Athena Swan Silver application form for departments

Applicant information

Name of institution	Imperial College London
Name of department	Immunology & Inflammation
Date of current application	29 November 2024
Level of previous award	Silver
Date of previous award	26 November 2020
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Section	Words used
An overview of the department and its approach to gender equality	3,386 / 2,500
An evaluation of the department's progress and success	3,235 / 2,000
An assessment of the department's gender equality context	2,566 / 3,500
Future action plan*	
Appendix 1: Culture survey data*	
Appendix 2: Data tables*	
Appendix 3: Glossary*	
Overall word count	9,187 / 9250

*These sections and appendices should not contain any commentary contributing to the overall word limit

Overall word limit: 8000 words (plus 500 clinical and non-clinical, and 750 Faculty reorganisation; confirmation email overleaf).

Table references

Figure references

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Section 1: An overview of the department and its approach to gender equality

1.1 Letter of endorsement from the head of the department

Dani Glazzard
Head of Athena SWAN
Advance HE
First Floor, Napier House
24 High Holborn
London WC1V 6AZ

Ref – Departmental Athena Swan Silver Award Application

As Head of the Department of Immunology and Inflammation (DoII), it is with great pleasure that I endorse our Athena Swan Silver Award application. As a lead contributor to this application, I confirm that the information presented is an accurate representation of our department.

I am personally committed to gender equality, and over the past five years have contributed to the embedding of the Athena Swan principles through my active membership of both the DoII Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Committee (EDIC), and the DoII Athena Swan Working Group (AS SAT), which allows me to lead the implementation and advancement of the department's mission with principles of gender equality and equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI) embedded within. Additionally, my lived experience as a female clinical academic means I understand the career challenges female colleagues may face and am committed to cultivating a positive department culture where everyone reaches their potential and thrives. I personally review all grant applications from early career researchers (ECRs) to make sure they benefit from my experience and am proud to say that so far all been successful (5F/1M).

I embrace the idea that success depends not only on the excellence of individual members, but on how well we work together. I am proud of the work the EDIC has achieved to support the implementation of the Athena Swan action plan and other initiatives to foster an inclusive workplace culture. The EDIC Chair sits on our Executive Board, allowing me to embed EDI into the department's strategy development and implementation. She also sits on the Academic Promotions Panel, where the department considers all eligible candidates, regardless of the nomination process. Building on the success of our 2020 Silver award our main achievements include:

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+ Implemented gender balance in all recruitment panels (32) and academic promotion panels (6) with a wide range of seniority levels which serves to provide a development opportunity and foster inclusivity amongst ECRs. This has resulted in 100% success rate in promotion (14 promotions since 2019 (9F/5M) (***Error! Reference source not found.***) and promotion/retention of female academics at every academic level so that we have achieved near gender balance at Professorial level;

+ Created the DoII Recognition Awards which identifies individuals and teams who contribute to a positive department culture and provides a recognition route for groups that may have less access to these types of opportunities (for example, but not limited to, postdocs and staff in the Professional, Technical and Operational (PTO) job family). This started in 2023 and we have awarded and formally recognised the contributions of 14F and 7M since its inception. This has contributed to an increase in PTO staff job satisfaction evidenced by an increase in positive responses in the 2023 culture survey (79% positive versus 50% positive in 2021).

The department has also launched and supported further initiatives to enhance our positive culture and wider EDI work, including:

+ Welcoming Professor Julie Makani as the Provost's Visiting Professor of Haematology, and now an Honorary Professor in the department, as part of a programme to increase the number of females and academics of Black heritage (and other underrepresented groups) at Imperial (see 3.1 for more details);

+ Supporting a Principal Teaching Fellow (M) to take up an appointment as Associate Provost for EDI, a strategic College-level leadership position where he leads on Imperial's EDI strategy and champions EDI across the community to facilitate cultural change. Dr Mitchell is a department EDI champion, representative for minoritised groups in the EDIC, and chairs the 'Imperial As One' race equality network for staff and postgraduate students across the College;

+ Acting as a beacon of positive behaviours within the Faculty of Medicine (FoM) and the College on laboratory sustainability. Every member of the department has contributed to this in a collegial and inclusive manner, which has led us to be the first laboratory in the FoM to be awarded Gold LEAF status, and the first in the College to receive a Green award (the highest possible) by My Green Lab, an external organisation (*Figure 1*);

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+ Launching a fully-funded Immunology and Inflammation MSc Scholarship for students of Black heritage (2F) (see 3.1 for more details);

+ Creating and funding a 0.5FTE, open-ended post of EDI Co-ordinator (shared with another FoM department) to support the enhancement of EDI, belonging and culture in the department.

Reflecting on our past achievements, I am pleased that we have made such significant improvements in many areas, whilst recognising there is still room for growth. As we look to the next five years, our key priorities will be improving the:

1. gender balance for PGT and PGR (non-clinical) students;
2. gender balance for PTO staff;
3. career support for staff, including postdocs and fellows;
4. inclusive culture within the department.

In this context, the work of our EDIC is crucial in supporting our aims and has my unreserved support. I look forward to the innovative developments the department makes in the coming years to address these challenges.

Best wishes,

Prof Marina Botto
Head, Department of Immunology and Inflammation

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Figure 1: some of the lab team from DoII who received a Gold award for their sustainability work

1.2 Description of the department

The DoII was created in August 2019 following the FoM reorganisation that created four new departments from the original Department of Medicine (*Figure 2*).

Figure 2: overview of the old and new Faculty of Medicine structure
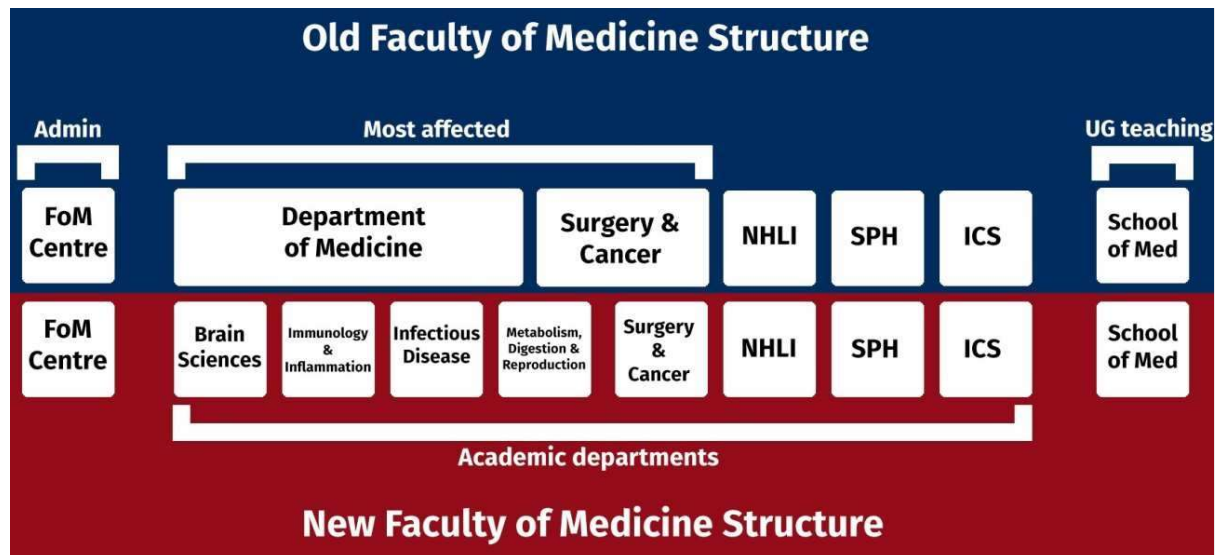
> *"The Department has become, since the Faculty restructure, a much much nicer place to work at."*
>
> F, Academic (2023 culture survey)

The new DoII merged the previous Division of Immunology and Inflammation with the Centre for Haematology and now consists of two centres: Haematology, and Inflammatory Disease *(Figure 3, Figure 4)*. This was a seamless merger which did not involve movement of any research groups, teaching or equipment. The mission of the DoII is to integrate discovery science with clinical medicine to prevent or treat inflammatory conditions, mainly haematological and kidney diseases *(Figure 5)*. The entire department is in a single building at the Hammersmith Campus site *(Figure 6)* facilitating management, collaborations and enriched departmental culture.

Figure 3: DoII structure – academic

Prof Marina Botto (F)
Head of Department

Centre for Haematology

Centre for Inflammatory Disease

Prof Tassos Karadimitris (M)
Co-Director, Centre for Haematology

Prof Cristina Lo Celso (F)
Co-Director, Centre for Haematology

Prof Matthew Pickering (M)
Director, Centre for Inflammatory Disease
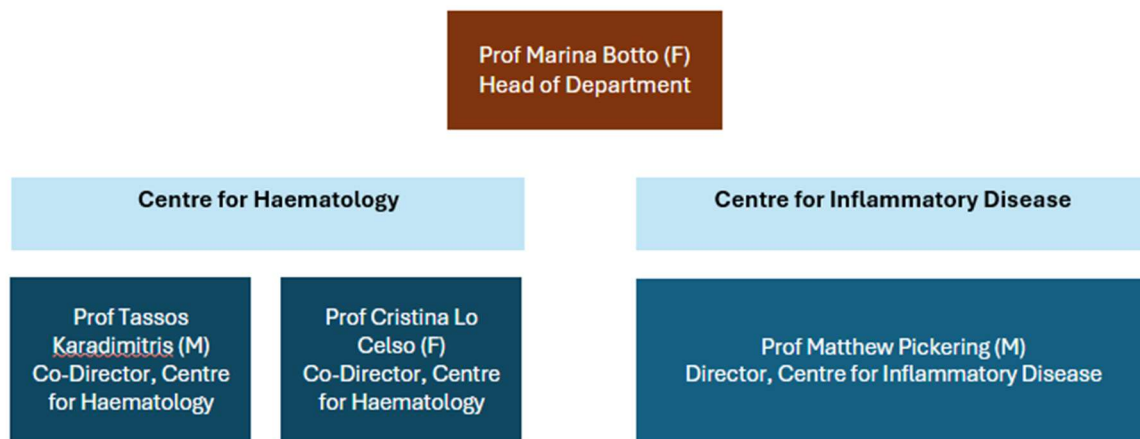
Figure 4: DoII structure – Professional, Technical and Operational Services

Cathy Tupman (F)
Department Manager

Divisional Manager – Jonathan Shepherd (M)

Divisional Manager – Rena John-Lewis (F)

Centre for Haematology

Centre for Inflammatory Disease

Agnes Lam (F)
Section Manager

Tahmid Sultan (M)
Section Manager

Mandy Smith (F)
PA/Secretary

Claudia Rocchi (M)
PA to Head of Dept/Centre Administrator

Anjli Jagpal (F)
Centre Administrator

Departmental Operations Assistant – Ed Wallace (M)

Figure 5: focus of departmental research interests

Immune regulation

Blood cells

Patient care

Kidney
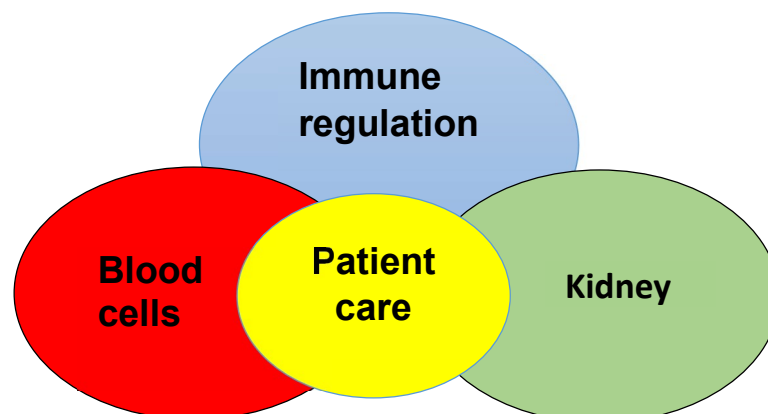
Figure 6: location of DoII, circled red, top left

The DoII is a small department consisting of 92 substantive employees (as of August 2024), plus 48 PhD students and 7 Emeritus Professors (67%F/33%M, *Table 1*). Staff numbers are largely unchanged since 2020, from 145 to 147, but our female representation has increased – notably PhD students – whilst male representation has decreased, particularly Research Associates. None of our staff are on zero-hour contracts. DoII also includes 106 members with an honorary association ranging from visiting researcher to Professor of Practice. The honorary associations are reviewed on a regular basis to ensure that relationships remain collaborative and constructive; they are closely involved in departmental culture, contributing to delivery of our education and research strategies through student supervision, teaching and collaborative research activities. DoII hosts postgraduate researchers and MSc students, and contributes to two UG BSc streams offered by the FoM to Imperial medical undergraduates: Molecular & Translational Haematology, and Immunity & Infection. We have provided data for these courses (***Error! Reference source not found., Error! Reference source not found.***), but note that students choose their stream and we have no control over their admission.

Table 1: staffing numbers by gender for DoII in 2020 and 2024

Membership Job Family	2020		2024	
	Female	Male	Female	Male
PTO				
Teaching and Learning				
Clinical Academic				
Non-clinical Academic				
Research Fellows				
Senior Researchers				
Clinical Research Fellows				
Research Associates				
Research Assistants / technicians				
Emeritus Professor				
PhD Student				
TOTAL	85 / 58%	61 / 42%	98 / 67%	49 / 33%
	145		147	

Figure 7: a selection of DoII staff

1.3. Governance and recognition of equality, diversity and inclusion work

Leadership and organisation of the department is illustrated in Figure 8. A Senior Executive Board (SEB), comprising the Head of Department (HoD) (F), Centre Directors (1F, 2M) and Department Manager (DM) (F), shapes the department's strategic vision and owns the core decision-making processes. The EDIC Chair will be invited to SEB meetings going forward to ensure Athena Swan principles are central to our department strategy **(2024 Action 4.7.a).** To ensure the consideration of broader perspectives and to promote transparency, key strategic deliberations are shared with a department Executive Board. This group is chaired by the HoD and, in addition to the SEB members, consists of the Chairs of the six committees (3F, 3M) and core PTO staff (Divisional Managers, EDI Co-ordinator and Senior Laboratory Manager – 12F, 2M) as well as PhD, postdoctoral and early career representatives (3F, 2M). Committee membership is purposefully broad to ensure fair representation and transparency in departmental decisions. Representatives of the PhD, postdoctoral and early career groups are renewed annually following the circulation of calls for Expressions of Interest (EoI).

The EDIC forms an integral part of the department management structure *(Figure 8),* reporting to the department Executive Board where EDI is a standing agenda item. The EDIC reports into the Faculty-level People & Culture Committee (PCC) and university-level EDI Forum, ensuring that all information and good practice flows throughout the relevant channels. Within the College, the Chair of the EDIC and divisional/department managers are part of larger Athena Swan working groups encompassing FoM and College members ensuring that all information and good practice flow in both directions.

