positive responses to questions regarding support during maternity leave	Ongoing 2020-23	SM, Line managers	
Action 5.35	Ensure updates on the paternity/maternity	We found that not all baby rooms were easily	KO/SM: Baby rooms added to all maps	2021	EDIC, Estates team	Action 5.34

Ref	Action	Rationale	Key outputs (KO) and success measures (SM)	Timescale for completion	Responsible person/team	Related actions
	supporting documentation include the location of the new (under development) baby rooms, and liaise with IT services to make them included in our Campus Interactive Map	located on maps or physically				
Action 5.36	Ensure all staff are aware of the Parent Career Development Fund.	Since its introduction during our last award in 2016, we have publicised this fund and 2 staff (1M/1F) have used it. We will to continue to ensure its existence is known and how it can be accessed	KO/SM: Regular sharing of this and other family-friendly policies on WILS and in newsletters.	Ongoing	HoS, SM Line managers	Action 5.24 Action 5.33 Action 5.35
Action 5.37	Continue to promote family-friendly policies and ensure all staff are aware of any updates or changes	To ensure that all staff are aware of the family friendly policies and updates or changes to them	KO: Regular sharing of this and other family-friendly policies on WILS and in newsletters. SM: Increase in awareness of these policies in SCS 2020. Currently 100%M and 80%F of new staff were aware-increase to 100% for both.	Ongoing but initially SCS 2020 results	HoS, EDIC Line Managers	Action 5.24 Action 5.33 Action 5.36
Action 5.38	Senior staff will lead by example and encourage ASER to prioritise one day each week for working at home or a day of non-teaching per week	To provide the headspace for writing papers or grants, staff are encouraged to spend one day per week working from home, or as a non-teaching day. This can be requested through the 'teaching	KO: Introduce a new question in the SCS 2020 to ask, 'do you have approx. 1 day per week non-teaching to be able to write papers/grants and work from home if you wish?' SM: more than 70% academic staff agreeing with the statement above	SCS 2020-21	AS Lead, EDIC DoR	

Ref	Action	Rationale	Key outputs (KO) and success measures (SM)	Timescale for completion	Responsible person/team	Related actions
		availability' forms used by timetabling staff.				
Action 5.39	Develop case studies of women and men who have developed their careers while working part time.	Work with the Peer College across the University to develop case studies highlighting individuals who have benefitted from working flexibly	KO: Identify individuals to be case studies and post to WILS SM: Increase in positive responses on flexible working in SCS 2021. Currently, 71%M and 77%F agree/neutral that there is a good culture around flexible working- increase to 85% of both.	Ongoing 2020-21	AS Lead, EDIC	
Action 5.40	Monitor the uptake of flexible working in units/groups/teams.	The University's People Supporting Strategy sets out an aspiration to increase the use of flexible working across the University and the School is committed to helping achieve this by making staff aware of the flexible working options	KO: Increase the awareness of formal and informal flexible working arrangements within the School. SM: Encourage staff to apply for flexible working where appropriate (currently 3F)	2020-21	SM, EDIC	Action 5.41
Action 5.41	Incorporate flexible working policy into new staff induction pack and ensure the Annual School Calendar of meetings and important dates is circulated to all staff.	As above- the School is committed to helping achieve this by making staff aware of the flexible working options at induction	KO: Ensure incorporation of formal and informal flexible working policies within the induction pack. SM: Increase in flexible arrangements (currently 3F)	2020-21	SM, EDIC	Action 5.3 Action 5.40
Action 5.42	Review timing for open days, institutional meetings and outreach events to not only weekends	Open Days run on Saturdays can present difficulties for those with caring responsibilities and can	KO/SM: Liaise with Recruitment about plans for non-weekend open day events, allowing certain staff and prospective students to participate in these events, held on alternative days	2020-21	EDIC Recruitment team, Outreach coordinator	

Ref	Action	Rationale	Key outputs (KO) and success measures (SM)	Timescale for completion	Responsible person/team	Related actions
		be problematic for religious reasons.				
Action 5.43	Strengthen our current practice to further ensure that all staff are aware that unsupportive language and behaviour is not acceptable in the School	In SCS 2019, 12% of all staff (3M/5F) feel that unsupportive language is not sufficiently discouraged and that is an issue we need to address.	KO: Regular reminders in newsletters and meetings that this behaviour is not tolerated, signposting to 'Report and Support' and anonymous postbox SM: decrease in the % of staff disagreeing with statement that unsupportive language and behaviour is not tolerated (currently 12% in SCS 2020, reduce to <5%)	2020	HoS, SM, EDIC	Action 5.44 Action 5.45
Action 5.44	Introduce 'Bystander Intervention' training for all EDIC members initially, then rolled out across the School.	To support action 5.43, Bystander training is now available	KO: All EDIC members to complete training initially, then roll out across the School SM1: 100% compliance with training by EDIC SM2: decrease in % of staff disagreeing with statement that unsupportive behaviour is not tolerated (currently 12% in SCS 2020, reduce to <5%)	2021	EDIC members, HoS	Action 5.43 Action 5.45
Action 5.45	Introduce anonymous 'post-box' for reporting of unacceptable behaviour	To support Action 5.43	KO: Engagement with postbox reporting. SM: decrease in % of staff disagreeing with statement that unsupportive behaviour is not tolerated currently 12% in SCS 2020, reduce to <5%)	Ongoing but initially in SCS 2021	SM	Action 5.43 Action 5.44
Action 5.46	Set up an email group of staff with line management responsibilities in order to be able to contact, or disseminate	To be able to disseminate information to line managers easily	KO: email group set up SM: Easier dissemination of line manager information such as training, PDRs and others	2020	School Administrator	