Membership of all department committees *(Table 2)* is voluntary; each year, committees release calls for EoI to join them and individuals volunteer themselves, having discussed their desire to do so and any associated workload considerations with their line managers. We recognise that EDIC and Research committee have a gender imbalance that is not reflective of the department **(2024 Actions 3.6a-d).**

Figure 8: overview of the management and governance structure of DoII
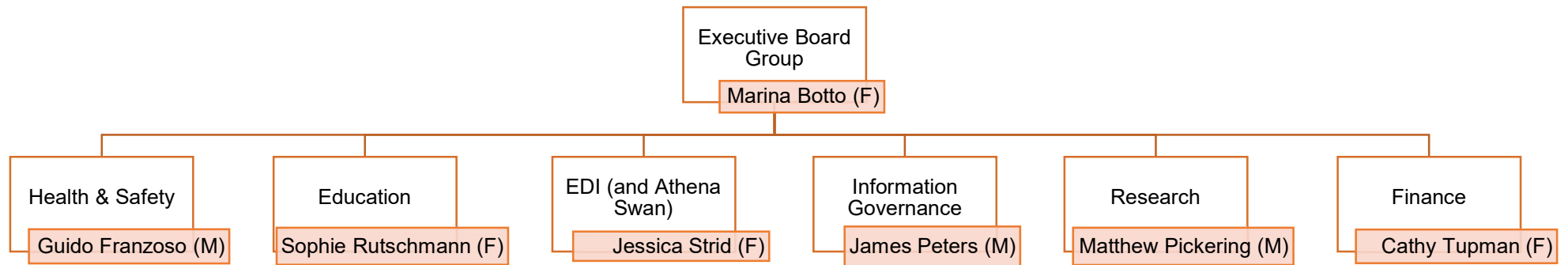
Table 2: committee membership by gender in 2020 and 2024

	2020		2024	
	Female	**Male**	**Female**	**Male**
Executive Board	41%	59%	53%	47%
Health and Safety	50%	50%	50%	50%
Education	56%	44%	67%	33%
EDIC	69%	31%	76%	24%
Information Governance	62%	38%	50%	50%
Research	33%	67%	33%	67%
Finance	50%	50%	50%	50%

Details of department leadership roles, committee membership and contributions to department culture are held by the DM, reviewed on an annual basis, and shared with relevant line managers ahead of the launch of Annual Review Conversation (ARC) season and university-level recognition schemes each year. EDI activities are encouraged and integrated into all job families' ARC forms; they are included in applications for promotion and progression. Staff are eligible for nomination to receive President's Awards for Excellence in Culture and Community, Departmental Recognition Awards, and Achievement Awards under the university's annual Pay Review exercise *(Table 3)*. According to the scheme the nominations are done by HoD/DM or line manager or by any member, including students, of the department. Since 2020 we have made several nominations, and the most recent one was for the sustainability team who received the President's Award for Excellence in Sustainability (Team Award).

Table 3: nominations to the College Annual Pay Review exercise by gender, 2020-2024

Nominations and awards (all nominations successful)						
	Equity			Performance		
	F	**M**	**%F**	**F**	**M**	**%F**
2020			100%			100%
2021			50%			63%
2022			0%			29%
2023			0%			67%
2024			100%			86%

Whilst the department does not currently have a formal Workload Allocation Model (WAM) in place for academic staff, we have adopted and applied the workload principles set out by the College and used an informal approach where we share information with the relevant staff; we have plans to make this process more transparent **(2024 Actions 3.4.a-b)**. We also continue to join and contribute to the university-level conversations around the development of such model and ensuring

that the burden of administration and/or education-related tasks does not fall disproportionately onto any one group.

2024 actions referred to in this section:

3.4.a	Develop a workload allocation model (WAM).
3.4.b	Explore examples of how other departments have managed this process (developing a WAM) so we can manage it effectively.
3.6.a	HoD to send personalised invitations to those in groups that are underrepresented and invite them to engage.
3.6.b	Discussions with PTO staff about reward and recognition, dependent on the needs of the individual, e.g. voucher.
3.6.c	ToRs will highlight gender diversity as a key objective; to be contextualised against overall department gender balance.
3.6.d	Work with College EDI Forum, FoM PCC and EDIC to develop mechanisms for EDIC activity to be included in all work plans.
4.7.a	EDIC Chair to be invited to join the Senior Executive Board (SEB)

1.4. Development, evaluation and effectiveness of policies

Most policies are formulated at university level and then implemented by faculties and/or departments. Members of the department EDIC sit on the FoM PCC and the university's EDI Forum, contributing to the development of university policies and strategy.

Where policies are developed at department level, they are usually responding to an identified need**,** often direct experience or repeated anecdotal feedback. A policy framework is then drafted by subject matter experts, reviewed by relevant stakeholders, then shared with the department-/PIs via email and made available through the department website or SharePoint. An example of a department policy that has been adapted following community feedback is the "internal peer review of fellowship applications". The efficacy of department policies is evaluated over time against data relevant to the individual policy (i.e. qualitative data in the form of feedback from those impacted, quantitative data to explore changes to volume of events against policy, etc.). Policy content is generally reviewed annually by the policy owner and key stakeholders to ensure the information contained within them is accurate and relevant, and that no groups are inadvertently impacted negatively. This review process is managed manually by each policy owner. Undertaking the Athena Swan process has highlighted that department policies do not currently go through EDIC for review; we will now do this **(2024 action 3.7.b).**

This process has also highlighted that many of our department policies are not formally written down. There are certain things that we just 'do' in the department as part of our normal business, such as:

a. no group meetings before 10am or after 4pm to accommodate caring responsibilities (**2024 action 4.1.a** moves this time to 10am-3pm);

b. scheduling of events to suit most attendees (using online tools such as Doodle polls), and avoiding religious events, busy clinical days, school holidays, etc;

c. recording meetings so that those who cannot attend can still access our discussions and updates;

d. hold winter and summer parties that occur in the early afternoon (within the working hours) to maximise the opportunity for those with caring responsibilities or other considerations to attend;

e. including the EDI Chair in Pay Review panel, Academic Promotions panel, Research Job Level Review panel, etc;

f. having Q&A with the HoD at monthly PI catch-up meeting;

g. uploading the minutes of the Executive board/EDIC on the department webpages.

We recognise the risk that not formally documenting our policies exposes us to, in terms of adherence and potential knowledge loss should key colleagues leave their roles, and we will resolve this **(2024 Action 3.7.c).**

2024 actions referred to in this section:

3.7.b	Ensure department policies are reviewed by the EDIC.
3.7.c	Formalise / write down and make available on Sharepoint department policies that we already have as part of business as usual (BAU).
4.1.a	Implement a 'core hours' policy for all regular departmental meetings to take place between 10-3pm to give staff maximum flexibility in their caring responsibilities. Ensure this is effectively communicated.

1.5. Athena Swan self-assessment process

<u>Consultation and Engagement</u>

We are grateful to our staff for sharing their views and experiences through staff surveys, although recognise the impact of survey fatigue. Imperial administers a university-wide staff survey that occurred in 2019, 2022 and 2024. In alternating years, the department circulates a culture survey to all staff and PhD students through a combination of targeted emails, the department newsletter, and reminders from the DM. This happened in 2021 for the first time as a new department and again in 2023 (*Table 4*).

Table 4: response rates for 2021 and 2023 departmental culture surveys

	2023	**2021**
Response rate	70 / 127 = 55%	38 / 137= 28%
F%	39 / 75= 52%	22 / 78= 28%
M%	21 / 52= 40%	11 / 59 = 19%
Total responses	70	38
F	39 / 56%	22 / 58%
M	21 / 30%	11 / 29%
PNS	10 / 14%	5 / 13%

We think the low participation rates in the 2021 survey were due to declining engagement during the pandemic, combined with remote working. It is important for the department that participation in the surveys reflect an accurate representation of our demographic composition as we use these data to set priorities not only for the Athena Swan exercise, but also for initiatives across the EDIC's remit. In 2023 in response to low response rates in 2021, we organised a culture survey event which included a presentation outlining the importance of feedback and demonstrating actions that had been taken directly from feedback, followed by a catered social networking event to promote engagement and connection on campus. This resulted in a significant increase in participation; we plan to build on this approach in future **(2024 actions 4.6.b-c).**

We will continue to run department culture surveys on alternating years (2025 and 2027) to identify areas for both improvement and celebration within the context of gender equality and wider EDI remit. A mix of polling, short surveys and Q&A sessions with the HoD at various department meetings have been introduced to measure the impact of our initiatives **(2024 Action 4.6.e).** In addition, our Executive Board meetings open with Q&A chaired by the HoD, which will continue. Staff and students also have

other opportunities to provide feedback by providing comments at department events like the Away Day or via their representatives at the department committees.

Communication

We actively raise internal awareness of the department EDI activities through our website, monthly newsletters, monthly PI and PTO catch-up meetings, and all-staff events such as our annual all-department Away Day; EDI is a standing agenda item in all key department meetings. Our website recently went through a major update with the creation of staff information pages, covering topics such as working culture, disabilities support, and information for parents and carers; EDIC minutes and membership are also available (*Figure 9*). The monthly newsletter (*Figure 10*) serves to disseminate information, celebrate successes and highlight staff achievements (67 issues to date). It receives a high level of staff engagement and is read on average, by 66% of staff and PhD students.

Figure 9: screenshot of example information available on DoII website for EDIC
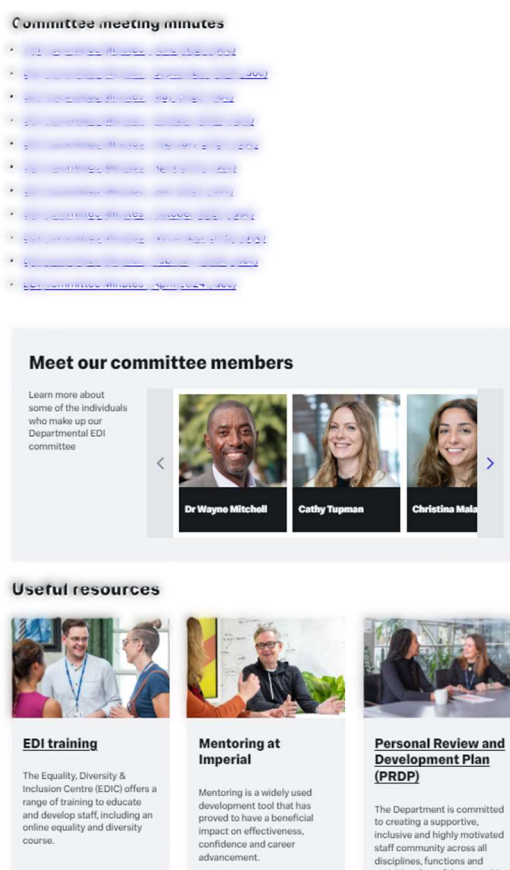
Figure 10: example section of departmental newsletter from September 2024
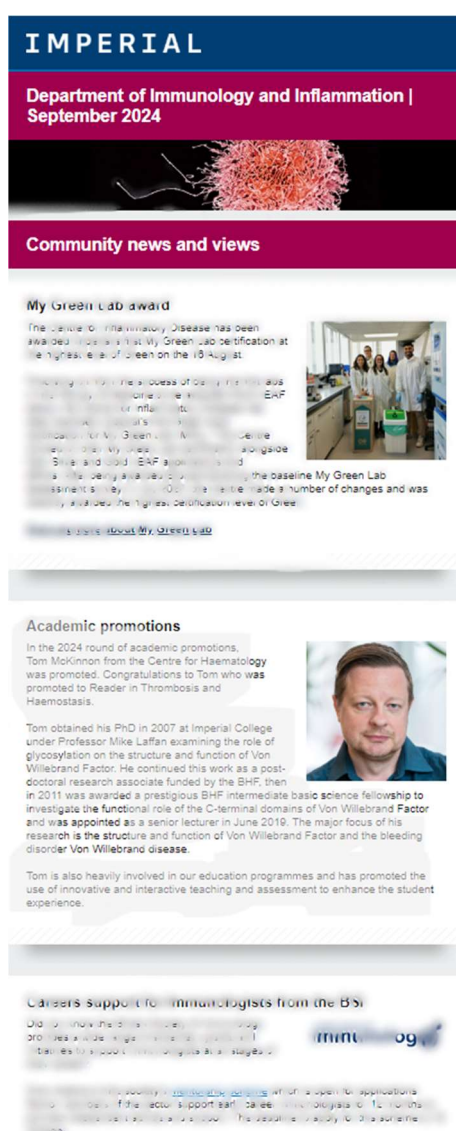
Membership

The EDIC is responsible for creating equity of opportunities for all staff in the department (including race equality, disability, age, LGBTQ equality and career development opportunities) and embedding inclusive practice into department culture. EDIC meets monthly, and since August 2024 the core AS Working Group have met weekly in preparation for this application.

Our EDIC membership *(Table 5)* reflects a broad range of lived experiences, perspectives and EDI interests, and individuals encompass a diverse range of gender identities, ethnicities, nationalities, religions, sexual orientations, and disabilities which we feel is key to its success. Our membership nominates themselves to join key priority areas based on their interest and expertise. The EDIC Chair keeps a record of attendance and action tracker to ensure fair distribution of work. EDIC membership is reviewed annually to ensure representation reflective of the department's

demographic composition (gender, ethnicity, job family, work pattern, etc.), with an annual open call to all the department for new members. Our aim is to have a committee that reflects the department in terms of gender (67%F/33%M in 2024, *Table 1*) and representation from all job families, but we recognise this is not currently the case *(Table 6)* **(2024 actions 3.6.a-d***).*

The Self-Assessment Team (SAT), known within DoII as the 'AS working group', is a sub-group of the department's EDIC (4F, highlighted blue in *Table 5*). The EDIC Chair advertised an open call within the group to convene the SAT. This application was prepared by the AS working group, actively supported by the wider EDIC, colleagues within the FoM, and Imperial's Athena Swan Co-ordinator. The HoD reviewed several drafts of the application providing constructive feedback and led discussions on the feasibility of the action plan. The action plan was developed collaboratively by the EDIC, with Champions and representatives of different groups responsible for shaping the actions which affect them. Actions are shared between relevant members of the EDIC and/or other staff across the department. The action plan is a standing item on the EDIC agenda, and everyone is involved in maintaining the action plan via a live shared document.

Table 5: DoII EDIC membership in 2024

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Table 6: EDIC membership in 2020 and 2024

Membership Job Family	2020		2024	
	Female	Male	Female	Male
PTO	4	0	6	1
Learning & Teaching	0	1	1	1
Clinical Academic	2	2	2	0
Non-clinical Academic	3	0	3	0
Research	2	1	2	1
PhD Student	0	1	1	0
PGT student	0	0	0	0
TOTAL	11 / 69%	5 / 31%	15 / 83%	3 / 17%

To ensure alignment, consistency and spread of good practise across the new EDI/SAT committees following the FoM restructure, the EDIC Chairs (from the four new departments) meet regularly for sharing best practice and exchange of ideas. Certain tasks (e.g. development of departmental culture surveys) were developed collaboratively, which will allow comparison of the data and identification of department-specific issues. The EDI Co-ordinator meets with other College EDI practitioners monthly to share ideas and collaborate on actions and initiatives.

<u>Reward and Recognition</u>
Leadership of and membership on both the EDIC and SAT are recognised through the ARC and promotion processes, reflecting the significant resource required to achieve the action plan, analyse feedback data, and prepare the Athena Swan application. The EDIC Chair receives an honorarium for her contribution.

We acknowledge that, to make meaningful changes in the EDI arena, it is important to provide appropriate resourcing beyond asking colleagues to take on voluntary roles in addition to their full-time work. In recognition of the importance of, and our commitment to providing meaningful support to our EDI work, the department has created and recruited a dedicated EDI Co-ordinator (F) to support the process and relieve workload pressure. The key purpose of this role is to develop department-specific implementation plans to enact change and ensure gender equality and inclusion for underrepresented groups in department life. The role is shared equally with another department in the FoM, allowing best practice sharing across both departments. Since its initiation this role has been instrumental in our ability to identify, implement and evaluate relevant activities, including establishing our Department Recognition Awards, which have been incredibly well received within the DoII community. The post comes with an annual budget of £5K to support EDI events and initiatives.