Ref	Action	Rationale	Key outputs (KO) and success measures (SM)	Timescale for completion	Responsible person/team	Related actions
	important information to these individuals more easily					
Action 5.47	Modify SCS question on representation of women on committees to clarify whether females feel overburdened, or underrepresented	To ensure effects of changing admin duties are properly understood	KO/SM: new question added to SCS	Ongoing but initially in SCS 2020	AS Lead	Action 5.48 Action 5.49
Action 5.48	In recognition of the higher admin burden to female academics, increase allocation to 7.5% FTE in WLM	To readdress the excess workload placed on female academics as a result of gender balancing on committees	KO: 7.5%FTE added to all F academics WLM. Add new question into survey on work-life balance. SM: Increase in positive responses to question on allocation of teaching/admin in SCS 2021- currently 61%M and 43%F feel it is fair. Increase to >70% for both.	2020-21	HoS, AS Lead	Action 5.50
Action 5.49	Monitor gender balance on key decision-making committees, allow for co-opted members to join for development opportunities, e.g. ESG and RSG and identify staff who could be encouraged to apply.	To ensure women are represented on committees and allow co-opted members to join for development opportunities. E.g. PGT meetings are currently 8%F and RSG is currently 17%F.	KO: record and monitor gender balance on committees SM: maintain or improve gender balance, see PGT and RSG examples	2020-21	HoS, DoR, DoE, PGT Director	Action 5.47 Action 5.48
Action 5.50	Update WLM to accurately capture outreach or recruitment activities.	Outreach activities are not currently captured in WLM- it is not known if there are gender differences in outreach participation.	KO: Record outreach activity for each staff member and ensure this is recognised in WLM SM: Increase in M perception in the value of pastoral and outreach work (in SCS 2020-21). Currently 71%F and 61%M believe pastoral and outreach is	2020-22	HoS, SM, Outreach Coordinator	Action 5.48

Ref	Action	Rationale	Key outputs (KO) and success measures (SM)	Timescale for completion	Responsible person/team	Related actions
			valued in PDR and promotions process- increase to 80% for both.			
Action 5.51	The School will actively participate in the University-wide Athena Swan Review of WLM policy, with a view to developing some consistent guidance for HODs and senior leadership teams.	WLM has been improved, SCS 2019 showed that 83%M and 86%F felt that allocation of teaching and admin loads were fair/have no opinion	KO: Feed into University review on WLM, by sharing our good practice in allocating of hours SM: Maintain or improve staff satisfaction of WLM in SCS 2020 to over 90% for both.	2020-21	HoS, AS Lead	Action 5.50
Action 5.52	Hold all meetings within new 'core hours', i.e. 10am-3pm, so that those with caring responsibilities can attend.	To accommodate those working P/T or flexibly, core meeting hours are becoming 10-3pm.	KO: Core meeting times becoming 10-3pm SM: maintain or improve staff response rate in SCS 2020 regarding suitability of meeting times. Currently 94%M and 89%F felt meetings were at times suitable for those with caring responsibilities- increase to 95% for both.	2020-21/2021-22	HoS, School Administrator	
Action 5.53	Ensure School social events are held within core hours where possible so all can attend	To accommodate those working P/T or flexibly, social events should be held within core times when possible.	KO: Consider timing and location when planning social events SM: Maintain or improve staff response rate in SCS 2021 regarding suitability of social event timings. 83%M and 93%F felt that was already the case increase to 95% for both.	2020-21/2021-22	HoS, School Administrator, SM	
Action 5.54	Create a more formal, centralised process to record the details of seminar speakers over a longer time period, rather than relying on individual staff records.	Improve monitoring of seminar speakers as this has been inconsistent as the role has changed hands	KO: Keep a formal, centralised record of invited and attended seminar speakers and their gender. SM1: improved access to this data, and therefore better monitoring to ensure improved gender parity in speakers.	2020-21	HoS, Seminar Organiser, RM	Action 5.55



Ref	Action	Rationale	Key outputs (KO) and success measures (SM)	Timescale for completion	Responsible person/team	Related actions
			SM2: Increase in visibility of F role models and improvement in SCS 2020 response to question 'there are enough F role models in School' (77%M vs 60%F)- increase to 80% for both.			
Action 5.55	Monitor display screen activity and regularly update with information on female staff.	The display screen in the School foyer is a recent addition and is being used to show student and staff information.	KO: Better use of the display screen to highlight staff achievements and updates SM: Increase in visibility of F role models and improvement in SCS 2020 response to question 'there are enough F role models in the School' (77%M vs 60%F)- increase to 80% for both.	2020-21	RM, SM	Action 5.54
Action 5.56	Promote and encourage take-up of mentoring opportunities.	Mentoring scheme in place for academic staff but low take up. Ensure all staff and PGRs are aware of this opportunity by regular email reminders, discussions in PDR and inductions	KO: Feedback on mentoring schemes obtained from annual SCS and focus groups SM: Increase in number of partnerships (currently 8, increase by 50% to 12) and improved feedback on awareness and usefulness. Currently 51%M and 47%F are interested in, or already have a mentor- increase to 60% for both.	Ongoing 2020-21	RM Line Managers PGR Director	Action 5.25 Action 5.31 Action 5.32
Action 5.57	Develop and maintain a central repository of outreach activities that can be shared for all staff to use	Outreach activities are carried out ad hoc, with little coordination and probable repetition across the School.	KO: Conduct an annual review of staff outreach activities and collate into a shared repository for all staff to use SM: Repository created and staff aware that they can access it for outreach purposes	Annually	RM, EDIC	Action 5.50