<u>Future plans</u>
The EDIC will continue to meet monthly and monitor member attendance and engagement with actions/initiatives. We recognise the challenges of busy working days and staff who are not able to physically or virtually join the meetings provide comments to agenda items and previous minutes by email. We accept this as active engagement. We will continue to hold annual recruitment drives to the entire department to achieve a fair workload and monitor diverse representation across all groups, and the HoD will send targeted emails to increase engagement from males (**2024 Action 3.6.a).** To encourage staff and students to share and develop ideas to improve the department culture we will introduce a "Virtual Suggestion Box" that will be regularly reviewed by the EDIC and actioned by the relevant committee **(2024 Action 4.6.a**). The EDIC will continue to report into our executive board, to ensure Athena Swan principles are embedded into leadership, strategy and culture and to provide regular updates as to our progress and successes with the action plan. In addition, the Chair of the EDIC will be invited to be part of the SEB **(2024 Action 4.7.a**) to ensure that Athena Swan principles shape the department strategic vision. We understand from the culture survey in 2023 that our communication flow within the department is not always consistent, and we will work with our Communications Manager to develop a dedicated Comms plan to ensure Athena Swan and EDI work is shared regularly **(2024 Action 3.7.a).**

2024 actions referred to in this section:

3.6.a	HoD to send personalised invitations to those in groups that are underrepresented and invite them to engage.
3.6.b	Discussions with PTO staff about reward and recognition, dependent on the needs of the individual, e.g. voucher.
3.6.c	ToRs will highlight gender diversity as a key objective; to be contextualised against overall department gender split.
3.6.d	Work with College EDI Forum, FoM PCC and EDIC to develop mechanisms for EDIC activity to be included in all work plans.
3.7.a	Comms plan to ensure Athena Swan and EDI progress are updated regularly, e.g. through newsletter
4.6.a	Introduce a 'virtual suggestion box' that will be managed and reviewed by the EDIC.
4.6.b	Run catered events, led by HoD, to launch the 2025 and 2027 surveys. Incentivise engagement with planting a tree for each survey response.
4.6.c	Incentivise department culture survey respondents with tree planting and prize draw for voucher.
4.6.e	Use a variety of ways to get feedback and measure success, such as pulse surveys, Q&A sessions, focus groups, Mentimeter, etc
4.7.a	EDIC Chair to be invited to join the Senior Executive Board (SEB)

Section 2: An evaluation of the department's progress and success

2.1 Evaluating progress against the previous action plan

Table 7: summary RAG review of 2020 action plan

2020 action plan section heading	Green	Amber	Red	Total number of actions
1. Staff consultation and Athena embedding	7	2	0	9
2. Students	3	0	0	3
3. PTO career development	2	1	0	3
4. Academic Career Development and Promotion	7	0	1	8
5. Appraisal	4	1	0	5
6. Recruitment	2	0	0	2
7. Health, Wellbeing and Culture	5	0	0	5
Total	**30 / 86%**	**4 / 11%**	**1 / 3%**	**35**

Methodology of action implementation, evaluation, and iteration

Table 7 highlights that we have largely been successful in implementing our 2020 action plan. The action plan in its entirety has been evaluated by the EDIC annually and progress critically reviewed. A further deep evaluation has been done by the SAT as part of this process.

Key reasons for success

Structural embedding of EDI

As our department was formed in 2019, we were able to structurally embed 'EDI voices' on all leadership boards and committees from the beginning. For example, we have EDI representation on our Executive Board, promotion panels and all academic recruitment panels. EDI is a standing item on all department update meetings (monthly) as well as on the Executive Board (**2020 Action 1d**). Thus, EDI themes are now broadly disseminated throughout the department, enhancing staff and students' engagement with common EDI issues (**2020 Action 1c**). The structural embedding of EDI representatives in senior management not only ensures that EDI issues are top of the agenda but also that this is an iterative and continued process. This was all made possible by strong engagement and leadership from our HoD and DM.

EDI 'business as usual'

Due to the careful embedding of good EDI practise when setting up the department, many of our 2020 actions are now 'business as usual'. In our 2021 department culture

survey, we asked for suggestions on how to support the department in promoting our EDI agenda and one respondent replied:

"I saw at the Away Day that a lot is being done more recently, so please carry on"

This practise of 'EDI as BAU' is to continue (**2024 Actions 3.7.b-c**), and we will further strengthen the ability of EDI and Athena Swan principles to shape the department's strategic vision by inviting the EDIC chair to join the Senior Executive Board (**2024 action 4.7.a**).

Barriers to success:

The period from 2020 was inevitably heavily impacted by the Covid-19 pandemic. Our staff worked from home for much of 2020 and training courses, teaching, etc. were moved online. This delayed our progress on some AS actions but also influenced department culture, particularly denting our shared sense of belonging. We have worked hard since to strengthen our department community spirit and have recently appointed an EDI coordinator to help improve department engagement and cultivate our Athena Swan and EDI ambitions further.

Upon evaluation of our progress since 2020, we have found that low engagement with department culture surveys has been a limitation to understanding staff's satisfaction, given our small numbers. Our first department survey, assessing staff's satisfaction with the restructure as well as department culture, was due out in 2020. However, because of the Covid-19 pandemic, and predominantly remote working during this time, this was delayed till 2021 and only received a response rate of 28%. Our follow-up survey in 2023 was more successful in terms of completion and we had a 55% response rate across the department. We are a small department though, so on occasion we have found it difficult to obtain granular data enough to confidently rate an action as a success or not. E.g. **2020 Action 1f** success measure: 'Results of the survey showing improved workload and clarity in work area among PTO staff (following reorganisation)'. Our sample data is small (n=█ answers vary widely and does not specifically relate to the reorganisation; hence we have rated this amber.

The above mentioned 'barriers to success' are general and speak both to actions that were ultimately a success (but may have taken a little longer than planned) and to our amber/red-rated actions. There were otherwise no general barriers in common. Below we evaluate our progress and highlight successes and limitations in some key specific areas.

Supporting students

A successful action for the support of students has been the development of 'induction packs' given to all new PhD students in the department (**2020 Action 2a**). The packs contain student-specific information regarding our department's structure/governance,

key contacts, information on mental and physical first aid, disability support, financial information and much other besides. The creation of these induction packs was led by students and developed by the EDIC and the packs are now updated annually. We had low response (n=█ when we surveyed students about this, and so will now utilise the PhD reps and forums to determine the success of this action, and whether they will also increase awareness of EDI among our students (**2024 Actions 4.9.a-b**)

It is widely recognised that Imperial, like other peer-institutions, has an underrepresentation of home students of Black heritage, especially females. To increase diversity within our field and among our student cohort, the DoII has created and funded a new MSc Scholarship to support Black heritage students (**2020 Action 7b**). The first two recipients of this new Scholarship were females. As the scheme is new, we did not want to put in place any formal process targeting females, but the DoII Education Director met informally with most of the interested students and encouraged female students to apply.

Supporting Staff

We have improved overall numbers of females amongst both non-clinical and clinical academics, with the non-clinical female proportion increasing from 29% in 2019 to 43% in 2023 and the clinical academic females increasing from 39% in 2019 to 62% in 2023 *(Error! Reference source not found.)* (**2020 Action 4a**). This has been important for providing role models for female staff developing their careers (**2020 Action 7b**). Indeed importantly, this includes females in the most senior academic roles, e.g. female non-clinical professors have increased from 14% in 2019 to 40% in 2023 and female clinical professors from 30% in 2019 to 50% in 2023. These data are testament to successful implementation of our work supporting the careers of female academics (see further details in section 2.2).

In addition to carefully considering and encouraging everyone for promotion and career progression, the DoII has focused on several other aspects of staff support. We have created and introduced 'induction packs' for all new starters with specific 'packs' and targeted information for postdocs and academics (**2020 Action 4c**). We have introduced new clearer probation paperwork to guide lecturers/senior lectures through the initial period and have also mandated that all new academic starters are automatically allocated an 'academic advisor' to guide their academic journey in the department/College (**2020 Action 4d**).

Through our Research Committee, we offer internal peer review of all grants being submitted in our department and arrange mock interviews for all staff, irrespective of the type of funding applied for (**2020 Action 4f**). There has been a barrier to capture any possible gender-discrepancy in the grant application/review process as our current grant submission system, Worktribe, (introduced during the course of the current Athena Swan period), is not currently set up to capture gender/sex data and retrospective manual processing has proven to be too resource intensive, thus this action has not been achieved (**2020 Action 4g**). This will be taken forward in our new

Action plan (**2024 Action 3.5.a**) to ensure the grant application/review process is free of gender bias. The Worktribe system was introduced by the College and we have now flagged this limitation to the relevant people, and will work to improve its functionality.

Workload continues to be an area of concern for many staff. A formal WAM has been discussed on several occasions but a barrier to implementing this across the department has been the highly varied nature of our staff's work (**2020 Action 5e**). Instead, we now employ an 'informal workload model' wherein an internal monitoring system based on accurate data on staff roles/duties across all department activities held by the HoD and DM ensures overall equity and parity in workload between staff by considering the overall responsibility and complexity of an individual's job (clinical, non-clinical, PTO) and contributions. Workload is then discussed individually, and extra support is provided and/or encouragement given to take up additional proportional responsibilities in areas where lower contribution has been identified. We will continue further implementation of transparent and equitable workload allocation and explore how this can be managed most effectively (**2024 Action 3.4.a-b**).

For our PTO staff, we have not been successful in increasing the uptake of the College's mentoring scheme (**2020 Action 3a**). In our 2023 department survey 52% of PTO staff were aware of the scheme and 37% did not wish to use it. We will continue to promote the scheme and highlight that mentoring is available to all who wish to engage with it.

Department culture
We have worked hard to achieve a cohesive, transparent and supportive work environment for all, and we were very pleased that in our 2023 survey a very low proportion of staff disagreed to the question 'the department is an enjoyable place to work' (4% disagree, 0% strongly disagree). To emphasise our focus on EDI, all new starters in the department undergo compulsory EDI training the first 6 months and refresher courses every second year thereafter (*Table 8*, **2020 Action 7d**). We also encourage participation on EDI courses run by the Imperial EDI Centre and external providers, including 'Active Bystander', 'Unconscious Bias', 'Harassment – confronting inappropriate behaviour', 'Harassment – management perspective' *(Table 9, Table 10)*, and Mental Health First Aid (currently 4F, with 1F signed up to attend the course in November 2024) **(2024 action 4.8.a).**

Table 8: number of passes on compulsory EDI online training since relaunch and update in October 2020

2020-21	68
2021-22	66
2022-23	54
Total	**188***

*data received from central College, gender breakdown not available

Table 9: courses taken by DoII staff at the Imperial EDI Centre 2019-2023

Female	Male	Total
63	32	95

Table 10: DoII staff attendance on Active Bystander training course in 2021

Female	Male	Total
19	17	36

To increase the visibility of role models and the interconnectivity between different staff groups we have run a 'profile series' in our monthly department newsletter with many staff from different job families volunteering a piece **(2020 Action 7b,c)**. All new starters also get a profile article as a way to introduce/welcome them to the department *(Figure 11)*. The department strongly encourage staff from minority groups to share their stories, whilst being conscious not to overburden them.

Figure 11: example of staff profile for new starter in the newsletter
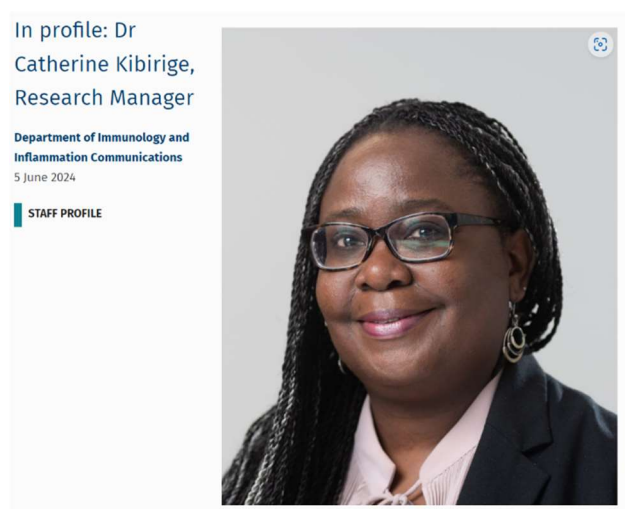
Following a break during the Covid-19 pandemic, our seminar series is now up and running again for the whole department, and open to other interested parties (see Section 2.1 for more details). This is a monthly seminar and now runs as a hybrid event to accommodate the schedule of as many people as possible. In addition, we run weekly meetings for the two Centres where postdocs and students can present their work and get wider feedback. We run monthly department update meetings for all PIs, with EDI as a standing item. We have also initiated regular Q&A sessions for postdocs and students with our HoD and recently held an ECR day, which included grant-writing workshops etc which received excellent feedback and was also attended by our HoD (**2020 Action 4e**).

To further foster a sense of community within the department, we host an annual 'Away Day' for all (**2020 Action 7c**) and organise bi-annual department social events. From

2023, we introduced the annual Recognition Awards with winners and prizes announced at the 'Away Day'. The recognition awards include prizes for 'contributing to environmental sustainability', 'kindness and support to colleagues', 'everyday hero who goes above and beyond', 'excellence in lab supervision' and 'PTO excellence'.

2024 actions referred to in this section:

3.4.a	Development of a WAM.
3.4.b	Explore examples of how other departments have managed this process (developing a WAM) so we can manage it effectively.
3.5.a	Explore whether this functionality (capturing sex/gender data on Worktribe) can be added
3.7.b	Ensure department policies are reviewed by the EDIC
3.7.c	Formalise / write down and make available on Sharepoint Departmental policies that we already do as part of business as usual (BAU).
4.7.a	EDIC Chair to be invited to join the Senior Executive Board (SEB)
4.8.a	Encourage more staff, particularly M, to become Mental Health First Aiders (MHFA) through signposting in newsletter, targeted emails and highlighting in department meetings. Use newsletter to highlight and use photos of MHFA each month. Profile new MHFA as they join. Add contact info to staff Sharepoint.
4.9.a	Ensure gender data is collected in Exit surveys for PhD students, and send to postdocs too.
4.9.b	Utilise the PhD and postdoc reps and forum to formally report back on their support.

No	Objective/ Rationale	Actions to Take	Timeframe	Owner	Success Measure	RAG
1. **STAFF CONSULTATION AND ATHENA EMBEDDING**						
1a	Ensure representative gender balance on the EDI/SAT. Currently 69% female and 31% male	Proactively invite more men to become members of the EDI/SAT	*Spring 2021*	Chairs of the EDI/SAT	Gender balance on the EDI/SAT representative of the DoII. To attain a 60/40 ratio of women to men.	Periodically active invitation of under-represented groups to our EDIC, e.g. men. The committee has fluctuated between 27-35% male participation. This is broadly in line with the DoII gender balance: PGR 76%F, total academic 60%F, L&T 67%F, PTO 60%F, Technical 75%F.
1b	Ensure regular EDI/SAT membership rotation with representation of all staff groups, grades and students to ensure that everyone has an EDI 'voice'	Yearly open call for members and active steer if staff groups are underrepresented	*Annually*	Chairs of the EDI/SAT & Committee Secretary	Rotation of staff groups. Examples of new ideas brought to the EDI/SAT by new members	Annual call of 'open expression of interest' implemented from 2020 to ensure rotation and new ideas. Example of new ideas include new-starter induction packs, sponsoring 'Black in Immuno', MSc scholarship to Black heritage students, staff recognition awards

Personal invitations to under-represented groups; e.g. males, students, postdocs |
| 1c | Transparency in all EDI activities | Publish EDI minutes on DoII website | *Spring 2021* | Committee Secretary & Digital Communications Manager | Increased awareness of EDI activities (monitored via staff survey). New staff members engaged in EDI from the start | EDIC meeting minutes on the Dpt website. EDIC has a dedicated presentation slot during our annual Away Day

Information regarding EDI activities and our committee included in 'new-starter induction packs'. In our 2023 culture survey, only 2.6% answered 'disagree' to |

						the question 'the department supports EDI'
1d	Continued EDI representation on senior management board and promotion board	Yearly audit of all Committees	*Annually*	HoD & Department Manager	Minutes from Department committees showing that EDI matters are a key part of the senior management agenda	EDI representation on senior management board, promotions and academic appointment panels since the onset of the Dpt. EDI is a standing item on management board and general Dpt update meetings (which reaches all PIs in the Dpt)
1e	Investigate impact of reorganisation	Departmental staff 'culture survey'. Results to be communicated in Newsletter	*Summer 2021*	DoII EDI/SAT & DoII Digital Communications Manager	Results of the survey acknowledging improved transparency and engagement within the Dpt	In our 2021 'Culture Survey' 23% answered 'yes' to the question: 'Has the reorganisation in 2019 had any impact on you?' Of these all but one person was feeling positive about the impact of the reorganisation
1f	Investigate effectiveness of reorganisation of administrative support	PTO staff survey	*Autumn 2021*	HoD & Department Manager	Results of the survey showing improved workload and clarity in work area among PTO staff	No separate PTO staff survey has been carried out, but we can analyse 2021 dpt survey responses from PTO staff separately (n=█): To the question 'how would you describe your current workload' 50% answered 'manageable' and 50% 'overworked'. To the question 'has your workload changed' 25% 'it hasn't, 25% 'increased since the pandemic', 25% 'varies depending on task/time of year' and 25% 'yes, it continually increases'

1g	Investigate impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on research activity, health and wellbeing	Departmental staff survey (as in Action 1e) Results to be communicated in Newsletter	*Summer 2021*	EDI/SAT & Digital Communications Manager	Evidence of whether the COVID-19 impact has gender disparities and actions to mitigate the impact	In our 2021 Culture Survey 91% said 'yes' to the question: 'Has the department recognised the adverse impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on staff?'. There were no gender differences. In the 2023 Culture Survey 46%F/53%M agreed or strongly agreed, 49%F/48%M neither agreed or disagreed and 5%F/0%M disagreed to the same question
1h	Ensure the impact of COVID-19 is taken into account at promotion considerations - including possible longer-term impacts on research momentum	EDI representation on promotion board and push for long-term consideration of impact, especially on junior academics	*2021 promotion round and beyond*	Chairs of the EDI/SAT & HoD	No loss of momentum in promotions or probations	The impact of COVID-19 is a standard item in our PRDP/ARC conversations and on our promotion paperwork from 2021 There has been no loss of momentum in promotions or probations as demonstrated by 100% success in promotion applications and 100% of the staff passing the probation
1i	Ensure delivery of DoII Action Plan and incorporate innovative additional activities as they become clear	Appoint champions within the EDI/Sat to oversee the following areas: Staff experience, Induction/Mentoring, Parental and carer issues, Student experience, Promotion and recognition	*January 2021*	Chairs of the EDI/SAT & individual area champions	Action plan delivery running as scheduled and DoII able to apply for Silver in 2023	Action plan regularly re-visited and implementation discussed during EDI committee meetings Champions appointed for the following areas: mentoring, mental health, postdoc and students experience. Our Dpt is small and for some areas projects have been best shared with other Dpts to manage resources

2. STUDENTS

2a	Increase awareness of departmental support for PhD students	Create an 'induction pack' for all PhD students with specific advice on support and resources	*Spring 2021*	Operations Assistant	Induction package given to all new PhD students	Induction packs generated in 2021 and now given to all new PhD starters in the Dpt. The induction packs include general information about the structure of the Dpt and key contacts as well as EDI-related information (e.g. non-binary toilets, parents' room, prayer rooms), financial information, mental and physical first aid, disability support etc. The packs are updated annually.
2b	Further career support for PhD students. Currently no DoII PhD students are part of the mentoring scheme	Offer all PhD students an academic mentor via the mentoring scheme. Appoint departmental administrator for mentoring scheme	*Spring 2021*	Department Manager	Increased uptake of mentoring for PhD students with the aim to reach at least 30%	We have a Dpt mentoring administrator/champion. We have signposted the Imperial College mentoring scheme tirelessly in newsletters and at 'Aways Days' etc. In our 2021 Culture Survey 31% of total Dpt staff said 'yes' to the question: 'Do you have a person outside your immediate team with whom you can talk (a mentor)?' In our 2023 'Culture Survey' 50% said 'yes' to the same question. 73% said they were aware of the Imperial mentoring scheme and 51% said that they did not want a mentor.

2c	Increase student engagement with the EDI/AS agenda and activities	Run a campaign for students and include information in newsletters. Provide information about EDI in student 'induction pack'	*Spring 2021* *Spring 2021*	Chairs of the EDI/SAT Operations Assistant	Greater involvement and EDI representation from students. Aim to have 2 students on EDI/SAT committee	We have had ██ PhD students on our EDI committee since the beginning. EDI information is prominent in PhD student induction packs
3. PTO CAREER DEVELOPMENT						
3a	Increase the uptake of the College's mentoring scheme. Currently the uptake for PTO staff is low with 3 mentors signed up	Actively promote the mentoring scheme to all new members and include information in induction pack	*Spring 2021*	Department Manager	Increase in mentoring with an aim to reach at least 30%	The mentoring scheme has been actively promoted to all staff through newsletters (including interview feature on mentors/mentees), Away Day, central College mentoring rep presentations. We have ██ active mentors in the PTO job family as of 2024 (██). This is not 30% of our PTO group; 2023 departmental survey 52% of PTO staff responses (total ██████) were aware of the university's mentoring scheme, 21% (██) wanted a mentor, 37% (██) did not wish to use it
3b	Ensure opportunities for training and career development across the College	Include opportunities in department newsletter.	*Summer 2021*	Digital Communications Manager & Division Manager	Increase in training opportunities with all PTO staff attending training annually.	PTO training – opportunities have been regularly shared across the Dpt and via line managers. High take-up in PTO team that has led to progression (details in section 10).

		Ensure this is a key focus during the PRDP				
3c	Highlight PTO career paths as a way of signposting career options	Visibility of PTO staff via effective communication. Newsletter and more	*Summer 2021*	Department and Division Managers	Job satisfaction via staff survey	Visibility of PTO staff is highlighted by a 'profiles series' that we ran in our monthly Dpt newsletter. In our 2021 Culture Survey, PTO staff rated their job satisfaction as: 25% extremely satisfied, 25% satisfied, 50% neither satisfied or dissatisfied, 0% dissatisfied, 0% extremely dissatisfied. In 2023 as 21% strong pos , 58% pos, 11% neutral, 5% neg, 5% strongly neg (Figure 7 and 8).
	4. **ACADEMIC CAREER DEVELOPMENT AND PROMOTION**					
4a	Underrepresentation of females at Reader (31%) and Professor (29%) levels	Promotions to be discussed at annual PRDP meeting *All* staff to be considered for promotion annually at the departmental promotion panel (with EDI/SAT representative present)	*Annually* *Annually* *Annually*	HoD HoD HoD &	All females to be considered for promotion as appropriate and rewarded equally in the process. A demonstrated increase in female Readers and Professors	All staff considered for promotion every year by dedicated panel (including EDI representation) and staff, especially females, who are not applying, are encouraged to do so. We have an increase of females in senior academic roles: of total academic Readers 50% are now female; and of Professors 40% are female

		Encourage women to train and prepare for such roles		Chairs of the EDI/SAT		
4b	Increase support for academic leadership training	Nominate academic staff for the 'Imperial Leadership and Management Development Programme' Encourage all female academics to attend the Academic Women's Programme	*Annually* *Annually*	HoD Chairs of the EDI/SAT	Annual nomination and support by the HoD for leadership training. Confident and flexible leadership in DoII	During 2020-2023 we actively nominated staff for the leadership programmes and several female academic staff attended.
4c	Increased support and awareness for new starters	New DoII 'induction packages' have been introduced for Lecturers/Senior Lecturers. A specific package to be made for postdocs	*Spring 2021*	Operations Assistant & Department Manager	Introduction package for all new staff. Positive response from new starters in staff survey	New 'induction packages' created. Separate packages for PhD students, postdocs and for lecture/senior lectures. Also new probation paperwork created for new academics to support the transition. Our survey did not capture whether staff were new starters or not.

4d	Further career support for all academics	Offer *all* academics an academic mentor via the mentoring scheme. Specifically need to widen the use of the mentoring scheme among postdocs. Departmental administrator for mentoring scheme has been appointed	*Summer 2021*	Head of Centre & Postdocs champion Department Manager	Increase the pool of senior mentors to 20% Increase the mentoring pairs including postdocs up to 30%	All new academic staff are appointed an academic advisor. We have a Dpt mentoring administrator/champion. We have signposted the Imperial College mentoring scheme tirelessly in newsletters and at 'Aways Days' etc. In our 2021 Culture Survey 31% of total Dept staff said 'yes' to the question: 'Do you have a person outside your immediate team with whom you can talk (a mentor)?' In our 2023 'Culture Survey' 50% said 'yes' to the same question. 73% said they were aware of the Imperial mentoring scheme and 51% said that they did not want a mentor.
4e	Skills development	All postdocs offered 10 days skill development a year. Ensure uptake by increased awareness (induction package) and advertising of courses/training offered (Newsletter, Postdoc events)	*Summer 2021*	Postdocs champion	Increased uptake of their 'skills development' allocation among postdocs with the aim to reach 30% Regular meetings (at least 3 times a year) of all postdocs with the HoD	The offer of '10 days skills development' has been advertised widely in our Dpt newsletter, mentioned at Away Days and is included in the postdoc 'induction packs'. Attendance has been encouraged by HoD by an email message to the whole Dpt. In our 2023 Culture Survey 69% said 'yes' and 25% 'no' to the question: 'do you take advantage of your contractual '10

						development days' for training and development support?' Regular meetings with the HoD have been arranged for postdocs
4f	Support for research grants	Organise/facilitate internal peer review and mock interview for all academics applying for research grants	*January 2021*	Chair of the Research committee & Research Manager	Academics offered internal peer review of research grants and interview practise with the aim to achieve 100%	Dpt has a research committee (including EDI representation). All academics in the Dpt are offered internal peer review and mock interviews. Our research manager helps to organise mock interviews. In addition, the College has separate 'shadow panels', where all grants going in from College gets pre-reviewed by 2-3 experienced academics prior to submission
4g	Monitor research grants by gender	Record and monitor research grant applications by gender	*Continuously 2020-2023*	Chair of the Research committee & Research Manager	Understanding of possible gender related obstacles in the grant application process and instigation of appropriate support	Our current grant submission system (Worktribe) doesn't have reporting functionality to capture gender/sex data. Manual processing has thus far proven too resource intensive.
4h	Continued support for return to work after parental or family leave, especially for female academics	Allowing flexibility and case by case support for everyone	*Continuously 2020-2023*	Section Managers	Ease of return to work following leave (staff survey > 90% satisfaction) - support for application to schemes like the	Successful applications to the Elsie Widdowson Fellowship award and allowing flexible working on return to work after parental or family leave

						Elsie Widdowson Fellowship Award	

5. **APPRAISAL**							

5a	Ensure continued 100% uptake of PRDP	Continued focus on the value of the annual PRDP	*Annually*	All line mangers	Departments continuing to show 100% completion rate of PRDP	100% uptake of PRDP in our Dpt every year. For 2024, the College has now introduced a new system called 'annual review conversation' (ARC) to replace PRDP. This requires a change to the annual appraisal, and our staff needs time to get used to the new format. In 2024 thus far we have an ARC completion rate of 97%.
5b	College PRDP for clinical DoII staff	All college employed clinical academics should complete the college PRDP process	*Summer 2021*	HoD & Head of Centres	100% uptake of PRDP for clinical academics	Obligatory PRDP for clinical DoII staff has been implemented (now ARC). Uptake of PRDP for clinical academics is 100%
5c	Analysis of quality of the PRDP process	Carry out a PRDP form quality sampling exercise by random audit of completed PRDPs. Culture survey to include queries regarding	*Autumn 2021* *Summer 2021*	Department Manager DoII EDI/SAT	2021 staff survey improved response to >50% very satisfied with appraisal response	We attempted an anonymous 'PRDP quality sampling exercise' but it proved inconclusive and deemed too invasive. In our 2023 Culture survey only one person 'disagreed' to the question: 'My PRDP was helpful to me'

		'usefulness' of PRDP process				
5d	Increase understanding of the promotion system	Offer workshops for staff to learn about the promotion procedure. Promotions to be discussed with academic mentor *and* at annual PRDP	*Summer 2021*	All line mangers	2021 staff survey increased awareness of how and when to apply for promotion to >75% very satisfied with the process	College offers on-site promotion workshops. Everyone due for promotion is considered by dedicated Dpt promotion panel every year and are given support on filing the paperwork. In our 2021 Culture Survey 75% answered 'yes' to the question 'do you understand the promotion process' (and 78% in our 2023 Survey) and 90% 'felt supported in their career progression'
5e	Workload model not in place	Develop a formal departmental workload model. Encourage use of the Faculty 'academic profile' tool to ensure a more holistic view of staff's total workload Line managers to monitor *total*	*Spring 2022* *Spring 2021* *Annually*	HoD & Chairs of the EDI/SAT HoD & Department Manager Line managers	Increased uptake of the 'academic profiles' tool with the aim to reach 30% 2021 staff survey - increased recognition of contributions to all areas of work (academic, teaching, outreach, committee work etc) at annual PRDP	We do not have a 'formal workload model' in place for the Dpt. We operate an 'informal workload model' where education and admin activity is being monitored for academic staff but not research activity. Individual's workload is discussed during PRDP/ARC meetings. Similarly for PTO staff an 'informal work model' ensures overall equity and parity in responsibilities and complexities of work through monitoring and discussions with senior management

		workload of individuals				In our 2021 Culture Survey, all our PTO staff replied to the question 'do you feel valued: 'Always', 'most of the time' or 'about half of the time', whilst among our Academic staff ██████ replied 'never' Our academic profile is undergoing review and development with central ICT
6.	**RECRUITMENT**					
6a	Ensure fair gender and diverse representation on recruitment panels	Have a minimum of one female and one male panel member in all recruitment panels with three or more members	*Annually*	HoD & Department Manager	100% Gender balanced recruitment panels	This has been implemented. Data in section 2.2 Table 15
6b	Recruitment panels to have undergone EDI training	Increase the number of people involved in recruitment processes and line management that have undertaken unconscious bias training	*Summer 2021*	All Line Managers	100% of those involved in recruitment trained	100% of people involved in recruitment have done EDI training. Further, 60% (████████) of PIs undertook additional Active Bystander* training in 2021 and 36% (████████) of PIs have done additional training in 'Unconscious Bias' and 'Bullying and Harassment'. *Active Bystander training withdrawn by Imperial in 2023.
7.	**HEALTH, WELLBEING AND CULTURE**					

7a	Continue to support request for flexible working	Disseminate information about department policy, which has a great acceptance of flexible working. Ensure the positive use of videoconferences for seminars and meetings will continue to enable people to join even when circumstances require them to be offsite	*Continuously 2020-2023*	Department Manager & Operations Assistant	Continued support for flexible working practises. Job satisfaction (staff survey)	The Dpt policy is to continue to support requests for flexible working in line with the College guidelines In our 2021 Culture Survey 92% said 'yes' to the question: 'Does the Dpt support flexible and part-time working'. In our 2023 Survey 7% 'disagreed' to the question 'my Dpt enables flexible working'. No requests of flexible working were rejected unless there were in breach of the College guidelines for flexible working or incompatible with the job description
7b	Improve visibility of role models	Continue and embed the 'profile page' on the DoII website and in newsletters to highlight and celebrate the variety of careers, genders, races. Increase emphasis on early and mid-career successes and female role	*Annually* *Summer 2021*	Digital Communications Manager Digital Communications Manager	Visibility of a diverse set of role models (staff survey increase to >50% satisfaction)	We have run a 'profile series' in our newsletter to highlight role models and different work groups/genders. From 2023 we have introduced 'staff recognition awards' – with winners and prizes announced annually. In our 2012 Culture Survey 54% answered 'yes' to the question: 'are there role models in your Dpt with whom you can identify? In 2023 63% answered 'yes' to the same question

		models in DoII newsletter				
7c	Effective and appropriate communications across DoII	Annual audit of DoII website for use of diverse images and appropriate language. Maximise potential of using all available platforms for effective communication	*Annually* *Annually*	Operations Assistant & Digital Communications Manager	Visibility of a diverse and inclusive proportion of staff (staff survey increase to >75% satisfaction)	In our profile series we highlight new staff members and particularly underrepresented staff groups. People are suggested either organically, due to new appointments or are asked if they would like to participate if they have a particular research project which would be interesting to be featured. A spreadsheet is kept which looks at the demographics of the people being suggested. Since Summer 2021 we have 14 profiles with 9 women, 4 men and one team profile. The profiles are showcased in our newsletter with high engagement rates.
7d	Further uptake in EDI training programme	Compulsory for *all* staff (new and old) to undertake general EDI training All academic staff to undertake 'unconscious bias', 'harassment and	*Summer 2021* *Spring 2022*	HoD, Department Manager & Chairs of the EDI/SAT	Greater awareness of EDI issues. 100% completion of general EDI training. Increased uptake in unconscious bias, harassment and bullying and active	All staff undergo compulsory general EDI training when they start and every 2 years after that – 100% uptake. 63% ███████ core (non-project) PTO staff and 60% ███████ of PIs undertook additional Active Bystander* training in 2021 and as of 2024 36% ███ ███) of PIs have taken additional

		bullying' and 'active bystander' training – one course a year			bystander training to 50% by 2022	training in 'Unconscious Bias' and 'Bullying and Harassment' * Active Bystander training withdrawn by Imperial in 2023
7e	Investigate and address issues of racial inequality within the department	Analyse appropriate data from biannual DoII 'culture survey'	Summer 2021	Chairs of the EDI/SAT & HoD	No evidence of racial discrimination in DoII (staff survey)	Data cannot be pulled specifically on race from culture survey data but in our 2021 and 2023 staff surveys no member of staff cited racial discrimination in the working environment. During this time, we supported a Principal teaching Fellow (M) to take up an appointment as Assistant Provost for Equality, Diversity and Inclusion and hosted a Provost's Visiting Professor (F) - both role models for the under-represented Black community

2.2 Evaluating success against department's key priorities

As mentioned previously, following the 2019 re-organisation of the FoM our immediate priorities upon creation included the need to establish ourselves and our culture as a credible new department. We sought to explore a broad range of actions including the embedding of Athena Swan principles within our processes and culture, reviewing the information and support we provide to our PhD students and new staff, and the ways in which we support and celebrate our different staff groups. We have made significant progress in the following areas:

Priority 3. PTO Career development; evaluating job satisfaction in our PTO families

Figure 12: "How do you rate your job satisfaction?" 2021 survey responses from PTO staff by gender
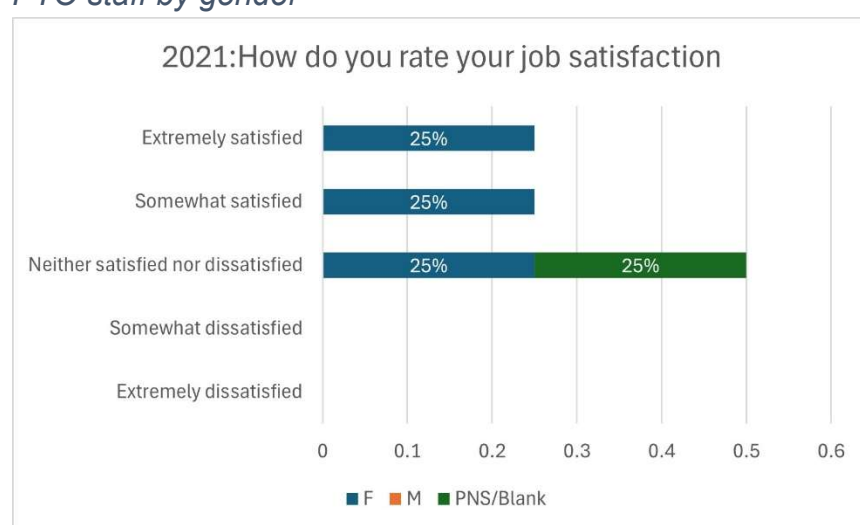
Figure 13: "I feel job satisfaction through my work in the Department" 2023 survey responses from PTO staff by gender
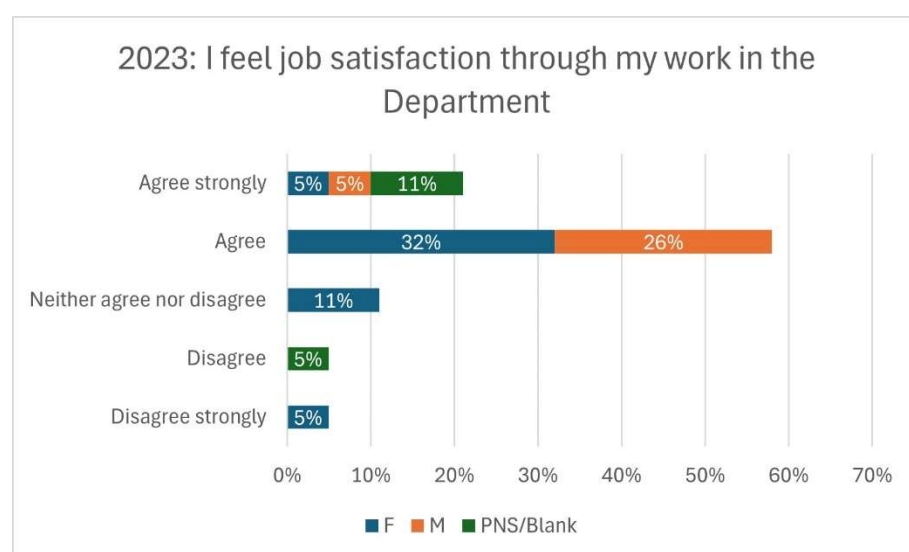
Figure 12 and Figure 13 show responses from our PTO staff to questions exploring job satisfaction levels in the 2021 and 2023 departmental culture surveys. Acknowledging the slightly different question phrasing, so not quite a like-for-like comparison, we see a 79% positive response in 2023 (90% if neutral responses included) versus a 50% positive response in 2021 (100% if neutral responses included). To note, we are a small department with a very small PTO group so a single change in response can have a big impact on our overall results; however, the number of responses from these staff was much higher overall in the 2023 survey (n=19) than in 2021 (n=█). The 2021 responders all either identified as female or preferred not to share their gender; the 2023 survey saw responses from male and female PTO colleagues, as well as those who preferred not to share their gender. These increases in both engagement and satisfaction are important from a gender equality perspective: our PTO staff predominantly identify as female (69%) but it is important that the views of those who identify as male are also captured.

In line with the priorities set in our 2020 Action Plan, we have worked hard to celebrate and highlight a range of PTO career pathways across the department (**2020 Action 3c**), featuring colleagues in a variety of roles as part of our 'profile series' of interviews for our department newsletter (10 of 23 profiles include PTO colleagues, all female). Training and development opportunities are shared across the PTO group (**2020 Action 3b**), with all colleagues encouraged to attend relevant training each year. Within the department's core PTO group there has been a high take-up for the university apprenticeship schemes (███████ registration pending), focusing on the development of leadership and management skills and supporting staff in pursuing moves to leadership roles both within the department and the wider education sector (Appendix 2, section 10).

In addition, when creating our department Recognition Awards, through which members of the department nominate their colleagues to receive recognition for their efforts in several categories, we purposefully included a category specifically for members of the PTO job family. We also ensure PTO representation on the judging panel each year to be certain the contributions of members of this often-neglected staff group are captured, recognised and celebrated *(Table 11, Figure 14, Table 12, Table 13)*.

Table 11: PTO Pay Review Awardees and PTO Recognition Awards Awardees

	Pay Review (PTO Awardees only)			Recognition Awards (PTO Awardees only)		
	F	M	%F	F	M	%F
2020	███	███	100%	███	███	███
2021	███	███	60%	███	███	███
2022	███	███	50%	███	███	███
2023	███	███	0%	███	███	100%
2024	███	███	100%	███	███	50%

Figure 14: comments from PTO recipients of the department Recognition Awards

*"It was a great feeling to receive the recognition of: **Everyday hero who goes above and beyond.** I am incredibly thankful to the departmental staff and researchers (the team) for the level of support you all continue to show me. I think I must have a guardian angel at Imperial ☺ It has always been a pleasure to work for this department and Imperial College."*

F, PTO

"I was grateful to receive a recognition award from the department. Working in a large organisation where the senior management is so distant from your daily workload and struggles, it is easy to feel like a cog in a machine, with your input unnoticed unless you do something wrong. Therefore, to be singled out and have work appreciated by those who work with you is a real morale booster that makes you feel that you are providing a benefit."

M, PTO

Table 12: job family distribution of department Recognition Award panel, nominees and awardees

	Panel					Nominees					Awardees				
	PTO	A&R	PGR	Total	% PTO	PTO	A&R	PGR	Total	% PTO	PTO	A&R	PGR	Total	% PTO
2023					50%					37%					50%
2024					40%					41%					46%
Total					45%					39%					48%

Table 13: gender distribution of department Recognition Award panel, nominees and awardees

	Panel				Nominees				Awardees			
	F	M	Total	% F	F	M	Total	% F	F	M	Total	% F
2023				67%				68%				88%
2024				60%				53%				54%
Total				64%				61%				67%

Priority 4: Academic career development and promotion, specifically **2020 Action 4a** addressing the underrepresentation of females at Reader (29%) and Professor (31%) levels

Reviewing our staff make-up following our creation, we observed high proportions of female academic colleagues in early and mid-career positions (Lecturer, Senior Lecturer), but an inversion at senior levels (Reader, Professor). We set as a strategic priority the active encouragement of promising internal and external female candidates to apply for senior posts within the department, whether through promotions processes or open recruitment.

Our work has led to clear changes in our academic staff demographics. Since 2019, we have successfully appointed four new female academics (three at Lecturer level[1], one at Reader level), four new male academics (one at Lecturer level, two at Senior Lecturer[2] level, one at Professorial level), and supported applications for academic promotions across all genders and levels *(Error! R██████████████████* three staff members (2F, 1M), have been promoted twice through this process since our creation.

We advertise academic vacancies across a range of platforms, including Black British Academics, to ensure we reach as wide an audience as possible, and work with colleagues in relevant academic specialties to identify potential applicants. None of our academic staff are placed on fixed-term contracts *(Error! Reference source not found.[3]).*

Turning to internal promotions, suitable candidates are identified by the department Academic Promotions panel before each year's activity launches at an institutional level, consulted with to establish interest in and capacity for application, and supported throughout the process. As an example of the support offered to applicants, following successful promotion, conferees become mentors and actively support other colleagues who wish to pursue successful academic careers to move to more senior levels.

The result of our work is that we currently have gender balance at Senior Lecturer and Professorial levels, and a higher proportion of female Readers (67% in 2024, *Figure 15).* It should be noted that this is also, in part, due to the departure of some male academics since 2019 at Reader and Professorial levels for myriad reasons *(Error! Reference source not found.)* alongside retention of female academics.

Figure 15: academic pipeline from UG to Professor in 2020 and 2024 by gender

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[1] 1F has been appointed and has a start date of 4 Nov 2024
[2] IM has been appointed and has a start date of 1 Oct 2024
[3] You will note that Table 52 shows several Clinical Senior Lecturers on fixed-term contracts. These are not academic contracts; they are time-limited Fellowships. Due to the individuals' clinical seniority they are paid on the 'consultant academic' scale, but do not hold academic contracts.

Doll 2020 / Doll 2024 (F% and M% by level: UG, PGT, PGR, Research, Lecturer, Senior Lecturer, Reader, Professor)
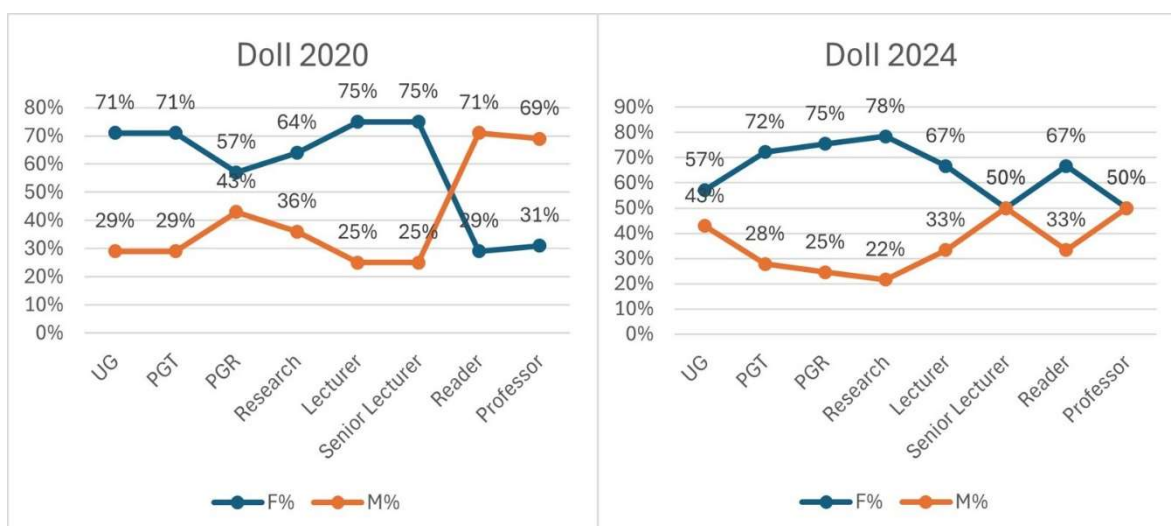
Priority 6, Recruitment specifically **2020 6a,** Ensure fair gender and diverse representation on department recruitment panels

Though our 2020 Action Plan focused on fair and diverse representation on recruitment panels **(2020 Action 6a),** the department has taken this further and worked hard to ensure that all panels, whether considering recruitment, promotions, Pay Review, etc. have appropriate representation from all appropriate levels and families across the department and a representative gender balance, to reduce bias in our decision-making processes. Success is shown in our data, for example Table 16 on gender composition of recruitment panels. The department gender balance is skewed towards the female gender for several reasons, including the type of clinical specialties we encompass (rheumatology, haematology and nephrology) and thus the membership of our department panels mirrors our demographic composition.

Expanding the concept of representation, in 2023 we started collecting data on the gender balance of speakers in the monthly research seminar series *(Table 14)* through which we invite external speakers from around the world to share their work with our community, with a goal of ensuring we amplify voices from both genders appropriately. This series supports knowledge transfer, encourages collaboration and highlights recruitment activities.

Table 14: department seminar series speakers by gender

	Female	Male	Total	% Female
2023	2	2	4	50%
2024	4	2	6	67%
Total	6	4	10	60%

In addition, the department holds an in-person all-staff (including PhD students) Away Day every year to foster cohesion and inclusion. Speakers talk about both academic topics and broader areas of interest and activity such as Sustainability, EDI activities and Research Support. Gender balance (and job family/level) is always monitored,

thereby demonstrating effort is made to ensure gender balance of speakers and, more broadly, foster an inclusive environment. Our data (*Table 15*) shows we have achieved a good proportion of female speakers.

Table 15: speakers at annual Away Day by gender

	Female	Male	Total	% Female
2020	No Away Day*			
2021	8	2	10	80%
2022	9	4	13	69%
2023	No Away Day**			
2024	7	5	12	58%
Total	**24**	**11**	**35**	**69%**

* No Away Day in 2020 due to COVID19

** No Away Day in 2023 due to unavailability of a critical mass of attendees (after canvassing for opinion, the preference has been to get together in person rather than offer an online event)

All recruitment panels within the department are expected to be gender-balanced, to reduce bias in our decision-making processes *(Table 16)*. This is recorded by the administrative team supporting each recruitment in a secure SharePoint site, which is monitored frequently with spot check audits. Where panel are composed by only two members or single-gender panels are indicated, the potential candidates will have met informally with several research staff at the same level who then provide feedback to the recruitment panel during the final decision meeting, so that a range of views is considered and the risk of bias is reduced**.**

Table 16: gender of panel composition for recruitment, 2019-2023

2019-2023				
Job ref	**F on panel**	**M on panel**	**%F**	**Successful candidate**
	1	2	33%	M
	1	1	50%	M
	1	1	50%	F
	0	2	0%	F
	1	2	33%	F

MED02122	1	1	50%	M
MED01771	2	2	50%	F
MED01704	2	0	100%	F
MED01537	2	1	67%	F
MED01482	2	1	67%	F
MED01399	1	1	50%	F
MED02554	1	1	50%	M
MED02557	1	1	50%	M
MED02735	2	0	100%	M
MED02827	1	1	50%	M
MED02974	1	2	33%	M
MED02900	3	2	60%	M
■■■■	3	2	60%	M
■■■■	2	1	67%	F
■■■■	3	2	60%	F
■■■■	2	1	67%	F
■■■■	0	2	0%	M
■■■■	2	1	67%	F
■■■■	1	1	50%	M
■■■■	1	2	33%	F
■■■■	1	2	33%	F
■■■■	1	1	50%	F
■■■■	2	1	67%	F
■■■■	1	1	50%	F
■■■■	1	1	50%	F
■■■■	1	1	50%	F
■■■■	4	2	67%	F

Section 3: An assessment of the department's gender equality context

3.1 Culture, inclusion and belonging

The survey results of 2021 and 2023 show that we have made significant improvements in many areas, but also highlight more could be done. Of note the total responses from 2021 to 2023 nearly doubled from 38 to 70 *(Table 4)*, demonstrating a higher engagement that we consider a very positive sign. We note the large proportion of respondents throughout who chose 'neither agree nor disagree' and 'PNS', suggesting respondents are unwilling or uncertain about wanting to share their opinions in this forum. A potential explanation for this is provided by one respondent:

> *"I have been hamstrung in my responses to some of the survey questions as there are no 'not applicable' options - I've used 'prefer not to say' but that is not an accurate response."*

We are saddened by the results around bullying and harassment *(**Error! Reference source not found.**),* where only 43%F and 48%M are satisfied with how this is dealt with. Further analysis identified 13%F and 6%M had personally experienced bullying and harassment in the past 12 months, with Academic staff (24%), Technical staff (20%), Research Assistants (19%), Professional and Operational staff (14%), Research Associates (9%) and PhD students (9%) affected. Additionally, 24%F and 10%M who responded stated that they had witnessed bullying and harassment in the department. We also know that staff have personally experienced or witnessed unsupportive language and behaviour *(Table 17)*.

Table 17: culture survey responses from staff answering 'definitely' or 'somewhat' regarding personal experience or witness to unsupportive language and behaviour

Type of unsupportive language and behaviour ('definitely' or 'somewhat')	% Female	% Male
Aggressive, condescending or intimidating communication	28%	19%
Inappropriate or unwelcome behaviour	15%	25%
Inappropriate banter about for example gender, race, culture or appearance	10%	14%

We note the gender disparity with F more likely to experience or witness aggressive, condescending or intimidating communication, and M more likely to experience inappropriate or unwelcome behaviour, and inappropriate banter. None of the above is acceptable and more work will be done to address this **(2024 Actions 4.2.a-c, 4.3.a, 4.4.a-b).**

However, we are encouraged by some of the comments highlighting recent positive changes and confidence in current leadership:

> "The department has a very positive research culture and an environment where bad behaviours will not be tolerated"
>
> PNS, Academic

> "...I have a strong feeling that they [bullying and harassment] *would be dealt with better in our department, because of current good leadership*"
>
> Female, PTO

Approximately 80% of male and female staff agreed or strongly agreed that department leadership actively supports gender equality (although a decrease in those who 'strongly agree' from 2021); it is pleasing that this sentiment is consistent across the Centres (***Error! Reference source not found.***).

Supporting the maintenance of a healthy whole life balance

33%F and 43%M declared a caring responsibility in the 2023 survey, with individuals in every staff group included. Since 2019 ███████████████ has taken maternity leave has chosen not to return (***Error! Reference sourc██ ██t found.***). We have had five staff take pa██ity leave *(**Error! Reference source not found.**)* and five taking shared parental leave (***Error! Reference source not found.***). We do not know if everyone who is eligible to take paternity and shared parental leave does so, and we want to ensure the staff is fully supported so have developed actions around this **(2024 Actions 4.5.a-c)**.

We are pleased that staff feel the department encourages flexible working (87%F, 85%M, *(**Error! Reference source not found.**),* with positive responses to these questions spread across the department centres: Haematology = 90%, CID = 76%, PTO = 82% (***Error! Reference source not found.***):

> "Very positive and helpful approach to flexible working arrangements"
>
> F, clinical academic

> "…first supporting me in working a condensed working week for the first 6 months after maternity leave – allowing me time to find a full-time nursery space. Now I make full use of the flexible working hours which allows me to start work early and leave early so that I can pick up my children from after-school-club and nursery…"
>
> F, Non-clinical academic

Notwithstanding this positive feedback, we do acknowledge the tension that comes with working in a clinical environment and the difficulties this can bring in terms of flexible working. For example, although our core hours are 10am-4pm (updated from 9am-4pm as stated in our 2020 action plan) and we endeavour to hold department meetings within those times, clinics often do not finish until 5pm. One comment from the culture survey highlighted that "meetings between 4-5pm are not always easy to attend for people with caring responsibilities" **(2024 Action 4.1.a).**

Widening participation in medicine

DoII is the second department in the FoM since Summer 2024 to stipulate all Undergraduate Research Opportunities Programme (UROP) students should receive

financial support (currently £400 per week, in line with the amount a student would receive if awarded a bursary from the College) to undertake these 6-12 week research experiences.   This aims to avoid discrimination towards students with financial hardship. We are tracking the gender of the recipients *(Table 18)*.

Table 18: UROP students by gender

Gender	2021	2022	2023	2024
Female	0	1	0	2
Male	1	1	1	0

Intersectional inequalities

In terms of intersectionality, we are conscious that the academic sector has an underrepresentation of Black females in senior positions[4]. Imperial as a whole is also underrepresented by female students and staff of Black heritage: we have only one Black female Professor (and two Black male Professors) in the College, and none in our department. The College was awarded a Bronze Race Equality Charter (REC) award in 2021. To increase the support for females of Black heritage in our department we have:

+   created and funded a new MSc Scholarship specifically for students of Black heritage in 2023 to support them to study immunology. This was developed by a member of our department who highlighted the decline in the number of Black students on our courses since 2018.   The scholarship recognises the intersectional challenges face by Black students, especially females, in the field. The first two recipients of this new Scholarship have been females *(Figure 16);*

Figure 16: Savannah Gordon, first recipient of the MSc Immunology Scholarship for Students of Black Heritage

"The scholarship had a profound impact on my studies, as it relieved the financial burden of funding myself while balancing work and study...Thanks to the scholarship, I was able to fully focus on my masters, engage in incredible research, and collaborate with fascinating people. It is hard to fully express the personal impact this opportunity has had on me...In the future, I see myself pursuing a PhD."

+   supported a female postdoc with a known debilitating condition linked to her ethnicity to successfully obtain the Wellcome Accelerator Award (Postdoctoral

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[4] WHEN 100 Black Women Professors Now

fellowship for researchers of Black, Bangladeshi and Pakistani heritage in the UK). We are supporting another female of Black heritage to apply for the next award round, who is currently on an MRC Fellowship;

+ hosted in 2022-2023 the first awardee of the Provost Visiting Professor programme, a Black female academic from Tanzania, on a programme specifically designed to recruit women and academics from Black-heritage and other underrepresented backgrounds, with the long-term goal of increasing the number of professorial staff at Imperial from under-represented groups. When she joined the department, she was invited to give a seminar about her career and work to all the department (attendance included those across the Faculty), and also to PGT students. When her College role ended, we appointed Professor Makani as an honorary professor associated to the department and she continues to act as a role model for future generations of women academics of Black heritage;

+ spent $5,500 sponsoring the 'Black in Immuno' network, founded by a collective of Black immunologists and allies (including an Imperial PhD student) following the murder of George Floyd in 2020, aimed at amplifying, celebrating and supporting Black researchers in immunology;

+ stipulated that all staff recruitment is automatically advertised on 'Black British Academics'; following recent analysis that indicated this was not having the desired impact, we have since forged a partnership with Diversity Jobs Group and will post here going forward;

+ supported 1F to complete the IMPACT Development Programme, a talent development programme for staff who identify as being from a minority ethnic group *(Figure 17)*.

Figure 17: Raneem Kalsoum, recent graduate of the IMPACT Development Programme

"*These sessions provided a safe space for me to share my experiences, strengthened my leadership abilities through taking part in group projects and increased my confidence in aspiring for career progression and personal development.*"

Support for trans and non-binary people

The department is fully committed to creating, consistently improving, and maintaining a safe, welcome and inclusive environment for all our trans and non-binary staff, enabling them to work to their full potential and supporting them to have equal access to the services and facilities they need. The department has a strict approach to all forms of transphobia displayed towards staff regardless of their gender identity or gender expression and this is reinforced regularly.

During the 2024 away day we invited representatives from the staff networks to speak, including a representative from Imperial600, the Imperial LGBTQIA+ network. This received positive feedback from staff and led to increased membership for the networks.

A member of our department is the Trans+ lead at Imperial 600 Staff & Postgrad LGBTQIA+ network. She organised an Imperial600 hybrid event on 18 September 2024 and invited a department academic to showcase their research on this area: "Sex hormones – Why diseases affect men and women differently" (attendance 60). The same research group from our department has recently published their work *(Table 19)* demonstrating our positive influence in the wider scientific community.

Table 19: published research supporting trans people

Title	Canonical journal title	Publication date
Immune system adaptation during gender-affirming testosterone treatment.	Nature	01.09.24
Immunological studies in trans-individuals undergoing gender affirming hormone therapy.	Nature Reviews Immunology	04.09.24

2024 Actions referenced in this section:

4.1.a	Implement a 'core hours' policy for all regular departmental meetings to take place between 10-3pm to give staff maximum flexibility in their caring responsibilities. Ensure this is effectively communicated.
4.2.a	Train up Harassment Advisers through the College EDI Centre so there are additional safe spaces within the department for people to disclose unacceptable behaviour. Partner up with other departments (initial discussions with the Business School) to share advisers so issues can be raised anonymously.
4.2.b	Use the newsletter as a monthly reminder of where and how individuals can report any concerns around unsupportive language and behaviour that they experience or witness.
4.2.c	Work with the College to improve the current reporting mechanisms.
4.3.a	Communicate processes for disclosing and what the next steps would be in terms of options for disclosure; highlight and focus on resolutions. This is done

	through reminders at department meetings and emails and cascaded by line managers to ensure everyone receives the message.
4.4.a	Create department recognition award for staff member who best exemplifies the College values through their behaviours
4.4.b	HoD to present findings from 2023 culture survey highlighting: + prevalence of unsupportive language and behaviours + that they are unacceptable + actions going forward + how to report
4.5.a	HoD to champion extending paternity leave with HR to be in line with or above those of other universities
4.5.b	Ensure new staff are signposted as part of their onboarding to the family leave offering
4.5.c	Profile staff who have taken different types of family leave (particularly paternity and SPL) for the staff newsletter and staff blog to raise the profile and help people be aware of the benefits; we can also add this to the sharepoint for new starter information.

3.2 Key priorities for future action

Key priority 1: improve gender balance for students
We recognise that our student numbers are skewed towards increasing numbers of female students at PGT *(Error! Reference source not found.*) and PGR *(Error! Reference source not found.)*; this has been increasing in our pipeline since 2019/20 *(Figure 18)*. As mentioned previously, we host UG students who intercalate on our BSc course in year 3 of their Medical Degree, but we have no control over their recruitment to that course, and they choose to join our course; we accept every student who chooses us, there is no separate recruitment process in place. As such, we have chosen to focus on PGT and PGR students as we have control over the application and recruitment processes, and have the autonomy to collect data and make changes. To explore this further, we will review and audit our recruitment and application processes **(2024 Actions 1.1.b, 1.1.d-e)** to ensure there is no gender bias, as well as collecting data on the gender of those representing our courses internally and externally **(2024 Action 1.1.c).**

Figure 18: %F student pipeline iBSc – PGT - PGR
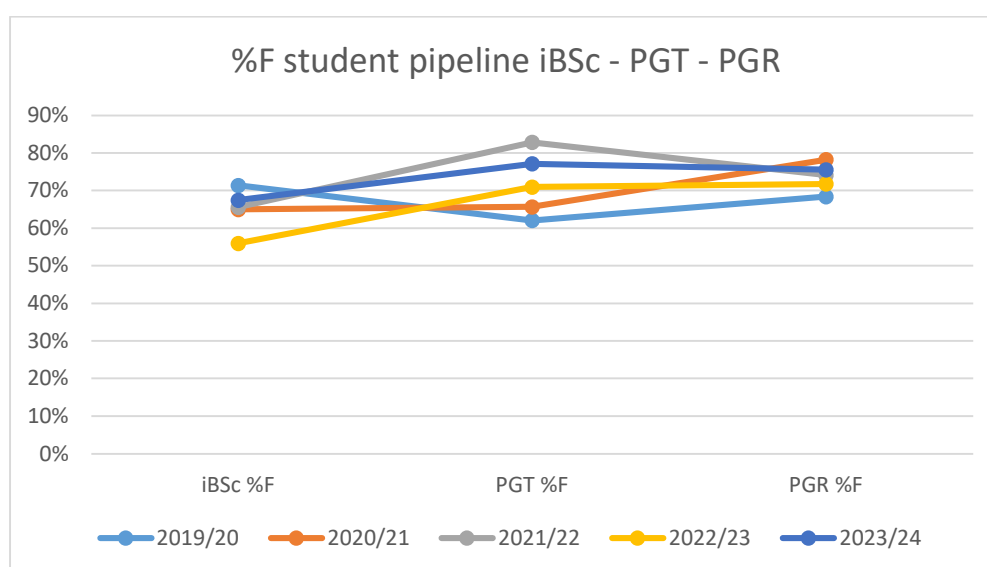
It is unclear why this trend towards a higher proportion of female students studying immunology is now occurring. To establish whether this was something unique to Imperial/DoII or happening across the sector we obtained recent data from peer institutions as comparators.

Table 20: gender split on similar courses across the sector for PGT

Institution	Course	F:M ratios (approx.)
King's College London	MSc Immunology	3F:1M
University College London	MSc Immunology	8F:1M
University of Manchester	MS Clinical Immunology	5F:1M

We are conducting further work together with our learned society, British Society for Immunology, regarding the gender disparity among students and early career researchers within immunology **(2024 Action 1.1.a).** They disclosed the following:

> *"...our observations very much match yours and that the early career levels of immunology are very much dominated by women but also that as you go further up the career stages, more women leave immunology than men, so that the more senior career stages are more gender balanced."*
>
> *British Society of Immunology*

In addition, we recognise the gender imbalance apparent in PGT attainment *(Error! Reference source not found.)*, with higher proportions of males attaining Distinctions (notwithstanding small numbers of this course), and higher proportions of females achieving Merits. We want to explore this more by analysing data by course module and gender **(2024 Action 1.2.a)**.

Actions relating to key priority 1

1.1.a	Work with the BSI to support and shape their gender equality projects and develop solutions
1.1.b	PGT: Work with Education Team to gather gender data on applications and offers for our courses, including home and overseas students
1.1.c	Collect data on the gender of students representing our courses at science fairs and events
1.1.d	Evaluate recruitment processes for PGT and PGR
1.1.e	Review wording and images used in student recruitment
1.1.f	Ensure flexible support is available and promoted for all students juggling work/life commitments, including guidelines for interruption of study.
1.2.a	Analysis of PGT attainment by module and gender.

Key priority 2: improve gender balance for PTO staff

We are over-represented by females within our PTO staff *(Error! Reference source not found.),* except at levels 3a and 4 for Professional and Operational staff *(Error! Reference source not found.)* although there are fewer than five individuals of each gender at those levels and thus the figures need to be considered with caution. Recruitment data shows an increased likelihood of males being appointed if shortlisted *(Error! Reference source not found.),* and this is most significant at level 3b for Professional and Operational staff *(Error! Reference source not found.).* The imbalance for technical staff at Level 4 is skewed by the small numbers involved and thus difficult to interpret. We will audit the recruitment process for gender bias, identifying data gaps **(2024 Actions 2.1.a-c),** and introduce Unconscious Bias observers at roles 3b and above **(2024 Action 2.1.d)**.

The lack of formal progression pathways for PTO staff has long been a frustration. Whilst we can work with the College to push for improved structured support, we can

also enhance the information and support we provide to staff to enable them to progress throughout the institution **(2024 Actions 2.2.a-b).**

Actions relating to key priority 2

2.1.a	Audit recruitment process to explore and investigate any areas for potential bias
2.1.b	Clarify recruitment panel process and implement process for capturing these data centrally
2.1.c	Analyse recruitment panel data by job family to identify areas in which gender bias may be happening.
2.1.d	Introduce unconscious bias observers and academic on recruitment panel for roles 3b and above
2.2.a	Work with the College to provide formal opportunities and structured support for PTO staff to progress, whether that be in the department, the College or elsewhere.
2.2.b	Include new PTO section in the newsletter which signposts staff to opportunities specific to PTO staff across the College.

Key priority 3: improve support for staff, including postdocs and fellows

There is a gender difference in terms of perceptions of transparency when it comes to management and decision-making, with 51%F and 76%M agreeing or strongly agreeing in the 2023 culture survey. We have an informal workload model for all staff managed by the HoD and DM. This is not publicly available but discussed with each academic; we will explore how we could do this in a more transparent way without breaching confidentiality **(2024 Actions 3.4.a-b)**. Similarly, we will improve the transparency of our policies and processes by ensuring they are reviewed by the EDIC, and all are available on our Sharepoint **(2024 Actions 3.7.b-c)**. Athena Swan and EDI work will be better communicated and more effectively updated **(2024 Action 3.7.a)**.

The College appraisal system, previously known as PRDP (Personal Review and Development Plan) and now ARC (Annual Review Conversation), is expected for all eligible[5] staff. Survey data from 2023 show that 41%F and 43%M had a PRDP when asked. Worryingly, only 33%F and 24%M agreed or strongly agreed in the 2023 survey that they found their PRDP helpful. The new ARC process, introduced by the College in 2023, aims to improve this. At the time of writing, 72 out of 74 (97%: 98%F, 96%M) of the department's eligible staff have undertaken an ARC. We need time to assess whether the ARC has achieved its objective and improved the perceived value of the appraisal system **(2024 Action 3.1.a)**. To ensure the ARC is being used effectively, we will work with HR to deliver short briefing sessions by job families in regular department meetings **(2024 Action 3.1.b)**.

Comments from the culture survey suggest that most, but not all, postdocs and fellows are taking their contractual 10 development days. Those not taking them cited other

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[5] those not expected to have one are probationers, PGR students including CRFs, those on long term sick leave or any kind of parental leave

commitments and a lack of knowing what is available. We need to better understand the reasons for this **(2024 Action 3.3.a-d)**. Further, online reporting systems show that not everyone is taking/logging their annual leave. Again, we want to know why and if there are any gender differences **(2024 Actions 3.2.a-d)**.

Two of our committees have a gender imbalance *(Table 2)*; we want all committees to be reflective of the gender make-up of the department. Reflection from our 2020 action plan shows that we need to take a more targeted and structured approach for this to be a success **(2024 Actions 3.6.a-d)**.

Actions relating to key priority 3

3.1.a	Ensure staff are surveyed on their experiences of the ARC process at the 2025 and 2027 departmental survey to assess its usefulness.
3.1.b	Work with HR to deliver personalised (by job families) short (20mins) briefing sessions that fit into current regular departmental meetings, e.g. monthly department catch-ups (PIs and core staff), Senior Admin meeting, ECR catch-ups, etc.
3.2.a	Gather data to see whether there are gender differences in those not taking annual leave
3.2.b	Targeted approach to line managers and PIs to raise conversations around why their staff may not be taking their leave. This includes exploring if people are trying to take leave but it's not being approved.
3.2.c	Direct emails to individuals to highlight that they haven't used their leave and offer conversations to understand why not.
3.2.d	HoD to send out communication about the importance of leave and to provide various touch points (including EDI Co-ordinator) within the department if people do not feel able to take their leave.
3.3.a	Gather data by gender on those taking and not taking their development days in the department.
3.3.b	Work with the ECR rep to better understand the training and development needs of this group
3.3.c	Provide information targeted to PIs and ECRs confirming the purpose and rationale for the development days
3.4.a	Work to develop a WAM.
3.4.b	Explore examples of how other departments have managed this process (developing a WAM) so we can manage it effectively.
3.5.a	Explore whether we can get Worktribe to capture gender data.
3.6.a	HoD to send personalised invitations to those in groups that are underrepresented and invite them to engage.
3.6.b	Discussions with PTO staff about reward and recognition, dependent on the needs of the individual, e.g. voucher.
3.6.c	ToRs will highlight gender diversity as a key objective; to be contextualised against overall department gender split.
3.6.d	Work with College EDI Forum, FoM PCC and EDIC to development mechanisms for EDIC activity to be included in all work plans.

3.7.a	Comms plan to ensure Athena Swan and EDI progress are updated regularly, e.g. through newsletter
3.7.b	Ensure departmental policies are reviewed by the EDIC
3.7.c	Formalise / write down and make available on Sharepoint department policies that we already do as part of BAU.

Key priority 4: improve inclusive culture

We are pleased that our culture survey showed many positive experiences within the department. However, we acknowledge that there are still areas to work on and improve, such as bullying and harassment, which was reported to have been personally experienced by more females than males (13%F, 6%M), and only 43%F and 48%M are satisfied with how bullying and harassment are dealt with. Where incidences of unsupportive and unprofessional behaviour occur, we need to ensure people know what their options are and have neutral and trusted individuals they can approach to support them **(2024 Actions 4.2.a-c, 4.3.a)**. We recognise that a decrease in reporting of incidents does not necessarily mean the problem has been sorted. It is also important to champion the large majority of people who consistently exhibit positive behaviours, and that these should be actively recognised and rewarded **(2024 Actions 4.4.a-b)**.

We want to facilitate an environment where all staff and students are psychologically safe and can thrive, acknowledging department feedback that shows we need to work harder to enable consistent and effective access to meetings and information **(2024 Actions 4.1.a-b)**, opportunities to socialise and network with each other **(2024 actions 4.1.c-d)** and support for mental health and wellbeing **(2024 Action 4.8.a)**. Everyone within the department should feel able to contribute and make suggestions for improvements **(2024 Action 4.6.a)** and the Athena Swan principles will continue to shape the department's strategic vision through our strengthened governance structure **(2024 Action 4.7.a)**. We intend to push the College to be sector-leading when it comes to all types of family leaves and improve support and guidance for our staff to take them **(2024 Actions 4.5.a-c)**.

Actions relating to key priority 4

4.1.a	Implement a 'core hours' policy for all regular department meetings to take place between 10-3pm to give staff maximum flexibility in their caring responsibilities. Ensure this is effectively communicated.
4.1.b	Utilise the staff website/sharepoint to provide up-to-date organisational charts with photos
4.1.c	Departmental coffee mornings every 1st Tuesday and 3rd Wednesday of the month, 10am-10:30.
4.1.d	Whole department inclusive social events, summer and winter.
4.2.a	Train up Harassment Advisers through the College EDI Centre so there are additional safe spaces within the department for people to disclose unacceptable behaviour. Partner up with other departments (initial discussions

	with the Business School) to share advisers so issues can be raised anonymously.
4.2.b	Use the newsletter as a monthly reminder of where and how individuals can report any concerns around unsupportive language and behaviour that they experience or witness
4.2.c	Work with the College to improve the current reporting mechanisms.
4.3.a	Communicate processes for disclosing and what the next steps would be in terms of options for disclosure; highlight and focus on resolutions. This is done through reminders at department meetings and emails and cascaded by line managers to ensure everyone receives the message
4.4.a	Create department recognition award for staff member who best exemplifies the College values through their behaviours
4.4.b	HoD to present findings from 2023 culture survey highlighting: + prevalence of unsupportive language and behaviours + that they are unacceptable + actions going forward + how to report
4.5.a	HoD to champion extending paternity leave with HR to be in line with or above those of other universities
4.5.b	Ensure new staff are signposted as part of their onboarding to the family leave offering
4.5.c	Profile staff who have taken different types of family leave (particularly paternity and SPL) for the staff newsletter and staff blog to raise the profile and help people be aware of the benefits; we can also add this to the sharepoint for new starter information.
4.6.a	Introduce a 'virtual suggestion box' that will be managed and reviewed by the EDIC
4.6.b	Run catered events, led by HoD, to launch the 2025 and 2027 surveys. Incentivise engagement with planting a tree for each survey response.
4.6.c	Incentivise respondents with tree planting and prize draw for voucher.
4.6.d	HoD to present on culture survey findings after each survey, including 'you said, we did' and actions for future
4.6.e	Use a variety of ways to get feedback and measure success, such as pulse surveys, Q&A sessions, focus groups, Mentimeter, etc.
4.7.a	EDIC Chair to be invited to join the Senior Executive Board (SEB)
4.8.a	Encourage more staff, particularly M, to become Mental Health First Aiders (MHFA) through signposting in newsletter, targeted emails and highlighting in department meetings. Use newsletter to highlight and use photos of MHFA each month. Profile new MHFA as they join. Add contact information to staff Sharepoint.
4.9.a	Ensure gender data is collected in Exit surveys for PhD students, and send to postdocs too.
4.9.b	Utilise the PhD and postdoc reps and forum to formally report back on their support.

Section 4: Future action plan

In Section 4, applicants should evidence how they meet Criterion C:

+ *An action plan is in place to address identified key issues*

4.1 Action plan

	WHAT are we trying to change for the better?	WHY are we doing it?		WHAT is the specific action we will take to address the issue?	WHO will be responsible for the action being completed?	WHO will implement the action?	WHEN will the action be addressed?	HOW will we know that the action has been achieved?
	Objective	Rationale and data	Ref	Action	Accountability	Responsibility	Timeframe	Success criteria
<td colspan="9" align="center">**Key priority 1: improve gender balance for PGT & PGR (non-clinical) students**</td>
1.1	Attract more male students onto our courses	2023-24 data show: PGT: 77%F (low of 64% in 19-20, high of 85% 21-22) PGR: 76%F (low of 68% in 19-20, high of 78%F in 20-21), including 100%F studying part-time.	1.1.a	Work with the BSI to support and shape their gender equality projects and develop solutions	EDIC Chair	EDIC Chair, EDI Co-ordinator	Already started, ongoing Review April / May annually	BSI acknowledges the gender imbalance within the field, and gender targets are included in their 2026-2030 strategy. M ratio improves to at least 30% on both PGT and PGR.
			1.1.b	PGT: Work with Education Team to gather gender data on applications and offers for our courses, including home and overseas students	Education Manager	Education Team	Oct-25 to Oct-26 Annual review in January each year (link to 1.1.d below)	Understand who our applicants are and see at what stage the gender imbalance becomes apparent. Also, to identify points at which bias could be. Data shows the same gender ratios at each stage of the process

								Centralised systems set up to record this data.
				1.1.c	Collect data on the gender of students representing our courses at science fairs and events	Comms Manager, Education Manager	Comms Manager, Education Manager	Sep-25 to Aug-26 Review in Oct-26	To assess whether we are promoting / feeding into a narrative which is not diverse. Data shows a gender balanced externally facing cohort, which is also diverse. M ratio improves to at least 30% on both PGT and PGR.
				1.1.d	Evaluate recruitment processes for PGT and PGR	EDI Co-ordinator	Education Manager and EDI Co-ordinator	Jan-26 to Jan-27 Annual review each January (link to 1.1.b above)	Identification of points for possible bias, and link to 1.1.b above in terms of gender across the processes. Clear process without bias formalised and implemented within the department
				1.1.e	Review wording and images used in student recruitment.	Comms Manager	Comms Manager	Mar-26 to May-26	All genders are prominent in visual media and promotional / marketing materials to promote the visibility of diverse role models. M ratio improves to at least 30% on both PGT and PGR.

1.2	Ensure no gender attainment gap	Data show a difference in attainment by gender at PGT level notwithstanding small M numbers (**Error! Reference source not found.**), with M more likely to receive a Distinction but also a Pass	1.2.a	Analysis of PGT attainment by module and gender.	EDIC Chair	EDI Co-ordinator, Education Team	Nov-25 to Nov-26 Annual review following final course attainment results each Nov/Dec	Identification of gender attainment by module – may require additional actions to rectify. Data shows attainment with no gender imbalance.
Key priority 2: improve gender balance for PTO staff								
2.1	Ensure recruitment processes for PTO staff are fair and free of bias	PTO: 60%F (Prof & Ops) and 75%F (Tech) M PTO more likely to be appointed if shortlisted at level 3b Recruitment panels are currently 53%F, 47%M overall (for all recruitment) with it being more likely that F will be successful (63%F, 38%M)	2.1.a	Audit recruitment process to explore and investigate any areas for potential bias	Department Manager	Department Manager and EDI Co-ordinator	May-26 to Jul-26 Review each recruitment opportunity.	Identification of points for possible bias. Increase M PTO to 50% (Prof & Ops) and 40% (Tech)
			2.1.b	Clarify recruitment panel process and implement process for capturing these data centrally	Department Manager	Departmental Operations Assistant; Divisional Managers	Feb-26 to Mar-26	Clear process without bias formalised and implemented within the department. Data show no gender bias in process.
			2.1.c	Analyse recruitment panel data by job family (professional services and technical) to identify areas in which gender bias may be happening.	EDIC Chair	EDI Co-ordinator	Sep-27 to Sep-28. Review at recruitment points (currently unknown)	Recruitment panels that are gender balanced. PTO are included in 50% of panels for the 2 PTO job families (professional services and technical).

				Opportunity for development for PTO.				
			2.1.d	Introduce unconscious bias observers and academic on recruitment panel for roles 3b and above	Department Manager	Department Manager and EDI Co-ordinator	From Jan-25. Review after each recruitment.	EDI Co-ordinator to act as unconscious bias observer. Elimination of bias demonstrated in the data.
2.2	There is no formal progression pathway for PTO staff	Anecdotally, PTO staff tell us they are frustrated by a lack of progression options within the department and at the College. 2023 culture survey showed that whilst 80%F and 100%M agreed or strongly agreed their line manager supported their career progression, only 60%F and 33%M knew what opportunities were available to them in the College for their role.	2.2.a	Work with the College to provide formal opportunities and structured support for PTO staff to progress, whether that be in the department, the College or elsewhere.	HoD	Department Manager and EDI Co-ordinator	Jun-26 to Jun-27	At least 80% know about opportunities for career progression in 2027 survey
			2.2.b	Include new PTO section in the newsletter which signposts staff to opportunities specific to PTO staff across the College.	EDIC Chair	Comms Manager	Starting Apr-25 Monthly Review Apr-26	
Key priority 3: improve support for staff, including postdocs and fellows								

| 3.1 | All staff to receive ARC | 97% staff have received their PRDP/ARC (72 out of 74)

ARC is not mandatory, but many of the discussion points and reflective focus could be positive in terms of the individualised support we can offer our staff

We have recruited someone external in the past to present an overview but it was not successful due to the limited evidence to evaluate; the form does not give much away in terms of the relationship and usefulness of the process for either party. | 3.1.a | Ensure staff are surveyed on their experiences of the ARC process at the 2025 and 2027 department survey to assess their usefulness. | Department Manager | Department Manager and EDI Co-ordinator | Sept/October 2025 and Sept/October 2027

Analysis Nov after each survey. | Inclusion of questions about ARC in 2027 culture survey: have they been had (if not why), have they been felt to be useful and why.

At least 80% staff consider their ARC useful (no gender differences).

100% of staff have attended a briefing session. |
| | | | 3.1.b | Work with HR to deliver personalised (by job families) short (20mins) briefing sessions that fit into current regular department meetings, e.g. monthly department catch-ups (PIs and core staff), Senior Admin meeting, ECR catch-ups, etc. | Department Manager | HR, chairs of the regular meetings, EDI Co-ordinator | March 2025, in department meetings

Review with ARC data in survey (link to 3.1.a above) | |
| 3.2 | Encourage and support all staff to take and log their annual | Our online reporting systems show some staff are not taking their annual leave. We believe leave is | 3.2.a | Gather data to see whether there are gender differences in those not taking leave | EDI Co-ordinator | Departmental Ops Assistant | Oct-25

Review Mar-26 and every 6 months | Establish process to gather and analyse quantitative and qualitative data |

leave allowance.	essential for recharging and coming back to work with renewed energy and creativity and helps to prevent burnout and improves wellbeing. Anecdotal evidence suggests, for example, that Research staff members have said they could not take leave because they were too busy, which we believe is not fair, or acceptable.	3.2.b	Targeted approach to line managers and PIs to raise conversations around why their staff may not be taking their leave.	HoD	HoD and Centre Managers	Jan-26 (link to 3.2.c and 3.2.d) to Dec-26	Question in 2027 survey: have you taken all your allocated leave over the past 2 years? (If not, why not?) 100% indicate they have taken their leave.
		3.2.c	Direct emails to individuals to highlight that they haven't used their leave and offer conversations to understand why not. This includes exploring if people are trying to take leave but it's not being approved.	Department Manager	Line Managers, EDI Co-ordinator	Jan-26 and Jul-26, then every 6 months (link to 3.2.b and 3.2.d)	Email records, increase in uptake/recording of leave. Email / newsletter / meeting minutes as records. 100% staff are taking and logging their allocated leave.
		3.2.d	HoD to send out communication about the importance of leave and to provide various touch points (including EDI Co-ordinator) within the department if people do not feel able to take their leave.	HoD	EDI Co-ordinator, Comms Manager	Jan-26 and Jul-26, then every 6 months (link to 3.2.b and 3.2.c)	

3.3	Enable and encourage all postdocs and fellows to take their 10 development days	Culture survey 2023 data show 4 respondents (2F, 1M, 1PNS) do not take advantage of their development days. Comments include: *"Already enough things to do"* *"I don't know what is available"*	3.3.a	Gather data by gender on those taking and not taking their development days in the department. Gather further qualitative feedback via postdoc reps	EDI Co-ordinator	PIs, Heads of Centre, Departmental Ops Assistant	Aug-27, add in to survey in Sept/Oct 2027	100% eligible staff considered their development days. Rephrase questions in culture survey 2027 to ask: "have you taken any of your 10 development days? Less than 5; 6-8; 9-10? 100% agree with the above question.
		"I simply do not have enough time to take away from my research to use my 10 development days" *"I try to but there aren't always courses I'd like to/need to do, timings of the courses don't always work with my project schedule"*	3.3.b	Work with the ECR rep to better understand the training and developments needs of this group. ECR Rep hosts one of their feedback session / forum where views are shared	EDI Co-ordinator	ECR Rep	From Mar-26 Review with ECR Rep annually	100% of ECRs agree their training and development needs are met – assess success through forum feedback.
			3.3.c	Provide information targeted to PIs and ECRs confirming the purpose and rationale for the development days	HoD	DM, PIs, Heads of Centre	Aug-25	Email / newsletter / meeting minutes as records. 100% ECRs are aware of their development days and considered.

								Link to success measure for 3.3.a rephrased question – 100% agree.
3.4	Increase transparency of workload allocation to ensure trust that the dept takes an equitable approach	There is no official WAM for the department, but the Department Manager and HoD do have an informal model to ensure fair distribution of work.	3.4.a	Development of a WAM.	HoD	HoD and Department Manager	Mar-27 to Mar-28	80% staff (no gender differences) in 2027 culture survey believe workload is fairly allocated.
			3.4.b	Explore examples of how other departments have managed this process (developing a WAM) so we can manage it effectively.	EDIC Chair	EDI Co-ordinator	Jul-26 to Oct-26	
3.5	Ensure the grant application / review process is free of gender bias	Research Committee offers internal peer review process and mock interviews for grants; the grant submission system (Worktribe) does not currently capture gender/sex data	3.5.a	Explore whether this functionality can be added	Department Manager	Section Managers	Apr-25 to Dec-25, review Jul-26 Review Mar-27	Data on gender in relation to grant submissions and success by gender. No gender bias in the process.
3.6	More gender balanced committee representation in EDIC	EDIC (76%F, 24%M) and Research (33%F, 67%M)	3.6.a	HoD to send personalised invitations to those in groups that are underrepresented and invite them to engage.	HoD	HoD, Department Manager and chairs of individual committees	Aug-25, and each year before the start of the new term. Review annually	Gender of all committees will reflect the make-up of the department.

| | | | 3.6.b | Discussions with PTO staff about reward and recognition, dependent on the needs of the individual, e.g. voucher. | Department Manager | Line Managers, EDI Co-ordinator | Discussions to take place in PTO meetings from Feb-25

Review Jul-25 in preparation for new year | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | and Research | | 3.6.c | ToRs will highlight gender diversity as a key objective; to be contextualised against overall dept gender split. | EDIC Chair | EDI Co-ordinator | Jan-25

To be approved by Exec Board Feb-255 (or next available meeting) | |
| | | | 3.6.d | Work with College EDI Forum, FoM PCC committee and EDIC to development mechanisms for EDIC activity to be included in all work plans. | EDIC Chair | EDI Co-ordinator, DM | Mar-26 to May-26

Report to EDIC Jun-26 | |
| 3.7 | Improve transparency regarding departmental policies and processes | 2023 culture survey:

51%F, 76%M agreed or strongly agree that 'The Department if transparent in its | 3.7.a | Comms plan to to ensure Athena Swan and EDI progress are updated regularly, e.g. through newsletter | Comms Manager | Comms Manager | Start May-25

To be ready for Sep-25 | Policies and processes published on department Sharepoint, highlighted by HoD at departmental meetings.

EDIC minutes show policies |

		management and decision-making'	3.7.b	Ensure department policies are reviewed by the EDIC	Department Manager	EDIC Chair	Jan 25 and then at each EDIC meeting.	are discussed.
			3.7.c	Formalise / write down and make available on Sharepoint Departmental policies that we already do as part of business as usual (BAU).	Department Manager	Department Manager and EDI Co-ordinator	From Feb-25, and reviewed every 6 months.	In 2029 culture survey, at least 70%F, 80%M staff say they believe the department is transparent about policies and processes.
<td colspan="9" align="center">**Key priority 4: improve inclusive culture**</td>
4.1	Facilitate a more inclusive environment for all staff and students to thrive	2023 culture survey text responses show not all meetings are held at times that accommodate individuals with caring responsibilities, e.g. *"meetings between 4-5pm are not always easy to attend for people with caring responsibilities".*	4.1.a	Implement a 'core hours' policy for all regular departmental meetings to take place between 10-3pm to give staff maximum flexibility in their caring responsibilities. Ensure this is effectively communicated.	Centre Administrators	DM, EDI Co-ordinator, Comms Manager	Developed Jan-25 Announced by HoD Feb-25 to apply from May 2025	100% staff agree or strongly agree that departmental meetings only take place between 10-3pm in 2025 and 2027 culture surveys.
		"There should be more inclusive guidance on meeting times (eg, making allowances for those with children by recurring meetings	4.1.b	Utilise the staff website / sharepoint to provide up-to-date organisational charts with photos	Comms Manager	Comms Manager	Jun-25 Review annually	At least 80% staff (no gender difference) agree or strongly agree that they know who is in their department and/or know how and where to find the information.

		happening between 10 and 3)." Feedback from EDIC members shows that staff and students would like more opportunities to socialise and get to know each other.	4.1.c	Departmental coffee mornings bi-weekly, every 1st (Tuesday) and 3rd (Wednesday) of the month, 10am-10:30.	All staff	DM, Heads of Centre, Section Manager	HoD to announce in Jan-25 First events: 04-Mar-25 12-Mar-25 and each month. Review Aug-25	At least 80% staff agree or strongly agree that there are a variety of social events held in the department that are inclusive and accessible. Use of pulse survey/mentimeter during summer and winter events.
			4.1.d	Whole department inclusive social events, summer and winter.	Department Manager	HoD, Heads of Centre, Section Managers	Winter party 05-Dec-24 Summer in Jun/Jul-25 To review after each event.	
4.2	Fewer incidents of bullying and harassment; where they occur, people are aware of their options and feel empowered to report	Dpt culture survey Sep 23 data show: 13%F and 6%M have experienced bullying and harassment in the past 12 months 57%F and 67%M know how to report bullying and harassment. We know, anecdotally, that individuals are worried about the	4.2.a	Train up Harassment Advisers through the College EDI Centre so there are additional safe spaces within the department for people to disclose unacceptable behaviour. Partner up with other departments (initial discussions with the Business	EDI Co-ordinator	EDI Co-ordinator , working with College EDI Centre and Comms Manager	EDI Co-ordinator to train in 2025 (based on availability), then at least one per year. Speak with Business School in Feb-25. Review and evaluate partnerships annually.	3 members of the department to be trained as harassment advisers, at least 1M. Halve incidents of those experiencing bullying and harassment to 6%F, 3%M in 2027 survey. 100% staff to know how to report unsupportive language and behaviours in 2027 survey.

			4.2.b	Use the newsletter as a monthly reminder of where and how individuals can report any concerns around unsupportive language and behaviour that they experience or witness	HoD	Comms Manager, EDI Co-ordinator	From Jan-25, and every other month Review annually.	
	consequences of reporting incidents, and do not always know what their options are. Reduction in the incidence not necessarily a true reflection of that is happening (link to 4.3 below).			School) to share advisers so issues can be raised anonymously.				
			4.2.c	Work with the College to improve the current reporting mechanisms.	HoD	EDI Co-ordinator	From Mar-27 to Sep-27	Inform and progress the discussion in College regarding reporting. Communicate updates through HoD and newsletter.
4.3	Where incidents of bullying and harassment occur and are reported, they are handled effectively and people are satisfied	Department survey 2023 shows: 43%F and 48%M are satisfied with how bullying and harassment are dealt with in the department	4.3.a	Communicate processes for disclosing and what the next steps would be in terms of options for disclosure; highlight and focus on resolutions. This is done through reminders at department	HoD	HoD	Jan and June 25, then annually	At least 70% staff (no gender differences) are satisfied with how bullying and harassment are dealt with in the department.

	with the outcome			meetings and emails and cascaded by line managers to ensure everyone receives the message			
4.4	Individuals to behave appropriately to each other, and for staff to model that behaviour to students	2023 culture survey respondents 'definitely' or 'somewhat' personally experienced or witnessed:28%F and 19%M - aggressive, condescending or intimidating communication15%F and 25%M - inappropriate or unwelcome behaviour 10%F, 14%M - inappropriate banter	4.4.a	Create department recognition award for staff member who best exemplifies the College values through their behaviours	Department Manager	EDIC Chair, Department Manager	Confirm and launch in Mar-26 Included in Summer-26 awards	Nominations received for recognition award, with gender of recipients reflective of the department at the time.
			4.4.b	HoD to present findings from 2023 culture survey highlighting: + prevalence of unsupportive language and behaviours + that they are unacceptable + actions going forward + how to report	HoD	HoD, DM, EDIC Chair and EDI Co-ordinator	March-25	At least 60% staff attend 2027 culture survey shows no more than 10% staff (no gender differences) experienced or witnessed this behaviour
4.5	Ensure all eligible staff are aware of paternity and shared	We have had 5 staff taking paternity and 5 staff taking SPL but anecdotally we think that not everyone is	4.5.a	HoD to champion extending paternity leave with HR to be in line with or above	EDIC Chair	HoD	HoD has already raised this at FoM. Review Nov-25	HoD raised issue at Faculty and department Exec board (minuted). Paternity leave entitlement

	parental leave entitlements and take it, if they choose to.	taking this. Imperial offers 2 weeks paternity leave at full pay. This is below the rate for other local universities: Kings offer 6 weeks UCL 20 days LSE 4 weeks		those of other universities				raised as a result of this. Clearer, and more regular, signposting to existing policies on paternity leave.
			4.5.b	Ensure new staff are signposted as part of their onboarding to the family leave offering	Departmental Operations Manager	All Line Managers	To include in departmental meetings from Mar-25. Annual review.	Archive of profiles. Qualitative feedback from fathers. All eligible staff take their enhanced paternity leave.
			4.5.c	Profile staff who have taken different types of family leave (particularly paternity and SPL) for the staff newsletter and staff blog to raise the profile and help people be aware of the benefits; we can also add this to the sharepoint for new starter information.	EDIC Chair	Comms Manager	To be included in newsletter from May-26.	
4.6	Encourage staff and students to share their thoughts and develop ideas to	Whilst departmental culture survey response rate improved between 2021 and 2023, it is still only 55% (52%F, 40%M).	4.6.a	Introduce a 'virtual suggestion box' that will be managed and reviewed by the EDIC	EDIC Chair	EDI Co-ordinator	Available from Aug-25. Highlighted to students in induction from Sept-25.	Attendance at survey events of at least 60% staff and PhD students Response rate of at least 65% (no gender differences) for 2027.

			4.6.b	Run catered events, led by HoD, to launch the 2025 and 2027 surveys. Incentivise engagement with planting a tree for each survey response.	EDIC Chair	HoD, EDI Co-ordinator, Department Manager	Sept/October 2025 and Sept/October 2027	
improve department al culture continuously	Additionally, current avenues for feedback through to the EDIC are all quite formal and dependent on attendance at meetings or group feedback sessions. We want to provide an opportunity for staff and students to engage and share ideas at any time. We use feedback mechanisms as evidence of the success of our actions and so these need to be robust and ensure we are reaching as many people as possible.		4.6.c	Incentivise respondents with tree planting and prize draw for voucher.	EDIC Chair	EDI Co-ordinator, DM	Sept/October 2025 and Sept/October 2027	
			4.6.d	HoD to present on culture survey findings after each survey, including 'you said, we did' and actions for future	HoD	DM, EDI Co-ordinator, EDIC Chair	Jan-26 and Jan-28	
			4.6.e	Use a variety of ways to get feedback and measure success, such as pulse surveys, Q&A sessions, focus groups, Mentimeter, etc.	EDI Co-ordinator	DM, Department Ops Assistant	Feb-25	

4.7	Athena Swan principles to shape the department's strategic vision	Strategic decision-making happens at SEB; currently the EDIC Chair does not attend these meetings so limited opportunity for formal influence.	4.7.a	EDIC Chair to be invited to join the Senior Executive Board (SEB)	HoD	EDIC Chair	From January 2025	SEB ToRs are updated to include the EDIC Chair
4.8	Improve support for mental health and wellbeing (link to 3.2 ref taking leave)	culture survey 2023 showed 72%F and 57%M know where to seek support for mental health and wellbeing at work.	4.8.a	Encourage more staff, particularly M, to become Mental Health First Aiders (MHFA) through signposting in newsletter, targeted emails and highlighting in department meetings. Use newsletter to highlight and use photos of MHFA each month. Profile new MHFA as they join. Add contact info to staff Sharepoint.	EDIC Chair	Comms Manager, EDI Co-ordinator	At least one person trained per year, starting in 2025	3 more members of the department to be trained MHFA, including at least 1M. 80% staff know where to seek help for mental health and wellbeing at work in 2027 survey.
4.9	Ensure support for PhD students and postdocs is	Exit surveys are already undertaken by the Education team for Ph students, but this is not analysed by gender. We want to	4.9.a	Ensure gender data is collected in Exit surveys for PhD students, and send to postdocs too.	Department Manager	EDI Co-ordinator, Departmental Operations Assistant and Education Team	Mar-25 to Mar-26	20% of students and postdocs (gender proportionate to cohort) attend forums to share their views.

| effective and helpful | ensure we are supporting them effectively whilst they are with us.

24% (11/45, 6F, 5M) PhD students responded to the 2023 survey.

We surveyed PhD students in summer 2024 about their induction packs but only received 2 responses (out of 48). Need more data for analysis. | 4.9.b | Utilise the PhD and postdoc reps and forum to formally report back on their support. | EDIC Chair | PhD and postdoc Reps | EDI Co-ordinator to attend forums from Jan-25 to Jan-26.

In May-26 send out survey re induction packs. | 20% (gender proportionate to cohort) respond to surveys about PhD/postdoc specific resources and support like the induction packs.

40% PhD students respond in 2025 survey and 50% in 2027. |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|

Appendix 3: Glossary

Please provide a glossary of abbreviations and acronyms used in the application.

ARC	Annual Review Conversation
AS SAT	Athena Swan Self-Assessment Team
BAU	Business as Usual
BSc	Bachelor of Science degree
DM	Department Manager
DoII	Department of Inflammation and Immunology
EDI	Equality, diversity, inclusion
EDIC	Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Committee
EoI	Expressions of Interest
F	Female
FoM	Faculty of Medicine
HoD	Head of Department
HR	Human Resources
iBSc	Intercalated bachelors course
LGBTQ+	Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer +
M	Male
MSc	Master of Science degree
PCC	FoM's People & Culture Committee
PGR	Postgraduate Research
PGT	Postgraduate Taught
PNS	Prefer not to say
PRDP	Personal Review and Development Plan
PTO	Professional, Technical and Operational staff
REC	Race Equality Charter
SEB	Senior Executive Board
UG	Undergraduate
WAM	Workload Allocation Model